PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

SIXTH SERIES—VOLUME 432 (Part 2)

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

FOURTH SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2004–05

COMPRISING PERIOD
14 March—7 April 2005

£105
(Two parts not sold separately)

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

CAMBRIDGESHIRE
LIBRARIES

Cam1Ref
C05106)

HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

(FORMED BY THE RT. HON. TONY BLAIR, MP, JUNE 2001)

PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HEALTH—The Rt. Hon. Dr. John Reid, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. Alan Milburn, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND—The Rt. Hon. Paul Murphy, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY—The Rt. Hon. Paul Boateng, MP
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES AND LORD PRIVY SEAL—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt. Hon. Ian McCartney, MP
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Amos
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS AND LORD CHANCELLOR (FOR THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD)—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WORK AND PENSIONS—The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson, MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS—The Rt. Hon. Ruth Kelly, MP

DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND MINISTERS

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister—
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. John Prescott, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Local and Regional Government—The Rt. Hon. Nick Raynsford, MP
Minister for Regeneration and the Regions—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Rooker
Minister for Housing and Planning—The Rt. Hon. Keith Hill, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Yvette Cooper, MP
Phil Hope, Esq, MP

Cabinet Office—
CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER—The Rt. Hon. Alan Milburn, MP
MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt. Hon. Ian McCartney, MP
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE—David Miliband, Esq, MP

Constitutional Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Falconer of Thoroton, QC
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Christopher Leslie, Esq, MP
David Lammy, Esq, MP
The Baroness Ashton of Upholland
Anne McGuire, MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland)
Don Touhig, Esq, MP (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales)

Culture, Media and Sport—
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT—The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Sport and Tourism—The Rt. Hon. Richard Caborn, MP
Minister for the Arts—The Rt. Hon. Estelle Morris, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. The Lord McIntosh of Haringey (Minister for Media and Heritage)

Defence—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Hoon, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. Adam Ingram, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Bach (Minister for Defence Procurement)
Ivor Caplin, Esq, MP

Education and Skills—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Ruth Kelly, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for School Standards—Stephen Twigg, Esq, MP
Minister for Children, Young People and Families—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Hodge, MP
Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education—Dr. Kim Howells, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Filkin, CBE
Ivan Lewis, Esq, MP
Derek Twigg, Esq, MP

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality—The Rt. Hon. Alun Michael, MP
Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment—Elliot Morley, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Whitty
Ben Bradshaw, Esq, MP

Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Jack Straw, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for the Middle East—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean
Minister for Europe—Denis MacShane, Esq, MP
Minister for Trade and Investment— Douglas Alexander, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Bill Rammell, Esq, MP
Chris Mullin, Esq, MP

Health—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Dr. John Reid, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. John Hutton, MP
Rosie Winterton, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Miss Melanie Johnson, MP (Minister for Public Health)
Dr. Stephen Ladyman, MP
The Lord Warner

Home Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Charles Clarke, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety—Ms Hazel Blears, MP
Minister for Criminal Justice System and Law Reform—The Rt. Hon. Baroness Scotland of Asthal, QC
Minister for Citizenship and Immigration—Desmond Browne, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
Paul Goggins, Esq, MP
Caroline Flint, MP
Fiona Mactaggart, MP

International Development—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Benn, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—Gareth Thomas, Esq, MP

Law Officers' Department—
ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Lord Goldsmith, QC
SOLICITOR-GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Harriet Harman, QC, MP
ADVOCATE-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND—Dr. Lynda Clark, QC, MP

Leader of the House of Commons—
LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Phil Woolas, Esq, MP

Northern Ireland Office—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Paul Murphy, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
The Rt. Hon. John Spellar, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE—
Ian Pearson, Esq, MP
Angela Smith, MP
Barry Gardiner, Esq, MP

Paymaster General's Office—
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP

Privy Council Office—
LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS—The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Amos

Trade and Industry—
SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER FOR WOMEN AND EQUALITY—The Rt. Hon. Patricia Hewitt, MP
MINISTERS OF STATE—
Minister for Energy and E-Commerce—Mike O'Brien, Esq, MP
Minister for Trade and Investment—Douglas Alexander, Esq, MP
Minister for Industry and the Regions and Deputy Minister for Women and Equality—The Rt. Hon. Jacqui Smith, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
The Lord Sainsbury of Turville (Minister for Science and Innovation)
Nigel Griffiths, Esq, MP (Minister for Small Business and Enterprise)
Gerry Sutcliffe, Esq, MP (Minister for Employment Relations, Consumers and Postal Services)

Transport—
SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Alistair Darling, MP
MINISTER OF STATE—
Tony McNulty, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—
David Jamieson, Esq, MP
Charlotte Atkins, MP

Treasury—
PRIME MINISTER, FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND MINISTER FOR THE CIVIL SERVICE—The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER—The Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown, MP
CHIEF SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Paul Boateng, MP
PAYMASTER GENERAL—The Rt. Hon. Dawn Primarolo, MP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY—Stephen Timms, Esq, MP
ECONOMIC SECRETARY—John Healey, Esq, MP
PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY—The Rt. Hon. Hilary Armstrong, MP
LORDS COMMISSIONERS—
Jim Murphy, Esq, MP
John Heppell, Esq, MP
Joan Ryan, MP
Nick Ainger, Esq, MP
James Purnell, Esq, MP
ASSISTANT WHIPS—
Fraser Kemp, Esq, MP
Gillian Merron, MP
Paul Clark, Esq, MP
Vernon Coaker, Esq, MP
Margaret Moran, MP
Bridget Prentice, MP
Tom Watson, Esq, MP

Work and Pensions—

SECRETARY OF STATE—The Rt. Hon. Alan Johnson, MP

MINISTERS OF STATE—

Minister for Pensions—Malcolm Wicks, Esq, MP

Minister for Work—The Rt. Hon. Jane Kennedy, MP

PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARIES OF STATE—

The Rt. Hon. The Baroness Hollis of Heigham, DL

Maria Eagle, MP

Chris Pond, Esq, MP

Her Majesty's Household—

LORD CHAMBERLAIN—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Luce, GCVO, DL

LORD STEWARD—The Duke of Abercorn, KG

MASTER OF THE HORSE—The Lord Vestey

TREASURER—Bob Ainsworth, Esq, MP.

COMPTROLLER—The Rt. Hon. Thomas McAvoy, MP

VICE-CHAMBERLAIN—Jim Fitzpatrick, Esq, MP

CAPTAIN OF THE HONOURABLE CORPS OF GENTLEMEN-AT-ARMS—The Rt. Hon. The Lord Grocott

CAPTAIN OF THE QUEEN'S BODYGUARD OF THE YEOMAN OF THE GUARD—The Lord Davies of Oldham

LORDS IN WAITING—The Lord Bassam of Brighton, The Lord Evans of Temple Guiting CBE, The Lord Triesman

BARONESSES IN WAITING—The Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton, The Baroness Andrews, OBE, The Baroness Crawley

---

SECOND CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSIONER, REPRESENTING CHURCH COMMISSIONERS— Sir Stuart Bell, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE SPEAKER—The Rt. Hon. Michael J. Martin, MP

CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—The Rt. Hon. Sir Alan Haselhurst, MP

FIRST DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Mrs. Sylvia Heal, MP

SECOND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS—Sir Michael Lord, MP

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—

Mrs. Irene Adams, MP, David Amess, Esq, MP, Janet Anderson, MP, Nigel Beard, Esq, MP, Miss Anne Begg, MP, Joe Benton, Esq, MP, Sir John Butterfill, MP, Martin Caton, Esq, MP, David Chidgey, Esq, MP, Derek Conway, Esq, MP, Frank Cook, Esq, MP, James Cran, Esq, MP, John Cummings, Esq, MP, The Rt. Hon. Eric Forth, MP, Roger Gale, Esq, MP, Win Griffiths, Esq, MP, Mike Hancock, Esq, MP, Jimmy Hood, Esq, MP, Kevin Hughes, Esq, MP, Alan Hurst, Esq, MP, Eric Illsley, Esq, MP, John McWilliam, Esq, MP, Bill O'Brien, Esq, MP, Edward O'Hara, Esq, MP, Bill Olner, Esq, MP, Peter Pike, Esq, MP, Dame Marion Roe, MP, Jonathan Sayeed, Esq, MP, George Stevenson, Esq, MP, David Taylor, Esq, MP, The Rt. Hon. Ann Widdecombe MP, Sir Nicholas Winterton, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION—

The Rt. Hon. The Speaker (Chairman), The Rt. Hon. Peter Hain, MP, Oliver Heald, Esq, MP, Sir Archy Kirkwood, MP, Sir Stuart Bell, MP, Sir Patrick Cormack, FSA, MP

SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION—David Natzler

ASSISTANT SECRETARY —Tom Goldsmith

ADMINISTRATION ESTIMATE AUDIT COMMITTEE—

Oliver Heald, Esq, MP (Chairman), Sir Archy Kirkwood, MP, Sir Thomas S. Legg, KCB, QC, David Taylor, FCA

SECRETARY OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE—Dr. Mark Egan

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—

Roger Sands, (Chief Executive), George Cubie, CB (Clerk of Committees, Department of the Clerk of the House), Peter Grant Peterkin, CB, OBE (Serjeant at Arms), John Pullinger (Librarian), Andrew Walker (Director of Finance and Administration), Bill Garland (Editor of the Official Report), Sue Harrison (Director of Catering Services)

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT—Robert Twigger

SPEAKER'S SECRETARY—Peter F. Barratt (Acting)

SPEAKER'S COUNSEL—John Vaux

SPEAKER'S CHAPLAIN—Rev. Canon Robert Wright

MEDICAL ADVISER TO THE SPEAKER—Dr. Ron Zeegen, OBE, FRCP, MRCS, DObst, RCOG

PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS—Sir Philip Mawer

PARLIAMENTARY SECURITY CO-ORDINATOR—Peter Mason

14 March 2005

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 14 March 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Asylum and Immigration

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): Earlier today my right hon. and noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Baroness Ashton of Upholland), made a statement in the other place reporting that on 7 March the Lord Chancellor made the following statutory instrument:

> The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004 (Commencement No. 5 and Transitional Provisions) Order.

The order is made in accordance with section 48(3)*(a)*, (4), (5) and (6) of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004, hereafter referred to as the 2004 Act. This order commences section 26 (unification of appeal system) of, and Schedules 1 and 2 to, the 2004 Act on 4 April 2005. This order also contains transitional provisions in relation to pending appeals which were made to an adjudicator before 4 April 2005, and in relation to further appeals and applications in such cases. Copies of the order have been made available to Members and Peers in votes and printed pages office.

The statement also reported that, on 10 March, the Lord Chancellor laid before Parliament the following statutory instruments;

> The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (Fast Track Procedure) Rules 2005, and
>
> The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (Fast Track Time Limits) Order 2005

The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (Fast Track Procedure) Rules 2005 are made in accordance with sections 106*(1)*-(3) and 112(3) of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 and section 40A(3) of the British Nationality Act 1981, after consulting with the Council on Tribunals in accordance with section 8 of the Tribunals and Inquiries Act 1992. These rules prescribe a fast track procedure for appeals and applications to the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, where the appellant is in detention under the Immigration Acts at the locations listed in schedule 2 to the rules. The rules come into force on 4 April 2005.

The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (Fast Track Time Limits) Order 2005 is made in accordance with sections 26(8) and (9) of the 2004 Act, after consulting with the Lord Chief Justice in accordance with section 26(10) of the 2004 Act. This order shortens the time limits for review applications made by parties to fast track appeals to the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal. These are referred to as section 103A applications.

For a transitional period, section 103A applications will initially be considered by a member of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal. If the tribunal member does not make an order for reconsideration or grant permission for the application to be made out of time, the applicant may notify the appropriate court, under paragraph 30(5)*(a)* of schedule 2 to the 2004 Act, that he wishes the court to consider the application.

This order reduces to two days the time limits for making the section 103A application and for giving notice under paragraph 30(5)*(a)*, in cases where the fast track procedure rules apply, so long as the appellant remains in detention when the application is made or notification is given. It comes into force on 4 April 2005.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Homelessness Strategy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): I am pleased to announce that the Government's new homelessness strategy "Sustainable Communities: Settled Homes; Changing Lives" has been launched today.

"Settled Homes; Changing Lives" follows on from our five year plans, "Homes for All" and "People, Places and Prosperity". It builds on our achievements to date in tackling the worst forms of homelessness. This has resulted in meeting challenging targets to significantly reduce rough sleeping since 1998 and put an end to the scandal of homeless families having to raise their children for long periods in cramped bed and breakfast hotels. It also sets out our plans for reducing homelessness further and halving the use of temporary accommodation by 2010.

I have placed copies of our strategy for tackling homelessness in both Libraries of the House. The Government response to the ODPM Select Committee report on Homelessness will be laid before Parliament today. Both documents are also available on the ODPM's website:

www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_control/documents/contentservertemplate/odpm_index.hcst?n=865&l=2

Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Amendment Regulations

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am announcing today the publication of a consultation document on draft regulations to amend the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.

The amendments implement the requirements of Article 3 of European Directive 2003/35/EC. This amends environmental impact assessment (EIA) requirements to bring them into line with the pubic participation provisions of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (also known as the Aarhus Convention), which was ratified by the UK on 23 February.

The EIA provisions are largely compliant with the Convention, and only a few changes to the current requirements are proposed. They include a requirement that supplementary information provided voluntarily by the applicant after the submission of an environmental statement should be subject to the same full public

consultation process as the statement itself, and that, when applications are determined, information about the public's participation and the right to challenge the validity of the decision should be made publicly available.

The consultation will run until 6 June 2005 and will apply to England only. Copies of the consultation document will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses and from The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website www.odpm.gov.uk.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Parliamentary Questions

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I should inform the House of inadvertent errors in the answers to two written parliamentary questions tabled by the hon. Members for Cotswold (Mr. Clifton-Brown) and for Ribble Valley (Mr. Evans) in November 2004.

The hon. Member for Cotswold asked:

> "How many written questions for his Department were unanswered when Parliament prorogued; and how many of the unanswered questions were tabled in each of the previous months of the 2003–04 Session". (201551)

I replied:

> "Seven. Of the seven, two were tabled in October 2004. Five were tabled in November 2004".

I regret that two further written parliamentary questions that received no answer in the 2003–04 Session have been identified. In addition, the original answer counted six questions that did receive a "prorogation answer" as not having been answered, and one of the six questions, tabled in September 2004, was wrongly attributed to October. I understand that Departments have dealt with this question in different ways and to be consistent with answers that the hon. Member has received to similar questions from other departments, we should exclude these "prorogation answers".

My revised answer to the hon. Member for Cotswold is therefore that three written parliamentary questions were unanswered when Parliament prorogued, of which one was tabled in December 2003, one in October 2004 and one in November 2004.

The hon. Member for Ribble Valley asked:

> "To how many written questions tabled in the last parliamentary session his Department had been unable to provide a substantive answer before the end of the Session". (199644)

I replied:

> "Seven. Of the seven, five were tabled shortly before the end of the parliamentary session".

As noted above, two further written parliamentary questions that received no answer have been identified. My revised answer to the hon. Member is therefore that nine questions did not receive a substantive answer before the end of the last parliamentary session. Of the nine, one was tabled in December 2003, one in September 2004, one in October 2004 and six in November 2004.

HEALTH

Moratorium on Genetics and Insurance

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): We are publishing today a new concordat and moratorium on genetics and insurance, which has been agreed between the Government and the Association of British Insurers (ABI). Copies have been placed in the Library. An electronic version has been placed on the Department of Health website at: www.dh.gov.uk/publications

The new framework, which comes into force today, provides that the use of genetic information by insurance companies will be transparent, fair, and subject to independent oversight. It will help to reassure patients who may be deterred from taking predictive genetic tests for fear of the insurance consequences, and is flexible enough to respond to fast-moving technological and clinical developments in genetic testing.

The concordat balances the interest of patients and insurers. Those seeking insurance should not withhold information relevant to underwriting, and insurers should not treat people who have an adverse predictive genetic test result less favourably than others, except as provided for in the concordat.

The moratorium on the use by insurers of predictive genetic test results is extended for an extra five years until 1 November 2011. No one will be required to disclose the results of a predictive genetic test unless it has been approved by the Genetics and Insurance Committee (GAIC) and is for insurance of more than £500,000 for life insurance or £300,000 for other health insurance. This means that for the vast majority of insurance policies genetic tests results will not be used at all.

The concordat clarifies the broad types of insurance for which predictive genetic test results may be relevant. They are life, critical illness, and income protection insurance policies. Insurers will not use the results from predictive genetic tests for travel insurance, private medical insurance, or any other one-off or annual policy, or for long-term care insurance.

The concordat also clarifies the circumstances when patients need not disclose genetic information, and how information will be handled by insurers.

For example, genetic tests taken as part of a research study will not need to be disclosed to insurers. This is good news for United Kingdom clinical researchers, as it specifically rules out the use by insurers of the results of genetic tests taken during participation in clinical trials, removing a potential obstacle to patient recruitment in the development of diagnostic tests, treatments, and medicines.

These commitments are backed up by independent oversight of the use of predictive genetic tests by GAIC together with the ABI's code of practice and an impartial complaint and arbitration process.

The Government would like to thank the Human Genetics Commission, GAIC, patient groups including Breakthrough Breast Cancer, CancerBACUP and the Alzheimer's Society, and other research groups and individuals who have provided valuable contributions that have helped shape this new concordat and moratorium on genetics and insurance.

The new framework means that insurance will continue to be available for people who take predictive genetic tests. They will only need to disclose the adverse results of predictive genetic tests for a limited range of unusually high value insurance polices—and then only if the predictive genetic test has been approved by GAIC. It is the Government's view that this approach is good news for individuals and insurance companies as it will ensure that the rights, safety and well-being of those taking predictive genetic tests are protected whilst also ensuring a viable and fair insurance market.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Regulation of Fundraising Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am today publishing proposals for consultation on the principles on which the Government will base its assessment of the success of the self-regulation of voluntary sector fundraising.

Self-regulation of fundraising was a recommendation of the Prime Minister's strategy unit review of the charitable and wider not-for-profit sector, "Private Action, Public Benefit". The Government accept the strategy unit recommendation for self-regulation of fundraising, and have made provision in the Charities Bill for statutory regulation should self-regulation fail.

The draft Charities Bill was subject to pre-legislative scrutiny by a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament. The report of the Joint Committee on the draft Charities Bill endorsed the self-regulation of fundraising initiative, and recommended that the Government publish for consultation the criteria in accordance with which my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary will judge whether self-regulation is working effectively.

Proposals for a regulation of fundraising scheme have recently been published by the Institute of Fundraising. The main aim of the scheme is to maintain and build on the high levels of public trust and confidence in the voluntary sector's fundraising activities. The scheme will help the sector guard against future threats to the high levels of public confidence, and to provide the sector with a platform to defend itself against criticism.

The principles in accordance with which the Government propose that the success of the regulation of fundraising scheme should be assessed include measures of participation, comprising the number of participating organisations, the proportion of fundraised income covered by scheme membership, and the range of organisations in the scheme's membership; and other measures such as the effectiveness of complaints handling, public awareness of the scheme, the promotion of best practice, the scheme's independence, effective sanctions for non-compliance, the impact of the scheme on non-members and effective liaison with other regulators.

In the scheme's initial years the focus would be on measuring the take-up of the scheme within the sector as it develops its membership. It is envisaged that a formal assessment of the success of self-regulation would take place as part of the review of the impact of the Charities Bill which is due to take place within five years of enactment, and would report to Parliament.

I am very grateful to all those who have contributed to the development of the proposals for the self-regulation of fundraising. I would particularly like to thank the

Institute of Fundraising for taking the lead in developing the scheme, Rodney Buse for considering and consulting on an appropriate model for self-regulation to adopt, and the members of the Steering Committee for their work in taking the proposals forward.

Copies of the consultation paper have been placed in the Library and will also be available on the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/ comerace/ active/charitylaw/index.html.

Details of the proposed self-regulation scheme are available on the Institute of Fundraising website at www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk.

Comments are requested by 3 June 2005 and a further statement will be made in due course.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

St. Helena

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): On 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS, I announced in a written statement that the Government would be undertaking feasibility and other investigatory work to determine how best to ensure access for St. Helena when St. Helena's passenger and supply ship, the RMS St. Helena, is withdrawn from scheduled service in or around 2010.

That work is now completed. We have looked not only at issues relating directly to access, but also at the potential of various access options to encourage the development of a vibrant island economy. This reflects our aim, shared with St. Helena, to achieve economic growth for the island.

We have decided that, subject to satisfactory contract bids and a rigorous environmental impact assessment, we will establish air access for St. Helena. This will entail providing an airport, with a 2,250m runway, near the eastern coast at Prosperous Bay plain. It will be capable of supporting the safe operation of long-haul jet aircraft, such as the Airbus A320 and Boeing 737–800. We will also provide advice to help establish regular air services; and we will support the St. Helena Government in taking advantage of the economic benefits that the new investment should bring to the island. All private sector investment interest will be considered on an equal footing.

For its part, amongst other supporting work, the St. Helena Government will review local legislation on inward investment, immigration and taxation. Our shared aim with St. Helena will be the creation of a policy environment, against a transformed background of good access, that will encourage sustainable economic development and progress for St. Helena and its community.

TRANSPORT

Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): The Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations 2005 were laid before Parliament today and will come into force on 4 April 2005. These new regulations implement Council Directive 2002/15/EC concerning the working time of persons performing mobile road transport activities.

To accompany the new regulations, we have also published

formal guidance on the new arrangements, and,

a regulatory impact assessment.

Copies of these documents have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The regulations, formal guidance and regulatory impact assessment follow public consultation—we have also placed copies of a summary of the consultation responses and the Government's subsequent conclusions in the Libraries of both Houses.

The new regulations will provide extra protection for drivers and crew of heavy goods and public service vehicles who carry out road transport activities covered by the EU drivers' hours rules—Regulation (EEC) 3820/85. The main provisions of the Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations 2005 are:

weekly working time is limited to an average of 48 hours (normally calculated over a four month reference period),

a maximum of 60 hours' work can be performed in a single week, so long as the average 48-hour limit is maintained,

night workers are restricted to 10 hours' working time in any 24-hour period,

there are break requirements tied to hours worked to supplement the break requirements linked to driving time in the driver's hours rules.

In addition, under the new regulations:

where there is either a collective agreement or a workforce agreement at company level between the employer and employees, companies will be able to use the derogations available under the directive:-

the four-month reference period for calculating the average 48-hour week can be extended to six months

the 10 hour limit (over a 24-hour period) for night workers can be exceeded, although the 60-hour weekly limit will still apply, and drivers will still have to respect the EU drivers hours rules

the definition of "night time" is a period between 00.00–04.00 for drivers and crew of goods vehicles and 01.00–05.00 for drivers and crew of passenger vehicles,

VOSA (DVTA—NI) will enforce the new regulations, primarily in response to complaints they receive,

workers who occasionally perform road transport activities will be subject to the Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended) rather than these new regulations.

Self-employed drivers will not be covered by the regulations until March 2009, as provided for in the directive.

The Government will review the new regulations and associated formal guidance in the light of practical experience.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Stakeholder Pensions

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): We have today laid regulations before Parliament to make the stakeholder pension suitable for inclusion in the new suite of stakeholder products. We are also publishing the Government's response to the consultation on the regulations and a copy has been placed in the Library.

There are two key changes to the stakeholder regulations. The first requires pension scheme providers to introduce lifestyling. The second amends the charge cap applicable to consumers.

"Lifestyling" is an established financial mechanism and means that a pension scheme member's savings will be moved gradually into less volatile investments at least five years before retirement, thus helping to reduce the risk of an unexpected drop in value in the period before retirement. Lifestyling will be a requirement where a person makes no choice about how his or her pension savings are to be invested. However, members will be able to opt out of lifestyling if they so choose.

The regulations also provide for an increase in the stakeholder pension charge cap. For new members of schemes from 6 April 2005, the annual management charge will be capped at 1.5 per cent. for the first 10 years of membership, decreasing to 1 per cent. thereafter. However charges for existing members will continue to be capped at 1 per cent. per annum.

The regulations come into effect on 6 April 2005.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 15 March 2005

TREASURY

Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Paul Boateng): Following the announcement that the Budget will take place on 16 March, HM Treasury plans to publish the Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2005 on Thursday, 7 April 2005.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Land Registry

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): The Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor has today set the following key performance targets for Her Majesty's Land Registry for 2005–06.

*Her Majesty's Land Registry key performance indicators and targets 2005–06**

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Speed:

Percentage of Official Copy and Search applications processed within two working days: 98 per cent.

Percentage of all registrations processed within 18 working days: 80 per cent.

Accuracy:

Percentage of registrations processed free of any error: 98.5 per cent.

Overall Satisfaction:

Percentage of customers who, overall, are very satisfied/ satisfied with the full range ofservices provided by Land Registry: Better than 95 per cent.

FINANCIAL:

Percentage return on average capital employed: 3.5 per cent.

Efficiency:

Cost per unit in cash terms[2] (real terms)[3]: £30.01[1] (£21.75)

[1] This is a milestone towards the HM Treasury agreed cost per unit target for 2006–07 of £28.81 in cash terms (£20.27 in real terms).

[2] Based on the GDP deflator issued by HM Treasury on 23rd December 2004 (base year 1992–93).

[3] The real terms unit cost in the base year of 1992–93 was £30.65.

CRITICAL ACTION POINTS

Customer Service:

Make scanned deeds referred to on the register available electronically via land Register Online

Land Registration:

Register for the first time an additional 5 per cent. of the area of freehold land in England and Wales

Electronic Service Delivery:

Provide a further data centre for business continuity purposes

Other Business Development:

Complete electronic document authentication prototyping.

* More information on these and other key targets is published in the Strategic and Business Plans.

National Enforcement Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My noble Friend the Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement:

"I am pleased to announce today plans for the introduction of a national enforcement service to take forward my commitment to ensuring the fullest possible compliance with court orders. For too long enforcement of court orders has been patchy and flawed. We have made real improvements in enforcement. The payment rate of fines now at 80 per cent. compared with just over 50 per cent. two years ago. But there is more to be done. The time has come for the next stage of reform.

My proposals involve the introduction of a robust national framework to deliver a single consistent enforcement process for the whole of England and Wales, and to deal robustly with offenders who fail to attend court, default on fine payments and breach community penalty orders. The launch of the new unified Her Majesty's Court Service next month, will allow us to put in place a cross-criminal justice system enforcement team that is more distinct, professional and better skilled. The specific remit of the national enforcement service will be to bear down on the hard core of offenders who consistently attempt to flout their obligations to the courts. This does not mean a new agency or department, but a better, more collaborative approach to tackling enforcement, which builds on the lessons learned from national initiatives including the recent "Operation Payback". Enforcement staff in the magistrates courts together with the police, the national probation service and other criminal justice agencies will form the core of the service.

Improving sentence compliance is key to building public confidence in the criminal justice system and the national enforcement service will do just that. The national enforcement service framework will be tested first across a region from April 2006 with the aim of full national rollout in 2007–08".

DEFENCE

Veterans Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I am announcing today that the key targets that have been set for the chief executive of the Veterans Agency (VA) for the financial year 2005–06 are as follows:

Service

KEY TARGET 1:

To issue decisions on claims to war pensions in an average of no more than 59 working days. This is an improvement of four working days on the agency's 2004–05 target; and it represents a cumulative improvement of 41 per cent. against the agency's 2000–01 baseline level of 100 working days.

KEY TARGET 2:

To issue decisions on war widows claims in an average of no more than 23 working days. This is an improvement of two working days on the agency's 2004–05 target; and it represents a cumulative improvement of 36 per cent. against the agency's 2000–01 baseline level of 36 working days.

KEY TARGET 3:

To achieve an externally-validated war pensions scheme claims accuracy rate of at least 97 per cent.

KEY TARGET 4:

To achieve an externally-validated AFCS claims accuracy rate of at least 97 per cent.

KEY TARGET 5:

To achieve an externally-validated medical adjudication accuracy rate of at least 97 per cent.

Working in Partnership

KEY TARGET 6:

To work with the Department for Constitutional Affairs Court Service to reduce the average time it takes an appeal to pass through the war pensions appeals process. By 31 March 2006 the average time should reduce to no more than 225 working days. This is an improvement of 15 working days on the agency's 2004–05 target; and it represents a cumulative improvement of 60 per cent. against its 2000–01 baseline level of 565 working days.

Efficiency

KEY TARGET 7:

To use the agency output costing methodology developed in 2002–03 to help identify and generate such administrative efficiencies and other savings as will enable the agency to achieve a 3 per cent. reduction in 2005–06 against a comparable 2004–05 final out-turn figure.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Commercial Property Leases

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Further to my statement of 24 February about Reading University's final report on the impact of the property industry's 2002 code of practice for commercial leases, I wish to announce our conclusions following the completion of the research and our own consultation exercise last year on upward only rent review clauses.

The Government continue to be concerned about flexibility in the commercial property market. The Reading report shows that the property market has become more flexible, notably with continuing trends towards shorter leases and break clauses, and I welcome these. However, there are still areas of inflexibility.

The Reading report indicates that the major problems are now inflexible assignment and subletting provisions in leases. These can make it difficult for tenants to dispose of properties they no longer need for their business. We intend to undertake a review of the law of assignment and subletting, with the aim of easing the position for tenants while not jeopardising property investment, including looking at legislative options.

We continue to have concerns about the prevalence of upward only rent review clauses in longer leases. The Reading report shows that their impact has been diminishing, as fewer leases contain any form of rent review provisions, and that tenants are currently more concerned about inflexible assignment and subletting provisions than they are about upward only rent reviews. We do however believe that further progress in this area is necessary to improve the flexibility of the market. We will therefore continue to monitor the situation and retain the option to legislate in future if necessary. But we do not propose to legislate against upward only rent review clauses at present.

The other major area of concern is the continuing lack of awareness of property issues among small businesses. The Reading report shows that many small businesses fail to obtain the best leasing terms available because they lack essential information about the leasing environment and the local market. There is a need for action by both the Government and the property industry.

We are asking the property industry to undertake a joint review of the code of practice, to carry out a renewed campaign to disseminate the code and provide an effective mechanism for dealing with complaints. We want to make sure that everyone negotiating a lease adopts the code.

We will be undertaking a further monitoring exercise over the next three years, and we will be looking for further movement on flexibility. We believe that achieving greater flexibility in the market is extremely important and that further market reform is essential.

We shall be inviting the property industry to join us in practical steps to improve small business knowledge of property matters.

We will shortly be making available on our website a summary of the responses to the consultation paper on upward only rent reviews. We will be placing copies of individual responses in the Library of the House while copies will also be available for public inspection in the ODPM Library.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Statutory Levy Bodies

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): In responding to Lord Haskins' report, the Government stated that they would commission an independent, fundamental review of the GB and UK statutory levy-funded agriculture and horticulture organisations.

We have, with colleagues in the devolved Administrations, now agreed the terms of reference for the review and a copy of them has been placed in the House today. The review will encompass the British Potato Council, the Home Grown Cereals Authority, the Horticultural Development Council, the Meat and Livestock Commission, and the Milk Development Council, taking as given the devolution of agricultural policy and the federal bodies created post-devolution under the umbrella of the Meat and Livestock Commission.

I am pleased to announce that Rosemary Radcliffe, formerly chief economist at PricewaterhouseCoopers and until recently independent complaints commissioner for the Financial Services Authority, has agreed to conduct the review. Rosemary will formally start her work on 4 April, and she will submit her report, to UK and devolved Administration Ministers, by the end of October.

Further details and information on how people may submit their views to the review have been placed in the Library of the House and are available on Defra's website.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iran (Body Armour)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Chris Mullin): In March 2005, after consultation with the Ministry of Defence and the export control organisations, DTI, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office donated armoured vests and body armour plates to the Iranian Anti-Narcotics Police (ANP). This gift was to provide an element of protection for the ANP in their work of countering drugs smuggling from Afghanistan. We are satisfied that these goods would only be used for anti-narcotics operations and are therefore prepared to make an exception to the UK national embargo announced in 1993, as amended in 1998.

We are fully committed to implementing the UK embargo on Iran. However, we are, in limited circumstances, prepared to make exceptions where denying an export or a gift would be contrary to the intention of the embargo. As the UK has been active in encouraging and assisting Iran with combating the smuggling of drugs from Afghanistan, I am confident that granting this exception is fully consistent with this responsible approach of supporting the ANP whilst respecting the aims of the embargo.

A departmental minute announcing the intention to make the gift was laid before Parliament on 22 February.

All export licences, F680s and Crown immunity gifts are considered on a case by case basis judged against the consolidated and national arms export licensing criteria.

HEALTH

Health (Patient and Public Involvement)

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Government have today published its response to the recent consultation exercise on the future support arrangements for patient and public involvement in health.

The main features of the response include:

- combining patients' forums in primary care trust areas into single forums but notreducing the number of forum members;
- requiring forums to have chairs who will be appointed by the NHS Appointments Commission. These appointments will be made with the full involvement of forum members;
- the development of a national resource centre in patient and public involvement that will assist both the NHS and patients' forums in their respective responsibilities in relation to patient and public involvement.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

Copies of the consultation findings as well as the Government's response are also available on the Department's website.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Bichard Inquiry

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): Today I have received further comments from Sir Michael Bichard regarding progress made in implementing the recommendations of his inquiry. Copies have been placed in the Library of the House. A progress report was made to Sir Michael in December last year, and copies placed in the Library in January. I should like to thank Sir Michael for his commitment and hard work both in the conduct of the inquiry and in his recent review of progress.

I welcome Sir Michael's comment that he has been impressed by the positive and energetic response to his recommendations. He accepts that significant progress has been made and is pleased at the positive response to his report, particularly from the police service.

In recognising this progress, Sir Michael goes on to make a number of further recommendations, aimed primarily at ensuring the effective implementation of his report findings, particularly those which give rise to long term and complex new arrangements for the management and sharing of information. These include the development of national IT infrastructure to support the handling of police information, a code of practice and detailed supporting guidance for the management and sharing of police information, and a registration scheme relating to persons wishing to work with children or vulnerable adults.

In these areas I am pleased to accept in principle Sir Michael's recommendations that careful monitoring should be in place to check on progress, that the necessary links must be made between different aspects

of the programme, and that appropriate budget allocations must be made to ensure effective implementation. I also accept the need for closer working between the United Kingdom jurisdictions to ensure that there are no loopholes to be exploited between the systems operating in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This co-operation has featured as an important element of the implementation work so far. I will also look to strengthen the work being undertaken with foreign jurisdictions from which large numbers of staff come to the United Kingdom to work with children and vulnerable adults.

I shall be considering the detail of Sir Michael's comments with ministerial colleagues, and a full response will be sent to Sir Michael shortly. This will be placed in the Library of the House. I am happy to accept Sir Michael's recommendation that further progress reports should be made available to Parliament and to the public in six and 12 months' time.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Departments (Cash Requirement)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): As a consequence of additional allocations made to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety since Parliament's approval of estimates in July 2004, the Department has an additional cash requirement in respect of health and social services boards and trusts.

Parliamentary approval for additional cash to finance these services is currently being sought in a supplementary estimate for DHSSPS. Pending that approval urgent cash needs, estimated at £143 million, will be met by repayable advances from the NI Consolidated Fund.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pathways to Work

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Alan Johnson): On the 30 November 2004 we published an early summary of administrative data from the pathways to work pilots in helping people claiming incapacity benefits to get back to work. Today I would like to provide a further update on the pilots' performance.

The pathways to work pilots are a major step forward in the reform of incapacity benefits and in the way people with a health condition or disability are helped back to work. Under the pathways pilots Jobcentre Plus and the NHS work positively together to re-focus people on their remaining abilities and their own aspirations for a return to work. The pilots offer all claimants access to:

- support from a highly skilled Jobcentre Plus personal adviser offering support and contact especially in the early stages of a claim when people can be most readily helped back to work;
- groundbreaking rehabilitation support offered jointly with the NHS in each pilot area so that claimants can be supported to manage and cope with their health condition (e.g. back pain, angina, mental illness) so they can get back to work;
- strong local partnerships with the New Deal for Disabled People—voluntary and private sector employment advisers;
- a £40 a week return to work credit for a year once they get jobs so that it pays to get back to work;
- work with local GPs and employers to ensure people on IB are not discouraged from working again.

The pathways pilots have targeted new IB claimants and existing claimants who volunteer. From last month the mandatory elements of the pathways approach have been tested with some existing claimants.

The latest figures from the pathways to work pilots (including data up to the end of December) continue to be very encouraging. I am placing a copy of the findings in the Library. In particular they show that:

- well over 10,000 people have now been placed into work in pathways pilot areas—these numbers include over 2,000 existing claimants for whom participation in this pilot has been entirely voluntary;
- the number of recorded job entries for people with a health condition or disability has almost doubled compared with same period last year;
- the proportion of people leaving IB for work within six months of a claim starting appears to be significantly higher in pathways than non-pathways areas. Benefit off-flow rates are up to 10 percentage points higher compared to the rest of the country;
- performance appears very positive in both Phase 1 (the three areas that started in October 2003) and Phase 2 locations (the four areas that started in April 2004);
- between 20 and 25 per cent. of those attending an initial WFI are taking up Jobcentre Plus, New Deal or NHS back to work support. This is around six times higher than the proportions accessing back to work support in the rest of the country. In Jobcentre Plus Pathfinder areas the figures are closer to around 4 per cent. and in the rest of the country 2 per cent.

These continuing, positive findings have formed the backdrop to the announcement made on 2 December 2004 by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the pre-Budget report he announced a plan to expand pathways to work to cover the Jobcentre Plus districts that contained the 30 local authority districts with the greatest proportions of the working age population on incapacity benefits.

The positive response of claimants and advisers and NHS staff to this radical initiative have also firmly shaped the detail of the DWP's five-year strategy and our plans to abolish incapacity benefit for new claimants and replace it with payments that more actively incentivise and support all those with the potential to get back to work to realise their own aspirations for doing so. I aim to publish a Green Paper setting out more details on these proposals in July.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 16 March 2005

TREASURY

Debt and Reserves Management

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Timms): The Debt and Reserves Management report 2005–06 is being published today. Copies will be available in the Library of the House at the conclusion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget statement.

Invest to Save—Inclusive Communities Fund

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Paul Boateng): I am pleased to announce that 37 bids from across the public and voluntary sectors have been successful in round 7 of the Invest to Save Budget at a cost of £37 million in total over the three years to 2007–08 for England. The allocated sum rises to £43 million to include consequential funding for the devolved Administrations. Details of the winners of this round have been placed in the Library of the House.

The Invest to Save Budget (ISB) provides support for projects that increase the extent of joint working between different parts of Government; identify innovative ways of delivering public services; and reduce the cost of delivering the services and/or improve the quality and effectiveness of services delivered to the public.

This, the seventh round of the ISB, concentrates on the priority areas of:

Health and Social Care for Older People;

Employment for People from Black and Ethnic Minority Communities;

Correctional Services;

Hostel Provision for Homeless People;

Support for Parents and Learning Services for Adults; and

Integration for People from Ethnic Minorities.

Winning projects must agree an implementation plan with the sponsor departments. Each project must provide six-monthly progress reports and carry out an evaluation of its success once it has been completed. Wider dissemination of the good practice from completed projects is then fed back into the whole spectrum of public service providers.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Private Finance Initiative (Fire and Rescue Authorities)

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): Today I am inviting all English fire and rescue authorities to bid for a share of £150 million of credits available through the private finance initiative (PFI). This considerable new investment is available to help fire and rescue authorities to deliver some of the key assets that they need to keep building a better more effective and efficient service that saves more lives.

Over the past five years fire and rescue authorities have used £200 million PFI credits successfully to provide innovative new fire stations, training centres, headquarters, a vehicle fleet and other equipment. I am confident that fire and rescue authorities will have plenty of ideas for what they could deliver with a share of the £150 million credits now available. I look forward to receiving their proposals.

This investment re-confirms the Government's commitment to meeting their public sector agreement (PSA) target by 2010 to reduce the number of accidental fire-related deaths in the home by 20 per cent. and the number of deliberate fires by 10 per cent.

It comes on top of the Government's already significant investment in new assets for the English fire and rescue service. We are investing heavily in a new radio system and regional control centres and up to £188 million in mass decontamination and urban search and rescue equipment and training. Plus we have announced a £25 million fire prevention package to provide free smoke alarms and fire safety advice to one and a quarter million vulnerable households, mainly in deprived areas, in England over the period 2004–08. Every English fire and fire and rescue authority will again receive an above inflation increase in grant in 2005–06 and will receive a share of £57.98 million in supported capital expenditure.

Fire and rescue authorities have been asked to submit initial expressions of interest by 31 May 2005 and have until 7 October 2005 to submit indicative bids for the £150 million of credits to ODPM.

Copies of the fire service circular announcing the bidding round are available in the Libraries of both Houses and are on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: www.odpm.gov.uk.

HEALTH

People with Learning Disabilities (Premature Deaths)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am announcing today the first stage of a confidential inquiry into premature deaths among people with learning disabilities. The Department of Health has asked the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA), which is taking responsibility for confidential inquiries from April 2005, to carry out a scoping study to establish the best way to conduct the inquiry.

The Government's White Paper "Valuing People", published in 2001, included as one of its main objectives improvements in the health of people with learning disabilities. In particular, it highlighted the need to address evidence of health inequalities. The Government have taken action to address this, primarily through asking learning disability partnership boards to develop plans for health action planning in their local areas. But "Valuing People" also noted that there was cause for concern about evidence of avoidable illness and premature deaths, and included an undertaking to look at the feasibility of establishing a confidential inquiry into mortality among people with learning disabilities.

The Department has held wide-ranging discussions with experts and stakeholders and has determined that an inquiry would not only be practicable but would also provide valuable information about the health care of people with learning disabilities. Health care for this group has also continued to be raised as a matter of concern for organisations such as Mencap and the Disability Rights Commission.

Professor Sir John Lilleyman (Medical Director, NPSA) is the lead director for confidential inquiries and will be in charge of the management of the scoping exercise. The research will be overseen, managed and commissioned by Professor Richard Lilford's team at the University of Birmingham.

Our intention is that this inquiry should be carried out in a new and more flexible style compared to previous inquiries. It will be time-limited and produce results that can then be used to inform practice. The confidential investigation of health care histories of people with learning disabilities will be complex, since it will in many cases need to cover care provided in a variety of settings, for example residential care homes. The scoping project I have announced today is the first step to a full-scale inquiry and will also provide valuable information in its own right about the health care of people with learning disabilities.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Magilligan Prison

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): The Government have received a report from HM chief inspector of prisons and the chief inspector of criminal justice in Northern Ireland, Kit Chivers. The report is on an announced inspection of Magilligan prison and has today been published.

The Government warmly welcome this report which recognises not only areas of good practice, but helpfully, identifies a number of areas for improvement. I shall be considering very carefully the report's recommendations. I have no doubt that the report will be of value in informing and re-assuring the public, and is helpful to the managers and staff who are involved in this challenging area of work.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 17 March 2005

TREASURY

Finance Bill

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): It is expected that the Finance Bill will be published on Thursday 24 March. Explanatory notes on the Bill's clauses will be available in the Vote Office (and the Printed Paper Office, House of Lords) and the Libraries of both Houses on that day. The explanatory notes will be available from the Stationery Office bookshops and on the Treasury's website at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

DCMS Five-year plan

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): I am publishing today the Department's five-year plan, "Living Life to the Full". Copies will be deposited in the House Libraries and the plan will be available on the DCMS website.

The plan sets our course for the next five years and builds on the significant progress that we have made in recent years. It sets out our achievements, our goals and the practical steps we will take to achieve them in the years ahead.

The fabric of this country and the quality of life we all experience are improving rapidly. The average proportion of household income spent on leisure nearly doubled between 1977 and 2002. We all expect more choice and higher quality. At the same time, opportunities are expanding to enjoy the arts, visit museums and galleries, to play sport, to travel, access the world's best media and prosper in the creative industries.

We have come a long way. In 2001 we introduced free admission to national museums and galleries—resulting in a record number of visits—34 million last year. Creative partnerships—bringing the experience and stimulation of culture to young people in deprived areas—will see 450,000 young people involved by this time next year. We recently published the BBC Green Paper setting out the framework for a strong BBC independent of Government. We are investing £1 billion in sports facilities to benefit every community. Working in partnership with the Department for Education and Skills we have ensured that more than half of all children in school do a weekly minimum of two hours' PE and school sport, up from a quarter in 2002. We are putting our wholehearted support behind London's bid to bring the Olympics to this country in 2012.

But there are still too many people who do not know about the opportunities available to them or who are not able to afford the cost of their talent. There are parents who cannot afford to support their children in making the most of their creativity and skills; adults who do not know how to get involved in local cultural and sporting opportunities; young people who miss out on formative experiences.

In the plan we make 10 commitments covering the key areas where the Department, working together with our partners in our sponsored bodies, in local government, in the voluntary and private sectors, can make a real difference.

We will work to build a comprehensive offer to young people on culture—known as creative sparks. We will review how national lottery money has been spent so far on arts, sport, heritage and film projects, and then consult about how proceeds should be spent in these areas after 2009. We will continue to improve our support for elite athletes, rewarding success with the talented athlete and 2012 scholarships. We will persuade nearly half a million adults per year to become physically active. We will complete our programme to replace outdated licensing and gambling laws, balancing personal freedom and prosperity with strengthening protection for the vulnerable. We will provide a virtual high-street for tourism and leisure offering an information and booking service to online users.

The title of the plan is "Living Life to the Full". Quite simply that is what our sectors can offer—the ability for everyone to live their lives and develop their talents to the fullest extent. So the aim of our five-year plan is straightforward, yet ambitious—making the quality of life in this country world-class and giving everyone the chance to taste it.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Revised Spatial Strategy (East Midlands) and Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is today publishing the revised regional spatial strategy for the east midlands (RSS8) and the Milton Keynes and south midlands sub-regional strategy (MKSM SRS). This follows public examinations on the draft revised RPG8 and the MKSM SRS and subsequent public consultations on proposed changes to both documents.

Copies of the revised RSS and MKSM SRS, together with the related statements of changes and summary of representations, are available in both Libraries of the House. These have also been provided for all the region's MPs, MEPs and local authorities. Documents are also available via the ODPM and regional government office web-sites: www.odpm.gov.uk; www.gose.gov.uk; www.go-em.gov.uk; www.go-east.gov.uk

Regional spatial strategy for the east midlands (RSS8)

RPG8 was issued by the Secretary of State in January 2002 to provide a broad development strategy for the east midlands up to 2021. This also represented the "spatial" element of the east midlands integrated regional strategy (IRS) and provided the framework for meeting the region's development needs in a way that promotes a more sustainable pattern of development.

The revised RSS, issued today, is more concise, more regionally specific, more focused on delivery and has cross-references to national policy rather than repetition. However the RSS also incorporates relevant parts of the MKSM SRS, including increased housing figures for Northamptonshire. Elsewhere in the region housing provision figures were not reviewed but these will be re-examined in the next RSS review, which will be conducted under the spatial planning principles required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.

Other new elements in the revised RSS include:

A revised regional transport strategy, which has been informed by a number of major studies in the region, and revised indicative targets and timescales for transport schemes;

A criteria-based policy for renewable energy projects;

A new map of natural and cultural assets;

Proposals for sub-regional strategies in parts of the region, including the area around Nottingham, Derby and Leicester (the "three cities"), the northern coalfield area of north Nottinghamshire and north Derbyshire and an area around Lincoln (the Lincoln policy area); and

A new appendix which indicates how policies are to be implemented and measured.

Milton Keynes & South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy

This relates to one of the four growth areas set out in the Government's sustainable communities plan published in February 2003, and covers Northamptonshire and parts of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Its largest urban centres are Milton Keynes, Northampton, Luton-Dunstable-Houghton Regis and Bedford-Kempston.

One of the key objectives of the plan is to increase housing supply and particularly to facilitate the building of more affordable houses in the area. The final sub-regional strategy, being published today, sets out the scale and form of development up to 2021 and will provide strategic direction for local authorities, local delivery vehicles and other delivery bodies.

The strategy incorporates amendments following public consultation on the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the draft strategy prepared by the regional assemblies for the east of England, the east midlands and the south-east. The strategy has also taken account of the recommendations of the independent panel following the five week public examination held in March and April 2004.

Key issues that emerged from the public consultation include:

The importance of infrastructure provision to enable growth;

The need for economic growth as well as housing growth;

Clarification of the status of some key transport projects;

Community safety—the need to create neighbourhoods designed to minimise crime and antisocial behaviour;

The applicability of affordable housing targets for Milton Keynes and Aylesbury;

The need to place greater emphasis on regeneration in Luton and issues of green belt review around the town;

The reintroduction of possible directions of growth around Northampton.

The Secretary of State has carefully considered these issues along with all representations submitted, and has made a number of amendments to the final document in response.

The sub-regional strategy constitutes revisions to the regional spatial strategies for the south-east, east of England and east midlands and will therefore form part of the statutory policy basis for the preparation of local development documents by local planning authorities within the sub-region. It is at this stage that detailed site specific proposals will be brought forward and this process will provide further opportunities for public consultation and stakeholder involvement.

Increasing the supply of homes and affordable housing in the wider south-east is essential to promote sustainable communities, and it is critical that the scale of growth is itself sustainable. This means that new communities must have the infrastructure that they need such as schools, transport and health facilities. The sub-regional strategy will help ensure that brownfield land is used first, improve the environmental efficiency of homes, and create new green spaces and places that will stand the test of time.

HEALTH

Non-medical Professional Regulation

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): On 27 January I announced that the chief medical officer for England had agreed to carry out a review of the revalidation of doctors and related matters, following concerns expressed by Dame Janet Smith in her fifth report from the Shipman inquiry. Dame Janet focused her inquiries, as her remit required, on the medical profession. However if changes are proposed to the arrangements for doctors, it is likely that they will have important implications for the regulatory arrangements for the other health professions, particularly where their roles are changing. And there may be other implications. I have therefore asked Mr. Andrew Foster, director of workforce, to lead a review of non-medical professional regulation. This review will run in parallel to the review into medical issues being conducted by Sir Liam Donaldson. It will consider and advise me about the measures needed to:

strengthen procedures for ensuring that the performance or conduct of non-medical health professionals and other health care staff does not pose a threat to patient safety or the effective functioning of services, particularly focusing on the effective and fair operation of fitness to practise procedures;

ensure the operation of effective systems of continuing professional development and appraisal for non-medical health care staff and make progress towards regular revalidation where this is appropriate;

ensure the effective regulation of health care staff working in new roles within the healthcare sector and of other staff in regular contact with patients.

In the light of the above, it will further consider and recommend any changes needed to the role, structure, functions and number of regulators of non-medical healthcare professional staff. The director of workforce is likely to report his conclusions and recommendations to me towards the end of the year.

As with CMO's Review, there will be an advisory group, which will include experts from non-medical regulators and from the NHS. A larger reference group, which will include education and training bodies and

professional organisations as well as consumer and healthcare quality interests, will also support this process.

The members of the advisory group are:

Andrew Foster (Chair)	Director of Workforce, Department of Health (DH)
Chris Beasley	Chief Nursing Officer
Kay East	Chief Health Professions Officer
Prof Sue Hill	Chief Scientific Officer
Prof Raman Bedi	Chief Dental Officer
Dr Jim Smith	Chief Pharmaceutical Officer
Harry Cayton	Director of Patient and Public, DH
Jane Wesson	Chairman, Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (CHRE)
Sandy Forrest	Director, CHRE
Steve Barnet	Director, NHS Employers
Alastair Henderson	Deputy Director, NHS Employers
Jonathan Asbridge	President, Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
Sarah Thewlis	Chief Executive, NMC
Norma Brook	President, Health Professions Council (HPC)
Marc Seale	Chief Executive, HPC
Nic Greenfield	Deputy Director-Workforce, DH
Steve Catling	Head of Professional Standards, DH

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tsunami

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): The 26 December 2004 tsunami brought destruction to coastal areas of South and South-East Asian countries and claimed over 273,000 lives, leaving millions of people in need of assistance.

DFID committed £75 million to the immediate relief effort, some £66 million of which has already been allocated to United Nations agencies, the Red Cross movement, and non-government organisations, or spent through DFID direct action or donations in kind.

The British public has responded with unprecedented generosity to this disaster. Appeals such as that of the Disasters Emergency Committee have had an overwhelming response.

DFID will now contribute up to £65 million for longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction. This is likely to be channelled mainly through the trust funds that are being set up in affected countries. Our response will be guided by the findings of needs assessments currently being finalised, and by the level of resources already available to affected countries. Our assistance towards longer-term reconstruction will not be at the expense of DFID funding for other emergencies or existing programmes.

Nepal

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): Earlier today, I informed the Government of Nepal that the Department for International Development was ending support to Nepal's police, prison services and the Prime Minister's office. A total of £2.4 million had been committed but £1.3 million remains unspent and will now be cancelled.

This follows the dismissal of the Government by King Gyanendra of Nepal on 1 February. Since then, the UK Government have been carrying out an initial assessment of the implications for our development partnership with Nepal. Assistance will continue to be kept under review.

The criteria against which decisions on DFID assistance are made are the ability to make an effective contribution towards the millennium development goals and the safety and security of staff. We need to ensure that our programmes can continue to benefit poor and excluded people in Nepal. It is vital that the Government of Nepal maintain agreed financial allocations to essential development services, such as health and education, and not divert them to other purposes.

Along with the rest of the international donor community, the safety and welfare of staff carrying out development programmes, especially those in the field, is of paramount importance. We will not continue programmes in the face of increased and unacceptable risk or interference. The UK has called on both parties to the violent conflict in Nepal to ensure that the international community can continue to provide the development assistance that is needed to provide essential services to the poor. The Department for International Development will press for concrete measures by both sides to affirm that they will do everything in their power to safeguard poverty reduction programmes and staff.

We are deeply concerned about human rights in Nepal and will continue to work with others in the international community to encourage democracy in Nepal, the full protection of human rights by both parties to the conflict and progress towards a peace process.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Company Law Reform

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I am pleased to announce that we are today publishing a White Paper setting out proposals for a Company Law Reform Bill.

These proposals result from a comprehensive review of company law, which we initiated in 1998. In 2001 we received the final report from the company law review, an independent group of experts, practitioners and business people. The White Paper also takes account of international and other developments. We are very grateful for the input of a wide range of interested parties into the proposals we are bringing forward today.

The White Paper sets out a range of measures designed to further four crucial objectives: to enhance shareholder engagement and a long term investment culture; to ensure better regulation and a "Think Small First" approach; to make it easier to set up and run a company; and to provide flexibility for the future.

The proposals are part of a wider programme of action to facilitate enterprise, encourage investment and promote long-term company performance. We brought forward legislation to strengthen regulation of the accounting and audit profession and to allow a new type

of community enterprise company. We have laid draft regulations for quoted companies to produce an operating and financial review and we have introduced greater transparency by quoted companies on directors' remuneration. We have taken smaller companies out of the need for an audit. We have also worked with market participants to strengthen corporate governance and shareholder engagement.

The measures set out in the White Paper represent a significant step forward in ensuring that our law remains up to date, flexible, and accessible for all those who use it. By making company law better fitted to today's realities, the measures should create improved performance across the economy as whole. They could also produce cost savings for business of some £250 million a year. The proposals will help ensure that Britain remains one of the best places in the world to set up and run a business.

TRANSPORT

Community Infrastructure Fund

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty): Earlier this year local transport authorities and delivery partners in the four growth areas submitted preliminary information about transport projects that would assist new housing development in support of bids for grant from the Government's new £200 million community infrastructure fund.

Following discussions with Ministerial colleagues in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we are today announcing the projects that we have selected for more detailed appraisal ahead of final decisions in the autumn. A list of the projects to be taken forward to the next stage is being placed in the Library of the House.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 18 March 2005

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Funding of Horseracing

The Minister for Sport and Tourism (Mr. Richard Caborn): It remains the Government's view that commercial agreements between the relevant parties provide the appropriate long-term basis for the funding of racing. However, in the light of a judgment by the European Court of Justice last September it has become clear that the British Horseracing Board is not in a position to proceed immediately with its plans to fund racing by the sale of database rights in place of the current statutory levy. Following consultations with the Horserace Betting Levy Board, the British Horseracing Board and the Association of British Bookmakers, I have therefore accepted the interim recommendations made by the independent review group, chaired by Lord Donoughue, that more time is needed to develop the commercial options and that it is in the public interest in the well-being of the sport that the levy arrangements should therefore remain in place for a further limited period. We will accordingly be making an order under part 2 of the Horserace Betting and Olympic Lottery Act 2004 to end the levy on 31 March 2009, and to close the levy board six months later.

I welcome the agreement of the parties that Lord Donoughue's group should continue to explore the commercial options, considering all areas relating to the funding of racing which it believes are relevant to establishing appropriate post-levy arrangements, with a view to preparing a final report this autumn. It will then be for the British Horseracing Board and the other parties to work towards putting agreed arrangements in place to meet the above timescale.

In the meantime it is important that racing continues to take forward the modernisation of its structures, with priority being given to the establishment of an independent regulatory authority.

It is also important that, both now and after the ending of the levy arrangements, there continues to be proper financial support for the advancement of veterinary science and education and for the improvement of breeds of horses, which are the levy board's other statutory purposes. I have therefore made clear the Government's wish to see the board, while it continues in being, take over the funding commitments previously given by the British Horseracing Board in respect of the Equine Fertility Unit and the equine genome project; to maintain support for veterinary science and education at 2.5 per cent. of levy income and for breed societies at no less than current levels; to take forward consideration of the establishment of a university chair in the field of equine veterinary science; and to complete the grant to the National Stud, for which budget provision was previously made, on the stud's proposed re-establishment as an independent charitable trust.

I wish to place on record my appreciation of the work of the members and staff of the levy board, who have been contending with an extended period of uncertainty, and of their commitment to running the levy arrangements effectively for longer than had previously been expected.

I am aware that other sports, particularly football, have also been affected by the ECJ judgement. I have met with representatives from the football industry and I look forward to working with them, as I have done with racing, as they develop their own solutions to the funding difficulties arising from this ruling.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Local Air Pollution Control

The Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): Charges to cover the costs of local enforcing authorities in regulating processes which are subject to part I of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Local Air Pollution Control (LAPC)) were introduced in April 1991. Interim charges for installations which are subject to the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 (Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control (LAPPC) and Local Authority—Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (LA-IPPC)) were introduced in August 2000.

With the approval of the Treasury to the extent required, and following consultation with local authority associations and industry, myself with my right hon. and noble Friend the Minister for Farming, Food and Sustainable Energy have made revised schemes in respect of the Environmental Protection Act and in respect of the Pollution Prevention and Control Act. The schemes specify the scale of fees and charges to take effect from 1 April 2005.

There will be a 37 per cent. increase to the LA-IPPC application fees (plus any increase in the EA fees for 2005–06) and a 5 per cent. increase to all other LAPC, LAPPC and the LA-IPPC fees and charges for 2005–06. The basis of these increases is set out in the regulatory impact assessment which is available on the Defra website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/airquality/lapc/charges/default.htm.

Some minor amendments to the schemes have also been made in the light of consultation with local authorities and industry.

The schemes have been laid today before both Houses and copies placed in the Libraries.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Gibraltar Exempt Companies Scheme

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): On 21 January 2005, the European Commission proposed terms for the continuation of the Gibraltar exempt companies scheme under certain conditions leading to its phasing out by 31 December 2010. These terms have been the subject

matter of intensive negotiations and agreement between the Commission, the UK Government and the Government of Gibraltar.

The terms are as follows:

The total number of exempt companies will be 8,464.

Existing exempt companies will be able to continue to benefit from their tax exempt status until 31 December 2010.

Existing exempt companies that change legal or beneficial ownership and/or activity between 19 February 2005 and 30 June 2006 will be able to benefit from their tax exempt status until 31 December 2007.

Existing exempt companies that change legal or beneficial ownership and/or activity after 30 June 2006 will lose their tax exempt status.

New exempt companies can be formed up to 30 June 2006. This will be on the following basis:

In 2005, the number of new exempt companies that can be formed shall not exceed 60 per cent. of the number of exempt companies leaving the regime in 2005, or in any event, 823.

From 1 January to 30 June 2006, the number of new exempt companies that can be formed shall not exceed 50 per cent. of the number of exempt companies leaving the regime during that period, or in any event the number of exempt companies admitted in 2005.

New exempt companies will be able to continue to benefit from their tax exempt status until 31 December 2007.

Regular reports shall be submitted to the EC Commission certifying compliance with the above.

The UK Government (as the member state responsible for Gibraltar's external affairs) accepted these terms on behalf of the Government of Gibraltar on 18 February 2005. On the same day the Government of Gibraltar issued a press statement indicating how it would implement the appropriate measures. Copies of this press statement are being placed in the Library of the House.

HEALTH

Arm's Length Bodies

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): On 30 November 2004, *Official Report*, columns 24–27WS, I announced the publication of an implementation framework for reconfiguring the Department of Health's arm's length bodies (ALBs) and achieving its three overarching objectives:

A 50 per cent. reduction in the number of ALBs

A saving in expenditure by ALBs of £0.5 billion by 2007–08; and

A reduction in posts of 25 per cent in the same period.

The ALB change programme is part of a wider programme to improve efficiency and cut bureaucracy in the management of the National Health Service. The aim of these activities is to reduce the burden on the front line and free up more resources for the delivery of front-line services to patients and users. This wider programme is to ensure that the increased investment in the NHS—42 per cent. in real terms from 2003–04 to 2007–08—is accompanied by modernisation that cuts out waste.

Today I am announcing the achievement of a further milestone towards the ALB change programme's key objectives. In November 2004 we made the following commitment as a first step towards our savings target on ALB expenditure:

"Even with these new functions, which bring new costs, we will be setting the 2005–06 budget for the ALB sector so that it will cost about £100 million a year less to run than in 2003–04."

I am pleased to report that I am today setting budgets for the operating costs of ALBs for 2005–06 which will reduce Department of Health funding by in excess of £150 million compared with 2003–04. This is despite the fact that in 2004–05 the ALB sector assumed new functions agreed by Parliament that increased the sector's costs substantially. A significant proportion of the savings generated in Department of Health funding will be redeployed for investment in front-line healthcare. We have additionally provided some £50 million to fund one-off identified costs in ALBs. This includes initiatives which will deliver savings in future years and enable us to continue the downward trend in operating costs for the ALB sector when we set budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–08.

In setting the 2005–06 budgets, we have:

Invested in ALBs which deliver front-line healthcare, like the National Blood Authority (an increase in Department of Health funding of more than £38 million over 2003–04), or carry out crucial work to protect public health, like the Health Protection Agency (an increase in Department of Health funding of more than £36 million over 2003–04).

Achieved the greatest savings in ALBs which provide central services to front-line NHS organisations. The reduction in Department of Health funding for this group of ALBs comes to more than £220 million compared to 2003–04 and provides a lower cost-base for overheads in future years.

Met our commitment that spending on ALBs undertaking inspection and regulation will not exceed 0.4 per cent. per cent. of the national spend on the NHS and social care, and made progress on our policy of full cost recovery for work relating to the independent health and social care sector.

Alongside these savings, we are also on course for ALBs to generate very substantial savings for the NHS front line by improving the efficiency of the services they provide centrally on behalf of the NHS.

We expect to generate further savings of over £100 million in 2005–06 from new national framework agreements let by the NHS purchasing and supply agency (PASA) alone. This follows savings of over £25 million in 2004–05. PASA is on target to achieve savings of £240 million per annum by 2007–08 for the NHS. Work is also under way to deliver efficiencies in the services offered by other ALBs. Taken together, this puts us well on course to meet or exceed our commitment to deliver £250 million to the front line by the end of 2007–08 through efficiencies generated by ALBs, as promised in the 30 November 2004 implementation framework.

The major reconfiguration of individual ALBs is also on course. The total number of ALBs will have reduced from 38 in 2003–04 to 34 on 1 April and is on course to reduce further to 31 by 1 October this year. The changes are:

The Family Health Services Appeal Authority (Special Health Authority) (FHSAA—SHA) will be dissolved on 1 April and its functions absorbed by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHS LA).

The Health Development Agency (HDA) will be dissolved on 1 April and its functions absorbed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).

The National Clinical Assessment Authority (NCAA) will be dissolved on 1 April and its functions transferred to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA).

The NHS Information Authority (NHS IA) will be dissolved on 1 April and certain functions transferred to the health and social care information centre (HSCIC) and to the National Programme for IT (NPfIT).

The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) will be dissolved on 1 April and its functions transferred to the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

The Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS) will be dissolved on 1 April and its functions transferred to the Health Protection Agency (HPA).

The Human Tissue Authority (HTA) will be created on 1 April and work closely with the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) ahead of the merger of the two bodies to form the Regulatory Authority for Tissue and Embryos (RATE) which requires new legislation.

The Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) will come into being on 1 April to co-ordinate information requirements across health and social care more efficiently.

The National Programme for IT (NPfIT) will become an Agency on 1 April.

The NHS Modernisation Agency and NHSU are due to be dissolved by 31 July 2005 and some of their functions taken on by the new NHS Institute for Learning, Skills and Innovation which is due to be set up by the same date.

The National Blood Authority and UK Transplant will be merged and become NHS Blood and Transplant by 1 October 2005.

NHS Estates is being wound down and will be dissolved no later than 1 October.

Following is a table showing the 2005–06 recurrent operating costs budgets for 33 of the ALBs which will exist on 1 April this year. The total of those budgets includes £1,107 million grant in aid from the Department of Health, as well as income from other sources, such as fees charged to industry. The total grant in aid provided by the Department in 2003–04 was £1,265 million. Therefore the 2005–06 grant in aid is over £150 million less than that included in 2003–04 operating costs. We have additionally funded £50 million one-off costs in order to enable further recurrent savings in later years.

These changes are only the first part of our plan for reconfiguring the ALB sector. Over the coming year we will:

Drive forward further major reconfigurations of ALBs so that total numbers in the sector are reduced to 24 by April 2006.

Maintain momentum towards releasing at least £0.5 billion for the front line by the end of 2007–08 through further reductions in overall ALB budgets in 2006–07 and continued savings in the central services which ALBs provide on behalf of the NHS.

As part of this, put in place firm plans for delivering further savings of £35–40 million a year by 2007–08 through efficiencies in ALB overheads (for example back office services and accommodation), in line with the expectations set out in the Gershon Review.

Make further reductions in the proportion of national spend on the NHS and social care which goes on inspection and regulation and make further progress on full cost recovery.

Take forward the commitment in Wednesday's Budget announcement to bring together the Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection by 2008.

The ALB budgets we are setting for 2005–06 will reduce Department of Health funding by more than £150 million compared with 2003–04. The resulting savings will contribute to our overall investment in NHS front-line healthcare. Taken together with growing efficiencies in services provided by ALBs to the wider NHS they place the sector on a firm footing to achieve the target of £500 million savings by the end of 2007–08.

ALB Recurrent Operating Costs 2005–06

17 March 2005

ALB name	*Operating costs 05–06 excluding non-recurrent elements £000*
Regulators	
HC[1]	*78,732*
MHAC	*5,218*
Monitor	*12,000*
CSCI[1]	*144,260*
HFEA	*8,421*
HTA	*1,000*
CRHE	*1,950*
GSCC	*14,310*
PMETB	*6,742*
DVTA	*281*
MHRA	*62,970*
Standards	
NICE	*29,894*
HdA	*0*
Public Welfare	
NPSA	*28,618*
NCAA	*0*
HPA	*228,600*
NRPB	*0*
PHLS	*0*
NBSB	*19,739*
NTA	*11,510*
CPPIH	*29,930*
Central Services	
NBA (inc. BPL)	*401,700*
UKT	*13,572*
NHS LA	*14,095*
FHSAA	*0*
NHS AC	*5,981*
NILSI	*80,000*
NHSU	*0*
NHS MOD	*0*
NHS IA/HSCIC	*42,900*
DPB	*23,062*
PPA	*75,606*
NHS CFSMS	*14,897*
NHS PA	*22,066*
NHS PASA	*22,081*
NHS LOGS	*70,658*
NHS DIRECT	*161,900*
NHS PROF	*31,000*
NHS EST	*1,000*
NPFIT	*115,230*
TOTAL	*1,779,923*

Notes:

1. Operating costs exclude capital charges but include income from other sources, such as fee income, as well as DH funding.

2. NHS Estates to be dissolved by 1 October 2005—one-off DH funding of £17.9 million. Operating costs are transfers to other ALBs.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Lord Carlile

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): Lord Carlile of Berriew QC has agreed to perform the role of independent reviewer of the operation of the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

I am grateful to Lord Carlile for accepting this invitation, and for his continuing work as reviewer of the Terrorism Act 2000.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

North West Regional Development Agency

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I have decided to reappoint Bryan Gray as the chair of North West regional development agency, for a second term.

The appointment will begin on 1 April 2005 and will expire in 13 December 2008. I have placed further details of this appointment in the Libraries of both Houses.

The appointment was made in accordance with the code of practice of the commissioner for public appointments.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Medical Services

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Maria Eagle): Today the Department for Work and Pensions announces the outcome of the retendering exercise for the provision of medical services.

The current contract for provision of service expires on 31 August 2005 with the replacement contract beginning 1 September.

A contract notice was dispatched to the Official Journal of the European Union (ref 2003/S 182–164829) on 11 September 2003. The procurement was conducted in accordance with negotiated procedure under the European Community Services Directive Article 11 (2) *(b)* and *(c)*, as implemented in the United Kingdom by the Public Services Contracts regulations 1993, regulation 10 (2) *(b)* and *(c)* (the "regulations").

Three service providers were short-listed:

Atos Origin (the incumbent)

Capita

Vertex

Throughout 2004, all three short-listed providers were afforded extensive due diligence and equal opportunity to develop innovative solutions for an improved service.

Following a comprehensive evaluation of bids, which balanced proposed operational solutions against value for money considerations, the replacement contract has been awarded to Atos Origin.

The contract duration is for 10 years with an option to break at year seven in the event of unsatisfactory performance by the contractor. The overall contract value is approximately £666 million over 10 years (net present value).

Under the terms of the replacement contract a number of service improvements have been secured including: faster turnaround times for medical assessments; improved quality of information to decision makers; proposals to recruit and retain additional medical resources—including use of appropriate health care professionals; and improvements for customer contact.

An experienced contract management team is in place who will work collaboratively with Atos Origin to secure improvements and service delivery for customers.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 21 March 2005

DEFENCE

Chemical Weapons Convention

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The UK's chemical protection programme is designed to protect against the use of chemical weapons. Such a programme is permitted by the Chemical Weapons Convention, with which the United Kingdom is fully compliant. Under the terms of the convention, we are required to provide information annually to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In accordance with the Government's commitment to openness, I am placing in the Library of the House a copy of the summary that has been provided to the organisation outlining the UK's chemical protection programme in 2004.

Skynet 5

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce that Skynet 5 has been accepted into service on time and to cost.

This represents a tremendous accomplishment by all parties concerned in the enterprise arrangement, and shows how PFI can successfully be brought to bear to provide our armed forces with the best available capability at the right price.

In addition to the enhancement to our defence capability, achievement of ISD is good news for our industry. The achievement shows that excellent results can be achieved in a demanding environment through close partnering between public and private sectors. The Skynet 5 project enables around 1,900 jobs to be sustained or created over the life of the programme.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Beacon Councils

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): We are announcing today the Beacon Councils for round six of the scheme. Some 44 applications from 48 authorities have been successful across 10 different themes. Government Ministers made their decisions following recommendations from the independent advisory panel on Beacon Councils. Copies of the panel report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Beacon council scheme was set up in 1999 and provides a remarkably popular and successful way of both celebrating and promoting best practice in local government. In the first six rounds of the scheme, 275 Beacon awards have been made in 59 service themes. Round six beacons will now work with the improvement and development agency to ensure that their good practice is spread to other authorities. Learning exchanges, where authorities can both disseminate their good practice and learn from the excellence of others, have now been attended by nearly all authorities. These events have helped and will continue to help raise the level of service provision by local government to the people of this country.

Planning for Town Centres

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am pleased to announce publication today of planning policy statement 6 (PPS6), "Planning for Town Centres" which sets out the Government's policies for promoting vital and viable town centres in urban and rural areas across the country.

PPS6 maintains the town centre first approach to planning for main town centre uses set out in the earlier national guidance on town centres, but places much stronger emphasis on the need for a pro-active plan-led approach to planning for town centres. Positive planning is critically important in ensuring town centres provide enhanced consumer choice, promote economic growth and deliver more sustainable patterns of development.

A further important strengthening of the policy framework in PPS6 is in relation to tackling social exclusion, with greater emphasis being placed on improving the provision of a range of shops and services, and encouraging investment in deprived areas.

PPS 6 applies in England and replaces revised planning policy guidance note 6 (PPG6), "Town Centres and Retail Developments" published in June 1996. The policies in PPS6 should be taken into account by regional planning bodies in the preparation of revisions to regional spatial strategies, by the Mayor of London in relation to the spatial development strategy for Greater London and by local planning authorities in the preparation of local development documents, and may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications.

Over 380 responses to the consultation draft version of PPS6 were received and these responses have been taken into account in finalising PPS6. Draft PPS6 provided guidance on design issues and implementation tools, which has been reviewed and is published today as a separate guidance note, entitled "Planning for Town Centres: Guidance on Design and Implementation Tools", alongside PPS6.

Copies of both documents have been made available in the Libraries of both Houses and are available to download from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website www.odpm.gov.uk/.

TREASURY

Valuation Office Agency

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): I have today set the following key performance indicators for the Valuation Office Agency for 2005–06:

1. *Valuation Accuracy*

   a. 2000 Local Rating List

   Confirm that reductions in the lists are kept to a maximum of 4.7 per cent. of the total compiled list rateable value over the entire life of the lists.

b. 2005 Rating Lists

Contain reductions in the 2005 rating lists to a maximum of 4.2 per cent. of the total compiled list rateable value over the entire life of the 2005 rating lists.

2. *Council Tax Revaluation—England*

Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of domestic properties in England by undertaking 15 million valuations by 31 March 2006

3. *Council Tax—Wales*

Clear by 31 March 2006 (up to a maximum of 30,000 cases) those appeals received by 30 September 2005.

4. *Value for money*[1]

Improve productivity by 5 per cent. in 2005–06 and be on course to achieve improvements of at least 15 per cent. over the four years from 2004–05 to 2007–08.

5. *Inland Revenue*

Clear 96 per cent. of inheritance tax initial appraisal cases referred by the Inland Revenue, within 30 working days of receipt.

6. *Land Services*

Cover costs and achieve an income figure in 2005–06 of £21.1 million

7. *Customer satisfaction*[2]

Achieve customer satisfaction, based on annual surveys, of 86 per cent.

8. *People satisfaction*

Improve staff satisfaction in working for the VOA in comparison with other places of work, based on annual surveys, by 1 per cent.

[1] During 2005–06, the VGA will endeavour to broaden this measure to reflect the significant additional work being undertaken to prepare for the council tax revaluation in England in 2007, and the new right first time approach to handling appeals against the 2005 rating lists.

[2] During 2005–06 this measure will be broadened to cover all the main areas in which we have direct contact with the citizen, whether as ratepayers or council taxpayers. The indicator will be re-based following the 2005–06 results.

Inheritance Tax and Pensions

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): We have been asked to clarify how inheritance tax (IHT) will apply to choices made by pension scheme members under the new simplified pension regime, and in particular what the implications are when scheme members opt for an alternative secured pension rather than taking an annuity at age 75 as they have been obliged to do in the past.

The same broad principles will continue to apply to the new regime as they have done to the old rules, and as they do to any other situation where people are able to make choices affecting their future wealth and that of others.

People are broadly treated as making a taxable transfer for IHT purposes when they omit to increase their own wealth in favour of increased wealth for others, just as they are when they transfer to others wealth that they already have. This is a principle of general application, and has always applied to choices under pension schemes as it has to any other choices that people make about their wealth. It is important that we maintain this principle, both in the interests of fairness between taxpayers and to ensure that pension funds remain dedicated primarily to providing retirement income.

The Inland Revenue published a statement of practice in 1992 setting out when IHT would be applied to choices made under the pension rules in force at that time. A new and wider range of choices will be available under the simplified regime, and that statement will no longer be valid. Treatment broadly comparable to that in the statement may remain appropriate in some situations, but in others that is clearly no longer so.

I have asked the Revenue to open discussions with interested parties to seek a consensus on the detailed application of IHT law to the new situations arising under the simplified regime, and on how in practice cases which are chargeable should be identified and any charge should be quantified. The Revenue will shortly be publishing a consultation document setting out their analysis of the IHT issues as a basis for these discussions.

ASPs were designed to provide an alternative to annuitisation for those with religious objections to risk pooling. They were not meant as a vehicle for inter-generational transfers by scheme members generally, and the Government will continue to monitor the situation to ensure that they are not being used for avoidance.

HEALTH

Adult Social Care

The Secretary of State for Health (Dr. John Reid): I am announcing today the publication of the Green Paper "Independence, Well-being and Choice: Our Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults in England" (Cm 6499).

This is an important part of our modernisation programme for public services and will set the social care agenda for the next decade. Formal consultation will enable us to develop firm proposals which will transform the lives of people who use social care by giving them more control and more choice in helping them to decide how their needs can best be met.

These ambitions are based on what people who use services told us they would like to see. Turning this shared vision into reality will mean that social care services will have to be redesigned to give people more control over their assessments and how the money is spent. But this is not just about social care services. We want to see the capacity of the whole community harnessed to make sure that people have access to the full range of universal services to secure the best possible outcomes for all adults.

The key proposals in the paper include the wider use of direct payments and the piloting of individual budgets to stimulate the development of modern services delivered in a way that people want; a strong strategic and leadership role for local government; closer working between health and social care sectors and greater involvement for the community and voluntary sector; plans to stimulate care capacity and informal caring; and encouraging the use of new models

of service delivery including assistive technology and extra care housing, and a greater focus on preventative services.

The ideas that we have put forward are designed to encourage and stimulate discussion about the future direction for adult social care. We would expect to develop concrete proposals for implementation following the formal consultation.

The consultation will run until 28 July 2005 and will apply to England only. Copies of "Independence, Well-being and Choice" have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and are also available from my Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/socialcare

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Security and Development

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am today placing in the Libraries of both Houses copies of a new paper entitled "Fighting poverty to build a safer world: a strategy for security and development", published by the Department for International Development (DFID).

The strategy—which has been produced in close consultation with other Government Departments, NGOs, researchers, the UN and other international organisations—analyses the links between security and development. It shows how we can better promote the security of the poor, and suggests ways in which the international system can better achieve both security and development goals.

Security matters for poor people in poor countries. In times of peace, they are the worst affected by violent crime, lawlessness and state-sanctioned abuse; and in times of conflict, millions of poor people have been killed, injured or forced from their homes. So the poor need security as much as they need clean water, schooling or affordable health.

DFID has been at the forefront of international efforts to promote security for poor people. We have initiated programmes to support police and security sector reform in developing countries, in order to make these public services more effective and accountable; we have improved access to justice for poor people; we have tackled poor governance; and we have developed ways of analysing conflict and insecurity, including their impact on the poor. But we need to do more. Our aim is to promote security as a basic entitlement of poor people.

The strategy explains how we will put the safety and security of the poor at the heart of our development work. We will make more use of political and conflict analysis in our programme design; pay greater attention to how regional and global conflict and insecurity affect the poor in countries where we work; focus our work to improve governance more directly on the security of the poor, including giving more attention to the role of security and police services and the judiciary; link conflict prevention and conflict reduction more regularly into our programmes; and work with a wider range of civil society organisations, so as to build relationships with groups with different views on development.

To implement the strategy, we will work closely with other Government Departments, international organisations including the European Union and the United Nations, and Governments and communities in our partner countries.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Good Relations in Northern Ireland

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): This statement sets out how I intend to take forward the policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland.

The Government's vision for the future of Northern Ireland is that of a peaceful, prosperous, stable and fair society firmly founded on the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and the protection and vindication of human rights for all. The founding principles of partnership, equality and mutual respect ensure a basis for good relationships.

The publication of the policy today sets out our aim of establishing over time a shared society defined by a culture of tolerance—a normal, civic society, in which all individuals are considered as equals, which respects diversity and where violence is an illegitimate means to resolve differences, but where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere. The policy document outlines realistically the scale of the challenge and that good relations will build on the significant progress of the equality agenda.

The policy objectives to achieve the policy aim include: eliminating sectarianism, racism and all forms of prejudice to enable people to live and work without fear or intimidation; reducing tension and conflict at interface areas; facilitating the development of a shared community where people wish to learn, live, work and play together; promoting civic-mindedness via citizenship education through school and lifelong learning; protecting members of minorities (whether for example by religion, race or any other grounds) and mixed marriages from intimidation and ensure perpetrators are brought to justice; ensure that all public services are delivered impartially and guided by economy, efficiency and effectiveness; shaping policies, practices and institutions to enable trust and good relations to grow; encouraging understanding of the complexity of our history, through museums and a common school curriculum; supporting cultural projects which highlight the complexity and overlapping nature of identities and their wider global connections; supporting and learning from organisations working across ethnic divides for reconciliation, including those operating on a north-south basis; ensuring that voice is given to the diverse victims of violence in Northern Ireland, including via archives and victim-centred reconciliation events; encouraging communication, tolerance and trust across Northern Ireland, but particularly in areas where communities are living apart; promoting dialogue between, and mutual understanding of, different faiths and cultural backgrounds, both long-standing within Northern Ireland and recent arrivals to these shores, guided by overarching human-rights norms.

The policy, which is underpinned by a series of fundamental principles, will be taken forward at three levels. First, a triennial action plan covering actions

across public authorities will be prepared by the autumn. Second, the roles and functions of the Community Relations Council will be enhanced to support the policy. Third, a new district council good relations challenge programme will be established by 2007 to replace the existing district council community relations' programme

Government will lead by example and set the pace to promote good relations with a strong public policy agenda. Ultimately, however, sustained and deeper progress depends on political stability. It will require leadership at political, civic and community levels.

Copies of "A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland" have been placed in the Libraries of the House and are also available on the website www.asharedfutureni.gov.uk/

The racial equality strategy for Northern Ireland will be published in the near future, following consultation with the Northern Ireland Race Forum.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Small Business Service

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The Small Business Service (SBS) is today publishing its business plan for 2005–06. I have placed copies of the plan in the Libraries of both Houses. It is also available on the SBS website at: www.sbs.gov.uk.

The SBS published a Government action plan for small business in January 2004. The plan identified a set of practical actions focused on improving policy and delivery as it affects small business. For the first time, it aligned contributions from the whole of government behind clear objectives for encouraging enterprise and improving the environment for small business. Implementing the action plan and working with government partners to refresh it remains a priority for the SBS this year.

The business plan also sets out the ways in which the SBS will develop its capabilities to ensure that it is equipped to play an enhanced policy leadership and influencing role within government, across the regions and internationally on small business issues.

The plan identifies 10 key agency targets for 2005–06. These are to:

Increase enterprise awareness in young people by supporting a further "Make your Mark: Start Talking Ideas" campaign culminating in a successful second "Enterprise Week" in November 2005 targeted on people in a wider 14–30 age group.

Continue to support and promote social enterprise by completing a review of the Government's three-year strategy by July 2005, and establishing future priorities for action.

Increase the availability of risk capital for high growth potential businesses, by launching a pathfinder round of enterprise capital funds within two months of EU state aid clearance being obtained.

Hold a conference on risk capital in October 2005 as part of the UK's EU Presidency to highlight the importance of risk capital for small businesses with growth potential, and explore ways of increasing its availability in the UK and elsewhere in the EU.

Work with the SBS's lender partners to launch a simplified, better targeted and more consistently available form of the small firms loan guarantee by December 2005 in line with the recommendations of the Graham review.

Encourage female entrepreneurship by implementing recommendations being made by the Women's Enterprise Panel to increase the proportion of women-owned businesses by March 2006, and take decisions on whether to establish a National Women's Business Council by July 2005.

Work in partnership with the English regional development agencies to focus the business link service on information, diagnostic and brokerage services, and further improve on current levels of business link market penetration and customer satisfaction by April 2006.

Improve small business access to public sector procurement and R&D opportunities by launching a supplier route to Government web portal by October 2005, and re-invigorating the Small Business Research Initiative so that more government departments are meeting the target of procuring 2.5 per cent. of their R&D from small and medium size businesses by March 2006.

Complete a review of the UK's key regulatory and administrative processes using the World Bank's "Doing Business" survey as a benchmark and, with the Small Business Council, make recommendations on the scope for streamlining and simplifying these processes by January 2006.

Increase the SBS's influence on small business issues within government, across the regions and internationally by building its capabilities as a source of expertise, leadership and challenge.

TRANSPORT

Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): The Secretary of State for Transport has set a range of high-level targets for the 2005–06 year on behalf of the Agencies within the Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group; the Driving Standards Agency, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, the Vehicle Certification Agency and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. They are included in the Agencies' Business Plans together with their associated measures. The plans also include a range of management targets, performance indicators and key tasks which are appropriate to the Agencies' businesses and which reflect the wider DVO change agenda. Copies of the Business Plans will be placed in the Library shortly.

The key targets for the Driving Standards Agency are:

Secretary of State Targets

Maintain a national average car practical test waiting time of six weeks from 31 January 2005

Appointments will be available within nine weeks at 99 per cent. of permanent car driving test centres by 31 March 2006

Maintain candidate satisfaction with the overall service received at 90 per cent.

Deliver 6,000 Arrive Alive and 200 Arrive Alive Classic presentations by 31 March 2006 and Pass Plus take up to continue at 18 per cent. of those passing the test

Assure the quality of trainers so that 98 per cent. of ADIs have been check-tested once every four years and all ADIs will be HP assessed by 31 December 2006

Assure the quality of the practical driving test by 1 per cent. of all driving tests being subject to quality assurance checks in which examiners are accompanied by a senior operational officer

Roll out plans for acquiring and making operational off road motorcycle test facilities by 2008: To acquire 20 and build 10 multi-purpose centres by 31 March 2006

Deliver the benefits in the value for money plan achieving at least 2.5 per cent. of cost savings and 2.5 per cent. efficiency and effectiveness improvements

The key targets for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency are:

Secretary of State Targets

Maintain or improve on the standard of services to the customer

Maintain or improve customer satisfaction at 2004 levels

To deliver a programme of e-service capability across the consumer and business sectors

Increase co-operation with other Government agencies/ departments to provide improved services

To achieve a level of tax collected of at least £55m above the 2004 baseline and maintaining or reducing evasion loss at a maximum 3.4 per cent. in line with the roadside survey

To reduce the number of persistent evaders of VED by 35 per cent. by March 2006

Records to be capable of 97.5 per cent. of current vehicle keepers to be successfully traced from the record

Deliver the benefits in the value for money plan achieving at least 2.5 per cent. of cost savings and 2.5 per cent. efficiency and effectiveness improvements

Deliver a return on capital employed of 3.5 per cent. and build reserves for development funding

The key targets for the Vehicle Certification Agency are:

Secretary of State Targets

Deliver at least 90 per cent. of type approval certificates within eight working days

Maintain or improve customer satisfaction rating year on year

Issue at least 98 per cent. of type approval certificates error-free

Expand VGA's global presence in new territories

Carry out and enforce an annual programme of in-service emissions testing

Develop the VGA strategy in relation to emerging technologies in vehicle testing by December 2005

Deliver the benefits in the value for money plan achieving at least 2.5 per cent. of cost savings and 2.5 per cent. efficiency and effectiveness improvements

To make a surplus on an operating basis

The key targets for the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency are:

Secretary of State Targets

Improve the availability of tests to meet customer needs better

Improve licence application processes enabling quicker decisions for customers

To deliver a programme of improved e-service across the commercial and business sectors so that by 2008, 80 per cent. of services will be available electronically

Maintain or improve customer satisfaction against 2004 levels

Complete the roll out of a robust MOT computerisation system nationally and implement the benefits realisation plan

Complete merger of the intelligence and compliance units to ensure the independence of traffic commissioners and improve the quality of investigated cases presented

Improve enforcement effectiveness through increased targeting of offenders making full use of powers to stop, ANPR and improved intelligence data

Improve the suitability of the VOSA test station estate, in terms of location and condition, to reflect changing customer requirements

Deliver the benefits in the value for money plan achieving at least 2.5 per cent. of cost savings and 2.5 per cent. efficiency and effectiveness improvements

Transport for London

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Mr Tony McNulty): The Government have been working with Transport for London (TfL) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to set out projections of the impact of TfL's business plan on the Department for Transport (DfT) national priorities, in order to generate overall agreed TfL planned outcomes.

These projections are in the format of 2010 outcomes which are given in the table below. The table also includes the year end position for 2005–06 which is consistent with the planned 2010 result.

These have been agreed at a working level between TfL, GLA and DfT, which I have discussed with the Mayor. They will be considered by the TfL Board on the 23 March, and are being published today alongside the TfL board papers. These outcomes are based on modelling, and as such will be updated as actual data is received.

Target area	*Outcome by 2010*	*2005/6 outcome*
Air Quality Reduction in emissions from surface transport compared to 2000 levels	-37% NO2 emissions - 41% PM10 emissions	-21% NO2 emissions - 23% PM10 emissions
Road Safety Meet national targets compared to 1994–8 average	-40% all KSI[1] -50% child KSI inc. tackling casualties in deprived areas.	-25% all KSI -43% child KSI
Capacity Public transport capacity compared to 2000	+18% place km operated, am peak	+7% (33.1 km operated, am peak)
Local public transport (bus and light rail) patronage compared with 2000 levels	+45% bus and light rail patronage	+ 37% bus and light rail patronage (1,854m bus, 54m light rail passenger journeys)
Road Congestion[2]	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

[1] Killed or Seriously Injured

[2] New national measures of congestion are currently in development, and therefore it is not possible to estimate the impact of TfL's plan in those terms at this time.

These are in addition to the targets for London Underground Limited (LUL) agreed between LUL, TfL and DfT in May 2002, www.TfL.gov.uk/tfl/downloads/pdf/integration-day/tfl-focus-on-tube.pdf (p.17–18) which will continue to be monitored.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 22 March 2005

TREASURY

House of Lords: Contingencies Fund Advance

Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Paul Boateng): The House of Lords is shortly to purchase new accommodation. In lieu of completion, which is expected to take place shortly, the Treasury agreed a cash advance essential to the purchase from the Contingencies Fund on 16 March in the sum of £50,294,225. This advance was given prior to the Royal Assent to the Appropriation Act on 17 March which gives parliamentary authority for the expenditure.

The advance will be repaid from the spring supplementary estimate.

Financial Services

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Timms): The Treasury is today publishing "The UK financial services sector: Rising to the challenges and opportunities of globalisation". Copies are available in the Vote Office and the Library of the House. The document is also accessible on the Treasury website at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/.

The paper sets out how the UK financial services sector will be integral to helping the rest of the UK economy and society respond to long-term global economic changes, and presents a series of associated challenges for the sector and for policy-makers.

Parliamentary Questions

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Timms): The Treasury has conducted a review into the costing of oral and written parliamentary questions. The revised costs, which will apply from 1 April 2005, are:

Oral questions	£369
Written questions	£134

The disproportionate cost threshold (DCT) relating to answers to written parliamentary questions and the recently introduced cost limit for requests to central Government under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are set at the same level—£600. The FOIA cost limit is due to be reviewed later this year. In order to maintain consistency between the two limits for the time being, the DCT will remain at £600.

Budget Resolution 28

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): It has been drawn to my attention that there was an inadvertent error in Budget resolution 28. This resolution should have read as follows:

> "That provision may be made for the purposes of corporation tax about—
>
> (a) amounts that are not to be allowed as deductions for the purposes of the Corporation Tax Acts; and
>
> (b) contributions to the capital of any company that are to be treated as income arising to the company."

The corrected text appears in today's Order Paper.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Services Reform

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place yesterday, 21 March 2005.

"On 15 December 2004, I informed the House that I had warmly welcomed Sir David Clementi's report on the regulation of legal services in England and Wales and broadly accepted his main recommendations. Since publication of the report, I have met key stakeholders, including consumer groups, a number of times. In the course of these meetings we have built a strong consensus in support of consumer-focused reform of legal services.

I will publish a White Paper later this year. I will set out detailed proposals for a Legal Services Board. Regulatory powers will be vested in the board, and delegated by it to the professional bodies, as long as they meet the standards the board sets. The professional bodies will be required to separate their regulatory and representative functions.

The White Paper will set out the arrangements for appointing members to the Legal Services Board, and will propose a lay chair and a lay majority with appointments being made on merit, by the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs. The board will have a range of sanctions available. The White Paper will set these out but I expect them to include setting targets, imposing fines, issuing guidance, directing a professional body and removing one or more regulatory powers, with the board ultimately having the power to remove regulatory powers from any professional body which has failed. Taken together, these arrangements provide a robust framework that will promote consumer interests.

I accept Sir David's recommendation for an Office for Legal Complaints. This will be simpler for consumers to use and understand and will provide consistent, fair and professional handling of cases for all complainants. As with the Legal Services Board, the White Paper will set out the detailed arrangements, but I expect the office will also be led by a board with a lay chair and a lay majority.

I warmly welcome Sir David's proposals to facilitate the creation of new business structures. Non-lawyers will be able for the first time to become managers, owners or investors in legal practices. This will create an opportunity to bring in new capital and develop new ways of working that should benefit consumers. Robust safeguards will be established to protect the consumer and the profession's reputation. Many of the changes that will be outlined in the White Paper will require legislation and I intend to bring forward that legislation when parliamentary time allows. I am committed to legislating to bring the regulatory framework I have described into full effect.

I can announce today that I have set up a consumer panel to advise the Government as we take forward reforms. The panel will comprise representatives from Citizens Advice, the Federation of Small Businesses, the National Consumer Council, the Welsh Consumer Council and Which?.

Going forward, I will continue to work closely with all interested parties to ensure that we establish a new framework for the regulation of legal services that protects and promotes the needs of consumers and allows the legal profession to flourish and retain its reputation as the best in the world."

Law Commission

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): On 12 May 2003 my noble Friend Baroness Scotland of Asthal, the then Parliamentary Secretary, Lord Chancellor's Department, announced that John Halliday CB had submitted the report of his independent review of the Law Commission on 31 March 2003. She added that the Lord Chancellor had welcomed the thrust of the recommendations and asked the Ministerial Committee on the Law Commission, which is currently chaired by me, to oversee the action taken on the report.

The Ministerial Committee subsequently authorised the setting up of an interdepartmental project board to manage the implementation of the recommendations. This board has now completed its task and been dissolved.

In all, of the 42 recommendations made, 39 have now been dealt with; two are for the future; and one is being taken forward separately.

Major themes of the 39 recommendations included:

more effective communication between the Law Commission, Government Departments and other stakeholders. As a result a vision and guidance' document, that sets out how the Law Commission and Government Departments will work together, has been published.

ensuring that the Law Commission's programmes of law reform are based on the best possible assessment of needs, priorities and resources. Consequently, the Law Commission undertook a wide consultation when preparing its ninth programme, which has been published today, 22 March 2005.

the development of more effective programme and project management at the Law Commission. As a result, the Law Commission has established a new electronic programme management system that will come into operation at the start of the ninth programme on 1 April 2005.

improving the processes for deciding on and implementing Law Commission recommendations. As a result, time limits have been set by the Ministerial Committee on the Law Commission within which Government Departments are required to respond to commission reports.

Recommendation 30, aimed at identifying special parliamentary procedures to facilitate scrutiny of Law Commission Bills, is being taken forward separately by the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

The vision and guidance and the paper setting out the quinquennial review recommendations and how the Government have responded to them have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and will shortly be available on the website of the Department for Constitutional Affairs at: www.dca.gov.uk

DEFENCE

Key Targets for the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency (AFPAA) for the financial year 2005–06. The targets build upon progress made by the agency since it formed on 1 April 1997 and reflect the importance of achieving joint personnel administration implementation whilst maintaining current outputs. Furthermore they provide customers with assurance that, in focusing on joint personnel administration and higher profile services such as pay and pensions, AFPAA will continue to give sufficient attention to the broad range of other outputs.

1. *To Deliver Pay*

To make 99.9 per cent. of all pay payments by the due date (excluding late payments caused by events determined to be outside the control of the agency).

To keep the monthly error rate of accuracy for the volume of payments within 0.1 per cent.

2. *To Deliver Pension Services*

To make 99 per cent. of all pension payments (including new awards) by the due date, (excluding late payments caused by events determined to be outside the control of the agency).

To keep the monthly error rate of accuracy for the volume of payments within 0.1 per cent.

3. *To Support the Delivery of Joint Personnel Administration Programme*

Achieve live service to the RAF by end March 2006. Live service to the RN and Army are to follow by end August 2006 and by end December 2006 respectively.

4. *To transform the Agency to Deliver the Joint Personnel Administration services*

To transform the agency to deliver joint personnel administration.

To deliver 100 per cent. of key critical path milestones in agency transformation plan.

5. *To prepare for delivery of AFPAA services post 2009*

Develop the AFPAA contribution to the project team, establish and meet 100 per cent. ofmilestones.

6. *To confirm that the broad range of AFPAA's outputs are delivered to agreed service levels.*

To achieve 90 per cent. of service levels selected by the customer.

7. *To meet approved efficiency targets for the delivery of core services.*

To reduce the unit cost by 2 per cent., which will contribute to a 12 per cent. reduction over a four-year period from 2002–03 for the delivery of core pay and personnel administration.

8. *To deliver an efficient and effective MOD medal service.*

To reduce the MOD medal office assessment backlog from 45,000 as at 1 April 2005 to21,000 by 31 March 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning Delivery Grant and Fee Increases

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): In July 2002 my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister announced that he would be making an additional £350 million available to local authorities over the period 2003–06 to improve the delivery of planning services. Since then, we have announced that the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) will continue, with a further £255 million being made available in the period to 2008. We have now decided the basis on which we will distribute the majority of the Planning Delivery Grant of £170 million in 2005–06 and will be informing recipients of their allocations.

The grant is performance related. Our aim is to enhance the resourcing of the planning system in a way that drives performance improvement and ensures effective delivery of our objectives for sustainable communities. It is specifically targeted towards meeting the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's public service agreements (PSA) 5 and 6. PSA 5 aims to achieve a better balance between housing availability and demand. PSA 6 requires all authorities to have local development frameworks in place (in accordance with agreed local development schemes) and to meet the best value development control targets by the end of 2006–07.

I can confirm today the amount of grant to be distributed to authorities in 2005–06 is £162.12 million. It will be paid to local planning authorities at a district and county level, national parks, regional planning bodies, the Broads Authority and the Greater London authority. A small amount of the grant, £4.73 million, will be top-sliced to support a number of national initiatives directly related to improving local authority planning performance. A smaller amount, £3 million, will be allocated to the Planning Inspectorate for their work on local development plan preparation.

Local authorities are rewarded for both improvement towards and achievement of best value development control targets in the period October 2003 to September 2004. Grant allocations are enhanced for local authorities within the high housing demand and growth areas as identified in the Communities Plan in proportion to their contribution towards delivering net additions to the housing stock. Pathfinder authorities receive an allocation of £160,000 in recognition of the low demand for housing in their sub-regions. Local authorities are also awarded £5,000 for each enterprise area within their boundary, up to a maximum of £100,000 for any single authority. Local authorities will be paid by determination under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, copies of which will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses, along with a detailed spreadsheet showing the breakdown of the allocations for individual authorities.

For the first time, local planning authorities will receive payments in recognition of their online planning provision. The "e-planning" allocations will range from £20,658.68 to £100,000 to all authorities satisfying a minimum of 10 out of 21 e-planning criteria, with the highest awards going to those who achieve all 21. Also for the first time, specific allocations will be made for performance on "county matters" applications in relation to minerals and waste, enabling county councils and those other authorities who deal with such applications to receive PDG.

An element of the grant that rewards authorities for submitting a Local Development Scheme (LDS) to Government offices will follow later this year but cannot be included with this allocation as the deadline for LDS submission, 28 March 2005, has not yet passed.

In the first year of the Planning Delivery Grant (2003–04) grant was paid without condition. In 2004–05 two conditions were imposed on PDG payments. This year, these conditions will remain, to ensure that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has the power to act appropriately to partly withhold payment or recover part or all of grant paid where there are concerns over the accuracy or proven inaccuracies in the information on which allocations were made. I may consider withholding up to 10 per cent. of the grant allocated to authorities whose Best Value Performance Indicator 109 (BVPI 109) has been qualified by the auditor until we have established to our satisfaction the reason for the qualification and the reliability of the data on which grant was allocated. Following this I may seek to recover some or all of the monies paid to those authorities.

The second condition relates to performance on appeals, and this year it has been strengthened. Where an authority's performance on appeal is 40 per cent. worse than the national average (33.81 per cent. of appeals upheld against the authority), 10 per cent. of their development control allocation will be abated. Where this performance is 50 per cent. worse than the average, this abatement will increase to 20 per cent. of the development control allocation. This condition underlines the continuing importance we place on quality in decision making.

Grant allocations are not ring-fenced and authorities have complete discretion in the way they spend this money, although this year, 25 per cent. of the total grant paid to any individual authority will be limited to capital spending. The remaining 75 per cent. can be spent by the local authority on resource or capital budgets.

Regional Planning Bodies receive grant to support their work preparing regional spatial strategies and in recognition of the additional work which the strengthened regional planning function involves. In 2005–06 this totals just under £7 million. The Greater London authority (GLA) receives grant in recognition of its plan making responsibilities. The award is based on the GLA's performance against its business plan, and is given in recognition of work in bringing forward alteration of the waste plan, the housing capacity study, and progress against the annual monitoring report.

Decisions have yet to be taken on the basis of the grant for 2006–07. However, the requirement to meet PSA 5 and 6 means that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to link grant awards to improved planning performance so as to incentivise authorities to reach and exceed the development control handling targets while maintaining high decision quality, incentivise delivery of housing in areas of high housing demand and provide greater e-planning provision. Authorities should be aware that they will need to

continue to secure improvement in these areas to receive grant in future years. We will monitor performance in all aspects of Planning Delivery

Grant in order to inform future decisions on this. We will consult on full proposals for allocations before any final decisions are taken. The announcement of the grant for 2006–07 will be brought forward to later in 2005, following the consultation process. This is in line with other announcements of grant, and will help to increase certainty in budget setting processes.

A table showing the amounts payable will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses. This sets out the details of each recipient's grant.

Planning Fees

Planning fees will be increased on 1 April 2005, to enable authorities to move closer to recovery of costs on planning applications. The increases were consulted on in a paper I published on 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 135–37WS. They will average 39 per cent. and raise an estimated £68 million in additional revenue, will be spread proportionately to the types of applications. The fees for a householder extension will rise from £110 to £135, whilst the maximum fee for a major development will rise from £11,000 to £50,000.

Fee increases are part of the package of resources, along with Planning Delivery Grant, that are designed to improve the quality of planning services and support the changes which the government is introducing as part of its reform of the planning system. For some time, it has been the case that the costs of handling planning applications have been significantly higher than the fees associated with them. These increases address the imbalance and provide authorities with a level of resources which we expect to see leading to improvements in the quality of services.

Minerals Policy Statement 2

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am announcing today the publication of a new minerals policy statement on "Controlling and Mitigating the Environmental Effects of Minerals Extraction in England". The new minerals policy statement 2 (MPS2), and its two annexes covering dust and noise, will replace and extend minerals policy guidance note 11 (MPG11), "The Control of Noise at Surface Mineral Workings", published in 1993.

A draft of MPS2 was issued for public consultation in February 2003. The key policy aim of MPS2 is to minimise any significant adverse environmental effects that may arise from minerals extraction.

Mineral planning authorities will need to have regard to the policies in MPS2 in preparing minerals and waste development schemes as part of local development frameworks. The policies will also be material to decisions on individual planning applications where environmental issues connected with minerals extraction arise or which concern minerals extraction. Planning authorities have an important role to play in facilitating an adequate supply of minerals to meet the need of society whilst ensuring that the environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are kept to an acceptable minimum.

Copies of MPS2 are being made available in the Libraries of both Houses following publication. It is also being placed on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I have today published two consultation papers on proposed secondary legislation and guidance to implement some of the development control provisions in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The papers take forward provisions to simplify and speed up the planning system and to facilitate greater community involvement.

We are preparing to implement the development control provisions in Part 4 of the Act in stages. Where the provisions in the Act require secondary legislation we are proposing changes to the General Development Procedure Order (GDPO), the listed building regulations and the advertisement regulations. We are considering responses to our first consultation paper entitled "Changes to the development control system" published on 30 November 2004. A further consultation paper "Planning Control of Mezzanine and Other Internal Floorspace Additions" was published on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 93 and 94WS.

"Changes to the Development Control System Second Consultation Paper" covers local development orders (LDO's). Local authorities will be able to grant permission for the type of development specified in the order. There will be no need for a planning application. It is envisaged that there will be reduced costs and greater certainty for developers, whether they be householders or businesses. Local authorities may benefit by dealing with fewer routine applications thereby freeing resources for the consideration of more major applications. LDOs might potentially prove a useful tool for local authorities seeking to deliver high quality housing developments more quickly.

The paper covers the interrelated subjects of outline planning permission, reserved matters and design and access statements. I announced in a written statement on 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 48–50WS during the passage of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill that applications for outline planning permission must provide a level of information to assess all the significant environmental impacts. The paper proposes that applications should include information on use, quantum of development, indicative layout, scale parameters and indicative access points. It also proposes some amendments to reserved matters requiring further detailed information. The amendments include information on layout and scale. The new Act contains a requirement for both design and access statements. The Government now propose—for simplicity and efficiency—that one statement would cover both design and access. The purpose of the statement is to explain and justify the design and access principles and concepts on which a development proposal is based. Most applications for planning permission and all applications for listed building consent will need to be accompanied by a design and access statement. The length of statements should be proportional to the complexity of the application.

The paper covers procedures for determining major applications. We plan to change an outdated provision in the GDPO that allows applicants to appeal major applications for non-determination after only eight weeks. This is an unreasonable turnaround time for local authorities, not to mention being out of kilter with Government targets of 13 weeks. Our proposals would alter the period that an applicant must wait before appealing a major application to 13 weeks, harmonising Government best value targets and Government guidance with the relevant secondary legislation.

The best practice guidance on the validity of planning applications published on 7 March was the first stage in clarifying planning practice in this area. The second stage, outlined in the consultation paper, is to clarify the idea of a valid application. We want to specify in secondary legislation that a planning application is valid only when it contains all the information required by local authorities and when accompanied by the correct fee. This measure would cut down on the number of applications that go to the planning inspectorate on appeal without ever having been accepted as valid by a local authority and would generally increase the accessibility and transparency of the planning application process.

We also want to use this opportunity to establish in secondary legislation the exact period of determination: from the first full day after a valid planning application has been received until the day on which a decision notice is dispatched.

We intend that, after a 14 week consultation period and consideration of the responses received, the provisions would come into effect in the autumn.

The other paper I am publishing today contains proposals for a standard application form for planning applications and related consent regimes. The paper refers to a prototype electronic application form called 1 APP which can be tested on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's web-site. The prototype allows for householder applications, demolition in a conservation area and listed building consent. Our intention is to develop the electronic form to cover all related consent regimes including outline and full planning permission, trees, advertisements, minerals and waste. In finalising the form we will take account of work under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's householder development consents review. When the electronic form goes live, probably next year, people will be able to apply either on-line or on paper.

Copies of the documents will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Local Government Performance

The Minister for Local and Regional Government (Mr. Nick Raynsford): Today we are making a number of announcements relating to local government performance and the improvement of local services. We are publishing the fourth in a series of discussion documents taking forward the debate on the future of local government that we began last July with the publication of "The future of local government: Developing a 10 year vision".

"Securing better outcomes: Developing a new performance framework" is intended to stimulate debate around the key principles that the Government consider should make up a new performance framework to secure more effective and efficient delivery of local services. The document is jointly published with Treasury and, building on the devolving decision-making review last year, sets out a broad framework for developing a more devolved approach to delivery of local services, including increased personalisation of services. It emphasises:

- opportunities for users and residents to influence local priorities and the design and delivery of services—including through more choice and personalisation,
- a reduction in bureaucracy—through a more coherent approach to managing performance, with clear national priorities, but with local government having the freedom to take responsibility for securing outcomes that meet the needs of their citizens and for improving their own performance in the way that the best councils are doing
- more flexibility to enable faster and better tailored responses to local circumstances—building on the experience of local area agreements
- the potential for developing an increasingly area based approach between councils and their partners—with greater focus on accountability between local partners in achieving common outcomes for the area
- the importance of strategic, integrated relationship management through Government Offices to tailor negotiations, co-ordinate engagement and support, and challenge and respond to significant under-performance
- the need for better and more transparent information to underpin any effective performance system.

The discussion paper also expands on the Chancellor's Budget announcement about a rationalised inspection landscape, including the creation of a single local services inspectorate by 2008. This inspectorate will bring together the functions of the Audit Commission and the benefit fraud inspectorate in relation to inspection of English local authorities. It will also have an important role as a gatekeeper and co-ordinator for all inspection of local authorities. The paper also looks at how inspection could be refocused in the longer term.

Copies of the document have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and are available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: www.odpm.gov.uk/localvision. I would urge those with an interest in local government to let us know their views on the issues discussed in this and the other discussion documents we have published.

The Government's aim is to give people the powers and resources to have a greater influence over the key decisions which affect their community. The new local area agreements, which were the subject of the first local vision discussion document, are one example of how we are enabling local authorities to work in partnership with other organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to target resources on local priorities.

The first 20 local area agreements (LAAs) will be signed today marking the successful completion of the negotiations on these pilots. The full, long-term agreements will be in place from 1 April 2005, enabling some £500 million of central government funding to be pooled or aligned locally to achieve better outcomes. The signing of these first LAAs means they can now be translated into better delivery of local public services. LAAs will simplify funding streams and help to join up public services. They will also enable local areas to have more freedom to work in innovative ways to benefit their communities.

As well as celebrating the success of those involved in the first round of LAAs today we are also laying out future developments for LAAs. This includes publishing the application criteria for a further 40 LAAs to be in place by April 2006. As with the first phase of pilot LAAs, the aim will be to ensure that there is a good regional spread of areas, a mix of single tier authorities and counties and linkages with other pilot initiatives in the next phase. Areas wishing to be in the next phase will have until mid-May to express an interest and areas selected will be announced in June.

It will also be confirmed later today that responsibility for local public service agreement (LPSA) negotiations will be transferred from departmental teams to the Government Offices, also responsible for overseeing the negotiations for LAAs. LPSAs cover additional service targets agreed between central and local government, with the incentive of additional grant rewards if these targets are met. The second generation of LPSAs are increasingly focused on local priorities and are more rigorously outcome-based. Aligning LAAs and LPSAs will help make these initiatives mutually reinforcing, and maximise the potential benefits they offer.

Today's signing ceremony will also highlight the new LAA fourth block, which will focus on economic development. Where LAAs are in place the new Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) will be channelled through this fourth block, as proposed in last week's budget. LAAs will allow local authorities to pool this fund and other economic and enterprise funding streams in one place and to use them in a flexible way.

I am also pleased to announce that as a result of the first round of the LPSA scheme fifteen local authorities will receive reward grants totalling £93 million over the next two years. The councils, from across the country, have earned the reward grants for improving performance across a range of services to levels above those previously agreed.

We have also launched a leaflet today bringing local government up to date with the joint Local Government Association Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Capacity Building Programme. The Capacity Building Programme aims to support improvement in local government, by enhancing and developing councils' confidence, leadership, and skills to drive forward improvement as well as developing their capacity to learn, innovate and share knowledge and expertise about what works and how. The leaflet provides details of who is eligible to participate and how the programme can be accessed as well as encouraging local authorities to form improvement partnerships.

Improvement partnerships are voluntary partnerships formed when a group of authorities and or fire and rescue authorities come together to improve their internal capacity either at regional or sub-regional level. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will make £57 million available from the capacity building programme over the next three years to support these improvement partnerships.

Several regions have work underway to develop improvement partnerships, the furthest advanced of which is the North West Improvement Network (NWIN). We will provide NTWTN with £7.9 million over the next three years to support it in its work of creating a network of local authorities and other partners in the region committed to mutual improvement.

These announcements show the Government's continuing commitment to working with local government to improve the outcomes for all our citizens, by allowing local authorities and their local partners more flexibility to be able to make the decisions about the issues that affect their areas.

Hull and East Riding (Gateway) Market Renewal Pathfinder

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Today I am announcing that we are awarding £16 million from the Housing Market Renewal Fund to the Hull and East Riding (Gateway) market renewal pathfinder to help revitalise areas in Hull blighted by abandoned homes and low demand housing. This investment will enable the pathfinder to start projects to improve poor quality housing and weak housing markets, working in partnership with the private sector.

Over the next year, Gateway will begin delivering:

The redevelopment of poor standard housing on the Ings estate in Hull;

The assembly of sites of land for housing redevelopment in west Hull, to replace abandoned homes.

The restructuring of existing plans to redevelop the Kingswood area in the north of the city so that it reconnects with north Bransholme estate in Hull, enabling the serious abandonment problems to be tackled more effectively.

The pathfinder will bring forward a scheme update in 2006 enabling further grant, of up to £35 million, to be awarded then.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill (Stray Dogs)

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): The intended impact of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill in regard to stray dogs is to achieve clarity and consistency in the way stray dog services are delivered. This statement is intended to explain how that will be achieved and address concerns raised with me by animal welfare charities.

The current situation is unsatisfactory because under under section 149 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and section 3 of the Dogs Act 1906, responsibility for stray dogs is shared between local authorities and the police. As neither is fully responsible for providing a service, the position has been patchy at best and has often been inadequate outside normal office hours. As a result of discussions involving the police and local authorities as well as relevant Government Departments, it has been decided to simplify the law and the allocation of responsibilities. For that reason clause 68 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill and part 6 of schedule 5 to the Bill provide for the responsibility of the police in respect of stray dogs to be repealed. When this provision comes into force local authorities will be solely responsible for dealing with stray dogs in their area. This clarity is in the public

interest and in the interest of animal welfare. This additional demand on local authorities will be funded through an agreed and appropriate transfer from the Home Office to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and will not be brought into effect until the transfer has been made. The Local Government Association and the police have indicated support to this approval.

This change will place the onus on local authorities to have arrangements in place for dealing with stray dogs on a twenty-four hour basis, seven days a week. Concern had been expressed by animal welfare charities on this very point but the impact of the proposed legislation is very clear.

In addition guidance will be issued explaining what local authorities will need to do to comply with this requirement. The issues the guidance is expected to cover include:

how local authorities can ensure that facilities of a suitable standard are in place to take stray dogs at any time. These could be provided by local authorities themselves or local authorities may prefer to contract the service out to local dog boarding kennels, animal welfare organisations, the police or veterinary practices;

the arrangements they will need to set in place to inform anyone who finds a stray dog where to take it. As with other local authority responsibilities such as social welfare or child care. We would expect good arrangements with the local police to assist the public in making contact with the right person when a problem is reported;

the need to ensure that any sick or injured stray dog is promptly treated to an appropriate standard; this will need to be covered in contracts with those providing a service in respect of stray dogs;

best practice in finding homes for stray dogs and limiting the number of healthy stray dogs that are put down.

The RSPCA, the Dogs Trust and the Kennel Club have been consulted on the issues that will be covered in the guidance, and are satisfied; these organisations will be fully involved in the preparation of the guidance itself.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Voluntary and Community Sector

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am pleased to announce today a series of initiatives that will strengthen the partnership between Government and the voluntary and community sector and support the sector to continue to develop capacity. The Government recognise the invaluable role that the voluntary and community sector plays in delivering services, building strong communities and empowering citizens to tailor services to local needs.

I am publishing a consultation document today called "Strengthening Partnerships: Next Steps for Compact". The compact is a guidance document that was first developed seven years ago and has made a significant positive impact on the relationship between voluntary and community organisations and the public bodies that fund them. The consultation document invites comments on how we move forward with the compact, building on the valuable experience we have gained so far. Proposals include compact plus, a short set of commitments which public sector bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations can opt into, and a compact champion who would support organisations in realising those commitments and adjudicate on disagreements.

We are also publishing the compact code of good practice on funding and procurement today. This revised funding code includes principles such as full cost recovery and the local dimension. The aim is to get the funding relationships right and keep it right by covering the full funding cycle, from programme design and bidding, monitoring and reporting, through to the conclusion of the financial relationship.

Last year we published a 10-year vision for developing the infrastructure and building the capacity of the voluntary and community sector, within a programme called ChangeUp. This was supported by an investment of £80 million over three years. Today we will be announcing continuation funding of £70 million for a further two years, until 2008. We will also announce the establishment of Capacity Builders, a sector-led agency to run ChangeUp and ensure it benefits front-line organisations

Futurebuilders is a £125 million investment fund to assist voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises in their public service work, announced in September 2003. The fund provides finance to acquire capital assets through grants and loans. Today we announce continuation funding of £90 million for Futurebuilders for a further two years of operation, until 2008.

A capital programme, which acts as a community enterprise incubator fond, was launched in 2001 as the capital modernisation programme in order to invest in the development of frontline voluntary and community organisations (for example, investing in premises and ICT). Today we are announcing an investment of £4 million through this programme to support the development of established community anchor organisations, to provide accommodation and intensive support for embryonic community-based organisations and enterprises.

Tasers

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): On 15 September 2004, the then Home Secretary announced that he had authorised chief officers throughout England and Wales to deploy the M26 Taser for use in strictly limited circumstances. This allows chief officers to make the M26 Taser available to authorised firearms officers in their force as a less lethal alternative for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted in accordance with criteria laid down in the ACPO Manual of Guidance on Police Use of Firearms. Since then, a new Taser model, the X26 Taser has been developed and placed on the market.

The Defence Scientific Advisory Council (DSAC) sub-committee on the medical implications of less lethal weapons (DOMILL) was invited to provide a statement on the medical implications of the use of the X26 Taser. The DOMILL statement confirms that the risk of a life-threatening event arising from the direct interaction of the currents of the X26 Taser with the heart, is less than

the already low risk of such an event from the M26 Taser. I have placed a copy of the statement in the Library of the House.

I have therefore authorised chief officers to make the X26 Taser available to authorised firearms officers in their force for use as a less lethal alternative for use in situations where a firearms authority has been granted in accordance with criteria laid down in the ACPO Manual of Guidance on Police Use of Firearms. The authorisation for the M26 Taser remains in force.

Prison Management

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): I am announcing today the first competition of a cluster of prisons under the National Offender Management Service (NOMS). This will consist of the three prisons situated on the Isle of Sheppey: HMPs Elmley, Standford Hill and Swaleside. The purpose of the process is to invite bids from all sectors for the management of all three prisons and it will be an opportunity for bidders to demonstrate innovation in developing imaginative approaches to offender management in custody and in the links with interventions in the community.

NOMS will shortly call for expressions of interest and we are confident that this competition will attract high quality bids from a range of existing and potential new providers. We expect to select a preferred supplier by spring 2006.

We are not doing this as a means of reducing costs. We do not expect to run the three prisons for less money as a result of the competition but we do expect increased quality and value for money. Nor is it privatisation through the back door. I have no preconception about the outcome. The winning bid, from whatever sector, will deliver higher quality services and better outcomes in terms of resettlement, with the ultimate aim of reducing re-offending.

Indeed, the roll-out of the two tier work force code of practice, announced last week by the Prime Minister, will produce a level playing field for the contest as all bidders will face the same market conditions and will need to focus on quality rather than cost.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): On 17 March 2005 the Department for International Development hosted a high level conference on the extractive industries transparency initiative (EITI). The EITI was launched by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister in September 2002. It seeks to increase the transparency of payments by oil, gas, and mining companies to governments, as well as the transparency of the revenues received by governments. The aim is to ensure that revenues from the extractive industries fulfil their potential as an important engine for economic growth and social development in developing countries, instead of leading to conflict, corruption, and poverty.

The conference follows on from an earlier EITI conference held at Lancaster House in June 2003. Since then implementation has begun in nine countries—Azerbaijan, Congo, Ghana, Kyrgyz Republic, Nigeria, Peru, Sao Tome e Principe, Timor Leste and Trinidad and Tobago. There has been considerable progress towards increased transparency across all nine countries, and two Azerbaijan and the Kyrgyz Republic have now published numbers under EITI.

The conference on 17 March provided an opportunity to take stock of progress in implementation so far, agree a set of criteria and guidelines for implementing countries and companies and encourage practical steps to internationalise EITI. The UK launched the EITI Source book as guidance for countries and companies interested in supporting the initiative. The UK also announced the formation of an international advisory group which will agree an approach to the future management of international EITI support, incentives for implementation and a suitable process for validating implementation. A number of countries including Niger, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea used the conference as an opportunity to announce their plans to implement EITI; and several countries and international organisations including the United Kingdom, France, Norway, the United States of America, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development agreed to increase financial and technical support for EITI.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Economic Partnership Agreements

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The EU is currently negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, which have been the source of some concern for Members of the House. I warmly welcome the recent commitment made by Peter Mandelson, the European Trade Commissioner, to introduce a much stronger development focus into EPAs. I agree with him that these agreements should promote development by combining aid with wider opportunities for all ACP countries to trade, with each other on an integrated regional basis, and with the EU. In this statement, I would like to set out how the UK believes a stronger development focus could be delivered.

EPAs must be designed to deliver long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries. To do so, we believe that in its work on EPAs with ACP regional groups, the EU should take a non-mercantilist approach and not pursue any offensive interests.

Developing countries can benefit from liberalisation in the long run, provided they have the economic capacity and infrastructure they need to trade competitively. However, without the capacity or the right conditions, trade liberalisation can be harmful.

Each ACP regional group should make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries' national development plans and poverty

reduction strategies. Regional groups should have the flexibility to move towards more open markets along a non-linear path if necessary. We will not force trade liberalisation on developing countries either through trade negotiations or aid conditionally.

EPAs must ensure that ACP regional groups have maximum flexibility over their own market opening. The EU should therefore offer all ACP regional groups a period of 20 years or more for market opening, on an unconditional basis. Each regional group should be offered this full period.

Within EPAs, the EU should make an upfront offer of complete duty and quota-free market access to each ACP regional group, with no strings attached. In addition, the EU should further simplify and liberalise rules of origin under EPAs. There should be an effective safeguard mechanism for ACP countries to use if faced with a surge of subsidised EU imports.

EPAs should be accompanied by additional resources to enable the ACP countries to benefit from trade reforms and build their export competitiveness. The EU, in coordination with international financial institutions and other donors, must provide additional financial assistance to support the ACP countries. This assistance must support them in building the infrastructure and economic capacity they need to benefit from trade with the EU and the rest of the world, and put in place the institutions to help manage change and protect vulnerable people, supporting poorer countries with the cost of transition.

Investment, competition and Government procurement should be removed from the negotiations, unless specifically requested by an ACP regional negotiating group. It is for ACP regional groups to judge the development benefits of any agreements on these issues and the EU should not push for them to be discussed. If included, any negotiations on Government procurement should be limited to transparency.

A review mechanism for EPAs—with full ACP regional group ownership and participation—should be introduced to ensure they are delivering the intended developmental benefits. The Commission should be ready to provide an alternative to an EPA at the request of any ACP country. Any alternative offered should provide no worse market access to the EU than is currently enjoyed under Cotonou preferences.

In addition, the EU should propose within the WTO that Article XXIV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, should be reviewed as suggested by the Commission for Africa, in order to reduce the requirements for reciprocity and increase the focus on development priorities.

Implemented along these lines, Economic Partnership Agreements should provide real development benefits to the ACP countries.

Patent Office

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I have tasked the Patent Office with managing and shaping an intellectual property system which encourages innovation and creativity, balances the needs of consumers and users, promotes strong and competitive markets and provides a firm foundation for the knowledge-based economy. During the coming year, the Patent Office will develop these new activities and form partnerships through which new services will be delivered.

I have also set the Patent Office the following targets for 2005–06:

Patents

1. Issue 90 per cent. patent search reports within five months of request.

2. Grant 90 per cent. of patents within two and a half years of request.

3. Give good customer service in patent search and examination in 95 per cent. of quality assured cases.

Designs

4. Register 95 per cent. of correctly filed design applications, to which no substantiveobjections have been raised, within three months of the date of application.

Trade Marks

5. Register 90 per cent. of processed trade mark class applications, to which no substantive objections are raised or oppositions filed within eight months of application.

6. Achieve an average of 23 weeks to issue a decision in trade marks *inter partes* cases once the case is ready.

7. Make the correct decision on registrability for at least 98.5 per cent. of trade mark applications.

Construction Industry (Payment Practices)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Nigel Griffiths): I am pleased to announce that today, with Edwina Hart AM, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration, I have launched a joint consultation on "Improving Payment Practices in the Construction Industry".

The consultation proposes a number of amendments to part 2 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Scheme for Construction Contracts (England and Wales) Regulations 1998.

The proposals are aimed at improving the ability of parties to a construction contract to:

reach agreement on what should be paid and when given the work done under the contract or, where they cannot agree, to make an informed referral to, or response at, adjudication;

manage cash flow and enable completion of work on the project in the event of problems such as defaulted payments, disputes or insolvencies elsewhere in the supply chain; and,

refer disputes to adjudication without disincentives such as avoidance, frustration or unnecessary challenge.

Fair payment practice is something everyone agrees with and a fair payment culture underpins any progressive and modern industry.

This consultation considers a number of issues around the key principles of improving the ability of people in the construction industry manage cash flow on construction projects and to bring about effective delivery, on time and to budget. It provides the opportunity for the whole industry and its clients to come together around a shared set of proposals.

The consultation considers issues and proposals identified during Sir Michael Latham's initial review of the Construction Act, published in September 2004. Following the announcement of the review in the Budget in March 2004, I appointed Sir Michael to

produce his report with input from the construction industry representative bodies and other stakeholders. Sir Michael's report raised some key issues. While the continued support of the construction industry representative bodies is vital to the effectiveness of this consultation process, we also hope to build a wider and deeper consensus on how to improve the construction contracts legislation and payment practices in the construction industry.

We have come a long way since the announcement of the review in the 2004 Budget and I hope this consultation process can take the dialogue within the industry further forward over the coming months.

The consultation considers 14 key proposals for amending part 2 of the Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the Scheme for Construction Contracts (England and Wales) Regulations 1998. These are:

Payment framework

- Defining the content of an adequate payment mechanism in Section 110(1) of the Construction Act
- Removing the requirement to serve a Section 110(2) notice in the Construction Act
- Providing an application for payment in the legislation
- Redefining the content of withholding notices under Section 111
- Restricting the use of pay-when-certified clauses

Other payment proposals

- Introducing a right to reimbursement for the costs of suspension and remobilisation and providing additional time for remobilisation under Section 112 of the Construction Act
- Making contractual provisions on cross contract set-off ineffective
- Making "pay-when-paid" clauses ineffective in cases of "upstream" insolvency proceedings
- Allowing stage payments under the scheme for construction contracts to be made for materials in advance of their arrival on site

Adjudication proposals

- Preventing the use of trustee stakeholder accounts to suspend an adjudicator's award pending litigation other than when the recipient is involved in insolvency proceedings.
- Providing the adjudicator with the power to rule on certain aspects of his own jurisdiction and providing a right to payment in cases where the adjudicator stands down due to lack of jurisdiction.
- Providing the adjudicator with the right to overturn "final and conclusive" decisions where these are of substance to interim payments only
- Extending the adjudicator's immunity under the Construction Act to claims by third parties
- Applying provisions on adjudicator independence from the scheme for construction contracts to all adjudications in section 108 of the Construction Act

The consultation period will close on 21 June 2005.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 23 March 2005

TREASURY

OGCbuying.solutions: Performance Targets for 2005–06

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Paul Boateng): I have today set the following performance targets for OGCbuying.solutions for 2005–06.

Savings

The agency will facilitate at least £400 million value for money improvements for the public sector in 2005–06.

Customer Satisfaction

The agency will continue to achieve levels of customer satisfaction above 90 per cent. as a headline figure and will demonstrate continuing improvements in customer satisfaction through other measures.

ROCE

The agency will make a return on capital employed of 6.5 per cent.

Efficiency

The agency will reduce by 5 per cent. the ratio of internal costs over value for money improvements with the outturn for the same ratio in 2004–05 (excluding any new business e.g. Efficiency Review Initiatives).

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Claims Management Companies

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place yesterday, 22 March 2005.

"I am announcing today the intention, when I bring forward proposals for new legislation giving effect to the government's proposed reform package for legal services following Sir David Clementi's report, to bring the claims management company sector within the new statutory regulatory net. I anticipate this would be with a front-line regulator subject to oversight by the proposed new oversight regulator the Legal Services Board.

The Government's response to the Better Regulation Task Force's report Better Routes to Redress made it clear that claims management companies, which often largely deal with acquiring personal injury claims, sector must be properly regulated. Claim management companies are well known for their high-pressure selling, sharp practices and targeting of vulnerable people and a major driver in fuelling the perceptions of a compensation culture.

Claims management companies are currently relatively lightly regulated. There has been an attempt to introduce further voluntary regulation by a non-profit making body called the Claims Standards Council (CSC). The CSC has worked hard to produce comprehensive rules, consumer and commercial codes of practice and to secure the engagement of the companies working in the unregulated sector. However, claims management companies have failed to demonstrate anything like the commitment that I would hoped to have seen by now to clean up their act. I must therefore consider how best to safeguard consumer interests, for now and for the future. The CSC can still play an important role in helping to close the current regulatory gap. If it is able to make sufficient progress to preparing the sector to be regulated it could also be a candidate for the role of the new front line regulator, subject to being judged as fit for purpose by the LSB.

For now I believe that we have the best opportunity to ensure consumers get a better deal through a combination of more rigorous use of existing protections and the introduction of compulsory insurance regulation via the FSA and the CSC's voluntary regulation initiative. For the future we will work towards developing and delivering the watertight statutory regulatory mechanism for claims management companies that is self evidently needed".

Justice and Community Safety Inspectorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): Today the Government will publish their report "Establishing an Inspectorate for Justice and Community Safety". Copies of the report have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The proposals for consultation outlined in the report aim to introduce root and branch reform, changing the structure of inspection in the criminal justice system and enhancing the capacity for leadership and decision making.

Independent inspection in the criminal justice system plays an important role in improving services and holding organisations to account for their performance. In recent years every criminal justice agency has undergone reform to deliver improvements to services; it is essential that the inspection regime is reformed to support these changes.

The five justice inspectorates have done an excellent job in driving up performance. Therefore the Government propose to build on the current base of expertise and create an inspectorate for justice and community safety that continues the rigorous independent inspection of criminal justice agencies, including the treatment and conditions of those in custody, whilst broadening this to inspect across organisational boundaries to deliver a more joined up inspection system; an inspection regime that inspects the criminal justice process from end to end, supports the frontline by reducing unnecessary burden and bureaucracy and examines how the system can better deliver for those who come into contact with it.

The Government welcome views on the precise design of the new inspectorate before 15 June 2005.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Digital Television

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): I have today published the report of the digital television project which sets out advice to Government on the process of digital switchover. The report is the culmination of nearly three years work by broadcasters, regulators and industry working with Government and other stakeholders. The report sets out a detailed strategy for achieving digital switchover and will help inform Government decisions about how and when to proceed with digital switchover.

There are still important questions that need to be resolved before we can announce the final timetable for switchover. We are currently working with the BBC to assess the scope of assistance schemes to help vulnerable consumers through switchover. We will only confirm the timetable once all remaining issues relating to digital switchover are resolved and we are satisfied that the interests of consumers, especially the most vulnerable, are well protected.

Copies of the report of the digital television project have been placed in the Library.

DEFENCE

Warship Support Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The House will wish to be aware that, as part of an internal restructuring of the Defence Logistics Organisation, the decision has been taken to disestablish the Warship Support Agency with effect from 1 April this year and to subsume its work in the new defence logistics structure.

The DLO restructuring is aimed at establishing the most effective and efficient organisation to support modern operations. In particular, we are seeking to achieve a clear customer focus, clarity of outputs and objectives, strong performance management, visibility of targets and performance and a strong governance regime in a way that is common across the whole of logistics support to the front line.

I expect the agency's annual report and accounts for financial year 2004–05 to be ready to be laid in Parliament before the summer recess.

Medical Supplies Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): With effect from 1 April 2005 the Medical Supplies Agency (MSA) will cease to hold agency status. This has been decided as a result of Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) restructuring proposals and the findings of the DLO/MSA integration review report.

Following the medical quinquennial review and the DLO/MSA integration review report, the ownership of the MSA transferred from the Surgeon General's Department (now the Defence Medical Services Department) to the DLO on 1 April 2002. The MSA is now integrated into the broad supply chain within the DLO. The MSA has ceased to be a storage and distribution organisation, has adopted DLO's business processes and has reduced in size. The MSA's role and business have undergone significant change and are no longer appropriate or large enough to justify agency status. I have therefore decided that agency status for the Medical Supplies Agency should cease and that the organisation should be retitled the Medical Supplies Integrated Project Team

Northern Ireland Patrol Vessels

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence previously announced to the House our intention to pay off the Northern Ireland Patrol Vessel (NIPV) Squadron by April 2007, 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 347. Further discussions have taken place with the Chief Constable and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. We have now decided that the vessels will be decommissioned in September 2005.

When the NIPV cease operations, the maritime security of Northern Ireland will be maintained under the same arrangements as the rest of the United Kingdom. While there will be no permanent assignments of Royal Navy vessels for Northern Ireland, the Chief Constable is satisfied that routine Royal Navy activities around the UK and specific intelligence led maritime operations will deliver an appropriate level of support to the police in countering terrorism.

Reservists (Financial Assistance)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): I am pleased to be able to announce that new regulations governing the payment of financial assistance to reservists and their employers during mobilisation were laid before Parliament today and that subject to usual parliamentary scrutiny will then come into effect on 14 April 2005.

These changes represent a significant improvement in the assistance available to reservists and employers. They reaffirm our continuing commitment to the reserve forces, and reflect the value we place on them and their contribution to the United Kingdom's defence commitments.

These regulations have been prepared following a comprehensive consultation process, which I announced on 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 62WS. They replace the previous complex and intrusive scheme which only matched individuals' earnings up to a rank-related threshold or band, with a separate hardship award scheme for those whose earnings exceeded the band for their rank. Payments to employers under that scheme were limited and complex.

The full details of the scheme of both reservists and employers are available in the documents laid before the House.

I also propose that the financial limit shall be subject to annual review commencing in April 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

High Hedges

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Phil Hope): I am today announcing that we will be commencing the remainder of part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 in England on 1 June. From this date, local authorities will be able to deal with complaints about high hedges that are having an adverse effect on a neighbour's amenity.

Alongside the commencement order, we have laid regulations specifying the grounds on which appeals can be brought against local authority decisions under the legislation, and setting out how such appeals will be handled. The appeals procedure has been streamlined in the light of responses to the public consultation held last year.

Consultation comments have also led us to decide that we should not exercise our power to set a ceiling on what local authorities can charge for dealing with high hedges complaints. Section 68 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 specifies that any such fee must be paid by the complainant. As a result of our decision, local authorities in England will be free to decide whether, and at what level, it is appropriate to charge for this service, taking account of local circumstances and local taxpayers' wishes. Should they so wish, authorities may provide this service for free, or charge different amounts to different groups of people. This is in line with the Government's general policy of allowing such decisions to be made at the local level.

We have published a full Regulatory Impact Assessment on implementing the high hedges legislation. It includes an estimate of what it might cost a local authority, on average, to deal with a high hedge complaint. It also contains, as an Annex, a summary of the consultation responses.

To support local authorities as they prepare to take on this new responsibility, we will publish shortly detailed guidance on administering complaints and enforcing any action that hedge owners may be required to take to remedy the problems caused by the hedge. We also plan to hold, during May, regional workshops to provide training for local authority officers.

For the public, we are publishing two free explanatory leaflets. "Over the garden hedge" is a revision of the previous leaflet of this name and offers advice on how people can settle these disputes for themselves. Negotiation is a necessary precursor to submitting a formal complaint to a local authority. The authority can reject a complaint if they consider the complainant has not done everything they reasonably could to settle the matter themselves. The second leaflet "High hedges: complaining to the council" explains what complaints local authorities can consider and how they will deal with them.

Copies of the Regulatory Impact Assessment and both leaflets will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and have been published on the website of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at www.odpm.gov.uk. The guidance for local authorities "High hedges complaints: prevention and cure" will similarly be deposited in House Libraries and published on the web as soon as it is available.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Student Finance

The Minister for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education (Dr. Kim Howells): The Regulatory Impact Assessment that was published alongside the Higher Education Act 2004 contained estimates of the fee income for the HE sector and the costs of student loans and grants. These estimates were based on two scenarios for the pattern of fee charging by higher education providers: 75 per cent. of students charged £3,000 and 25 per cent. charged £1,200; and 50 per cent. charging £3,000 and 50 per cent. charging £1,200. The figures below update that analysis on the basis of findings from the Office for Fair Access that 91 per cent. of higher education providers are likely to charge £3,000. The figures below also update the analysis to take account of the new £2,700 grant, replacing the previous £1,500 HE grant and £1,200 fee remission grant; they also update the analysis to put it all on a 2006–07 student number basis.

FEE INCOME AND STUDENT SUPPORT FORECASTS

Table 1: Fee income for higher education providers

Fee Income from standard fee (based on 2006–07 standard fee of £1,200).	£950 million
Additional income from variable fees (based on 91 per cent. of universities charging full £3,000 fee).	£1,350 million
Total	£2,300 million

Table 2: Cost of Student Support

	Cost
New grant of £2,700	£890 million
Maintenance Loans	£740 million
Fee Loans	£830 million

Notes:

1. All costs are in steady state 2006–07 terms.
2. Fee loan forecasts are based on the assumption that 9 per cent. of students are charged £2,000 and 91 per cent. charged £3,000, so the average fee for new students will be £2,910. We are also assuming 80 per cent. take-up of fee deferral.
3. The maintenance loan forecasts assume 82 per cent. take up.
4. The forecasts are based on a RAB charge for maintenance loans of 29 per cent. and for fee loans of 42 per cent., under 3.5 per cent. discount rate.
5. Fee income forecasts have been rounded to the nearest £50 million. All other figures have been rounded to the nearest £10 million.
6. Forecasts are based on setting a grant threshold so that 30 per cent. of students receive the full grant.
7. The combined grant costs represent an extra £440 million over and above expenditure on the £1,200 fee remission grant as it would have been.
8. Adopting the £2,700 grant has the effect of moving costs from maintenance loans to fee loans, because the £1,200 fee remission grant would have substituted for fee loans whereas some of the £2,700 grant substitutes for maintenance loan. The level of the substitution rate will be set to ensure overall cost neutrality.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

State Veterinary Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): With my colleagues in Scotland and Wales, I am delighted to announce that on 1 April 2005 the state veterinary service (SVS) will launch as an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, retaining the title the state veterinary service.

The first chief executive will be Glenys Stacey who will take responsibility for a challenging programme of reforming the way that the services are delivered to its many stakeholders. The SVS has a long, commendable history of engagement with the farming and rural community. The agency will build on this as it enhances its operational and financial effectiveness and continuously improves on the vital role it plays in the fight against animal disease.

The agency will work in close partnership with its policy customers in the Department and the devolved administrations; other delivery agents; and its customers in the rural and livestock community, to deliver services that maximise the use of modern information technology and ensure the optimum utilisation of its staff.

At the forefront of protection against animal-borne diseases and their potential impact on public health, the economy and the rural community, the agency will also be in the front line to deal with any outbreak.

The chief executive has been set some demanding key targets for the first year.

Copies have been placed in both Libraries of the House.

Copies of the agency's framework document and any subsequent amendments will also be placed in both Libraries of the House. Further copies and other information about the agency can be obtained from the chief executive.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): On 14 July 2004, in his statement to the House, *Official Report*, column 1431, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced to the House that the Government accepted the conclusions of Lord Butler's review. In my written statement of 15 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 54WS, I said that Sir David Omand, the Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator, would lead the work on implementation of those conclusions. Sir David Omand has now completed this work and I should like to report the outcome to the House.

A considerable amount has been done in a short time by Sir David, the Heads of the Security and Intelligence Agencies and senior officials in Government Departments to implement the conclusions. The detail is set out in a report (Cm 6492) that I am today laying before the House. Copies will also be placed in the Library of the House. A number of key actions have already been taken:

Secret Intelligence Service has developed new procedures, provided additional resources and revised line management arrangements to improve evaluation and to oversee the quality of intelligence reporting. Work has taken place to ensure that source descriptions in intelligence reports across the intelligence community use standardised terminology and are consistent;

Arrangements have been put in place across the community to ensure that the distribution of sensitive reporting can be extended when necessary;

Joint Intelligence Committee processes have been reviewed and tightened up. Arrangements have been made so that in future the annual process to set the requirements and priorities for the collection and analysis of intelligence will apply to the Defence Intelligence Staff as well as to the three statutory agencies. A confidential guide for readers of intelligence, including information on the limitations of intelligence, has been produced and distributed; and

Access to the Agencies' Staff Counsellor has been agreed for members of the assessments staff and fully analogous arrangements have been put in place for members of the Defence Intelligence Staff.

Further work is in hand to improve the analytical support provided to the intelligence community following a study carried out by a senior Foreign Office official. That study has recommended and the Government have endorsed:

the establishment of a Professional Head of Intelligence Analysis to advise in the security, defence and foreign affairs fields on analytical capability and methodology; recruitment and career management of analysts; and the development and oversight of more substantial training of analysts; and the expansion of the assessments staff, by about one third. This will provide additional internal review and challenge functions for Joint Intelligence Committee assessments; resource work on countries at risk of instability; and allow increased production of regular warning papers highlighting significant threats or other issues likely to face the Government in the near to medium term in the fields of security, defence and foreign affairs. Other small increases to make the assessments staff more effective are also recommended.

Sir David Omand's successor as Security and Intelligence Co-ordinator has been asked to give high priority to implementing these measures.

In addition to the publication of the detailed report on implementation of the conclusions of the Butler review, the Cabinet Office is publishing today an updated National Intelligence Machinery booklet. Copies of this are also being placed in the Library of the House. It is also on the Cabinet Office website: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk. This booklet sets out the roles, responsibility and organisation of the UK intelligence community and reflects the changes made as a result of the Butler review. It also includes an unclassified version of the guide for readers of intelligence that has been circulated within Government.

Lord Butler's review has contributed greatly to the process underway to fit the UK's intelligence community for the future. The Government recognise the need to move substantially to implement its conclusions and have done so.

HEALTH

Prudential Borrowing

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): Section 12 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 requires Monitor (the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of NHS foundation trusts) to make a prudential borrowing code for determining the limit on the total amount of borrowing by NHS foundation trusts.

In accordance with section 12(4) of the Act, the executive chairman of Monitor has today published the code. Copies are available in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Leave to Remain (Turkey)

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): Following my statement on 20 December 2004 about Ken Sutton's report on allegations about the handling of applications under the European Community Association Agreements (ECAA), work has continued on next steps. This work includes putting in place procedures and guidance for the agreement with Turkey, consistent with recommendation 15 of Mr. Sutton's report.

In line with Ken Sutton's second report recommendation 15, guidance for handling in-country applications was reviewed in order to take account of experience of procedures and revised guidance on handling in-country applications from Romania and Bulgaria. Turkish ECAA in-country applications were held during this time. The robust procedures we put in place on ECAA further leave to remain cases are reflected, as far as possible, in procedures for handling in-country Turkish cases. This guidance will be published on the Home Office website and consideration of these cases will re-commence shortly.

Guidance to manage Turkish applications made at port under this association agreement has already been published and we began consideration of applications for leave to enter at ports on 4 January 2005.

Corporate Manslaughter

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Charles Clarke): I am pleased to announce the publication today of the Government's draft legislation on corporate manslaughter. In summary, this is intended to remedy a particular defect in the present law which can lead to companies escaping liability for manslaughter because no senior single individual can be shown to be personally liable. It builds on earlier work by the Law Commission in 1996 and consultation by the Government in 2000 on the law on involuntary manslaughter. No new standards or regulations will be created with the proposed new offence.

Current laws for prosecuting companies for gross negligence manslaughter fail to operate in a sufficiently flexible way to reflect the reality of decision making in large organisations and therefore fail to provide proper accountability or justice for victims. It is too restrictive to say that a company cannot be prosecuted for manslaughter unless a person who effectively embodies the company is also guilty of the offence. The Government are committed to reforming this area of the law and today's draft Bill marks an important step in delivering that commitment.

Our proposals would introduce a clearer, more effective offence that would see organisations held properly to account for gross failings by their senior management that have had fatal consequences. This would continue to be an extremely serious offence, reserved for the very worst cases of corporate mismanagement leading to death, and the threshold for committing it would therefore remain at the same level of gross misconduct currently required. But the new test of senior management failure would allow courts to consider a wider picture of failure at the senior levels of an organisation, making it easier to bring prosecutions.

The new offence would complement, not replace, other forms of accountability such as prosecutions under health and safety legislation. And it would be clearly linked to the standards required under those laws. This is not about introducing new regulatory burdens, stifling entrepreneurial activity or creating a risk averse culture and organisations taking a conscientious approach to their current obligations have nothing to fear. Nor is it about the individual liability of directors or others, which is not affected by the proposals. It is about ensuring that the law is effective in bringing to account, for a specific serious offence and corporately, organisations that have shown a clear disregard for the law with fatal consequences for members of their workforce or others.

The proposals would apply to Crown bodies, such as Government Departments, as well as the wider public sector and industry. They create a broad level playing field between public and private sectors, applying when both are carrying our similar activities, for example, in respect of ensuring the safety of their workforce and premises and when supplying goods or services or operating commercially. But the Crown and other bodies performing public functions are not in an identical position to private industry and certain core Government activities will be outside the scope of the Bill. These include key public functions such as setting and inspecting regulatory standards, issuing guidance and standards to public services or providing central procurement for public bodies. A narrow band of activities requiring specific lawful authority, such as the detention of prisoners (whether in a publicly or privately managed prison), and public policy decisions involving the allocation of public funds or competing social or political factors will also be exempt. The organisation and management of these functions involve wider questions of public policy where Parliament, public inquiries or the broader democratic process provides accountability.

I welcome the process of scrutiny and consultation that will follow publication of this draft Bill. Consultation will run until 17 June and I welcome comments from across the board: industry, unions and other stakeholders. The draft Bill is also being published for parliamentary pre-legislative scrutiny and I look forward to receiving the report that will follow that process.

Copies of the draft Bill have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The draft legislation is also available on the Home Office website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

World Bank

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I have placed in the Libraries of both Houses a copy of a new DFID report, "The UK and the World Bank 2004".

This report describes the UK's work with the World Bank over the bank's financial year 2004 (known as FY04: July 2003–June 2004). In line with my commitment to greater transparency on our relations with the bank, it sets out the broad positions the UK

took in a number of discussions at the bank—on the bank's support to poor countries' development, its role in responding to debates on global issues such as debt and trade, and its institutional effectiveness. The report also records the UK's position on resolutions adopted by the Board of Governors. It will be an annual publication; the next report will cover the period July 2004–June 2005.

The UK believes that the World Bank is an effective development organisation, but its performance can still be improved. In FY04, the UK pressed the bank to improve performance in a number of areas, for example: ensuring that country assistance strategies focus on poverty reduction; using more poverty and social impact analysis (PSIA), and making more bank information available to the public. Since the end of FY04, we have also successfully pressed the bank to review its use of conditionality. We will report on this initiative in our next report on the UK and the World Bank.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

R *v.* Rayment and Others

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has made the following ministerial statement:

"The trial judge in the case of R *v.* Rayment and Others at the central criminal court has today, 22 March 2005, discharged the jury, ending the proceedings.

The trial dealt with an alleged fraud over contracts for the construction of London's Jubilee line extension project. The prosecution arose from allegations that the defendants conspired to defraud London Underground by gaining access to confidential insider information, which was used against London Underground Limited's interests during the course of its dealings with tenderers and contractors on the Jubilee line extension project. The information was relevant to the award of contracts worth tens of millions of pounds and also two substantial claims for additional monies under contracts awarded in connection with the Jubilee line extension project. The allegations also concerned corrupting public officials entrusted with safeguarding London Underground Limited's interests.

Experienced lawyers considered the evidence in detail and a decision to prosecute was taken. Charges were brought in February 2000. Lord Williams, when he was Attorney General, granted consent in February 2000 to prosecute the corruption case on the basis that there was sufficient evidence for a realistic prospect of conviction and it was in the public interest to prosecute.

The CPS were ready for trial in 2001 but the case was split into two trials. The first trial started with a jury on 26 June 2003. The case has been affected by delays and breaks. Time has been lost due to illness, scheduled holidays, periods of paternity leave, an operation and sickness of defendants. Legal argument has also involved substantial periods where the jury were not required to hear evidence. For example, in the last seven months the jury has heard evidence on only 13 days of the 140 available.

The judge's ruling followed submissions by all parties in response to a request from the judge.

Prosecuting counsel have advised that it is their clear view that there have been such delays and interruptions to this case that a fair trial is now impossible. Counsel formed a judgement that the case ought to be stopped. The DPP and I agree with that view and, therefore, approved prosecution counsel's statement to the trial judge informing her of this view.

I agreed with the DPP last year the need for more control and robust management of large cases. The DPP has responded by developing a system, which will see a case management panel, chaired by the DPP, to consider the management of very large cases. The panel will consider issues such as the selection of charges, the number of defendants, likely number and length of trials and selection of trial advocates. It will also monitor progress of the case and key case management decisions during its life. It will be coupled with a similar process across the 42 CPS areas where chief Crown prosecutors will review the most serious and lengthy cases in their areas. This will be implemented from 4 April 2005 and I believe, offers real potential for getting a better grip on cases such as the current matter.

In addition, the DPP has recently announced a new structure to deal with the most serious and complex cases in CPS headquarters. This will involve the DPP in more direct and substantial control over such cases. I welcome this restructuring.

On 22 March the Lord Chief Justice issued a protocol for dealing with lengthy trials, which I welcomed. The protocol emphasises the need for robust and well-informed case management to identify and allow the court to focus on the real issues in the case. The new protocol fits clearly with the criminal case management framework that I issued last July together with Lord Falconer, Baroness Scotland and the Lord Chief Justice. The protocol and framework will continue the culture change in the way in which all criminal justice practitioners operate. The public are entitled to an efficient and effective criminal justice system and cases such as the present one must never be allowed to happen again.

This decision will cause great public disquiet as it causes me considerable disquiet. Most serious allegations have not in the end been brought to a final conclusion. It is important and in the interest of the defendants, to underline that these allegations have not been proved and that they have maintained they are not guilty.

Very considerable public money has been expended. Much time for a jury and for judge and defendants has been expended. It is important to learn what lessons we can. I have therefore asked Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of CPS, Stephen Wooler, to report to me on this case under section 2(1)(b) of the CPS Inspectorate Act 2000. The terms of reference of this review will be drawn up shortly. The DPP has confirmed that the prosecution will provide full cooperation in this inquiry."

TRANSPORT

Light Dues

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): I am pleased to announce that light dues rates and the tonnage threshold will remain the same for 2005–06. The Government remain committed to a cost recovery system yet rates have been reduced significantly in the last 12 years. They were last reduced in 2004.

Despite the General Lighthouse Authorities having undertaken a programme of major capital investment—the redevelopment of the Trinity House Lighthouse Service depot at Harwich and the replacement of GLA ships, costs to the industry have remained static. These projects will be funded out of the General Lighthouse Fund. We shall continue to work closely with the General Lighthouse Authorities to maximise efficiency where we can and to ensure that the benefits that have been achieved are returned to light dues payers.

The Study into the Economic Effects of Light Dues carried out by consultants, MDS Transmodal and DTZ Pieda, was commissioned in 2003. The study examined the direct economic impact of light dues charges on shipping lines, ports and owners of fishing vessels and pleasure craft and on the wider UK economy and the

economic implications of alternative charging options. The study concluded that the requirement to pay light dues did not distort trading by commercial shipping to and from the UK. The charge had negligible effects on the economy. Removal of most of the existing exemptions would also have little impact on overall economic activity, as would an annual charge of around £100 on pleasure craft. This level of charge being an assumption, and chosen because it is the equivalent approximately to the annual cost of other Government levies, such as an annual television licence and the road fund licence for a small car.

I have considered the case for restructuring the current light dues system and in particular, extending the scope of the charge to all pleasure craft. A number of charging approaches have been discussed—for example registration of vessels, a charge based on moorings, or a charge based on vessel movements. All of these systems would be expensive and time consuming to establish, relative to the levels of charge to be levied. I have decided, therefore, that a cost effective, enforceable, collection mechanism for pleasure craft cannot be introduced at the present time.

I do not propose to change the structure of the current charging system for the foreseeable future.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Opportunity Age

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): Today we are breaking new ground by publishing, for the first time, a comprehensive strategy for an ageing society, entitled "Opportunity Age—Meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century".

British people are living much longer and on the whole healthier lives. The evidence points to a continuation of that trend. The strategy plans ahead for the changes this will bring and gives a lead to the broad partnership we need to bring change about.

The strategy complements the Government's pension principles and the work of the Pensions Commission, by focusing on other aspects of economic and social life affected by demographic change: employment, healthier and more active ageing, and the services—health, care and housing—which an ageing society demands.

The Government see population ageing as an opportunity to be seized to raise our already impressive level of employment, engage older people in contributing to society actively, and to transform public services for older people to extend choice and support independence.

Our people, firms and partners in local authorities and the voluntary sector will need to adapt. The task of Government through this strategy is to identify the issues and the outcomes we want, give a lead, invest sustainably in support, where needed, and co-ordinate action effectively.

It reports progress to date—on higher employment levels among the over-50s, on reducing pensioner poverty, on better access to more effective healthcare delivered by our investment in the National Health Service. And it plans ahead by setting out a programme of Government action to promote wider change in society.

We are striving for change in employment, by setting a world-leading aspiration of an 80 per cent employment rate, so that we provide opportunities for people to sustain and extend their working lives by choice. We will legislate to consign age discrimination in the workplace to history; we will support inactive and unemployed older people so that they find jobs; we will enable working people to improve their skills and plan their later careers, retirement and pension options; we will extend opportunities for people to combine work and caring responsibilities.

We are promoting change, to support active ageing in communities which respect age and diversity: we will remove barriers which can prevent older people from taking up opportunities to learn, enjoy leisure activity or to contribute through volunteering. We will extend free local public transport. We will encourage local authorities to engage with older people so that their needs are built into the priorities of local communities.

We are delivering change, to extend independence and choice in the way we deliver the support services older people need: we will offer an individual budget which older people will be able to use to buy in their care package, exercising real control like any customer. We believe that independence can be sustained even when infirmity sets in. We will pilot this new approach and also include Supporting People funding in nine of these pilots up to a maximum of 1 per cent. of each authority's annual allocation for that programme.

And through our link-age programme, we will build over time, an integrated home visiting service which can offer older people a personal care, benefit, heating and housing check up, so they receive their full entitlement to support for independent living at home.

Part of this strategy will be consultative. We are seeking views on the outcomes, and indicators assess progress towards improved quality of life. We will involve a wide range of central and local government partners and voluntary bodies in regular assessments. Consultation will finish on 17 July 2005.

We look forward with optimism to a future without ageism and in which older people are respected members of our communities contributing even more than they do now to society. Our strategy sets a sustainable path.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 24 March 2005

TREASURY

HM Customs and Excise (Contingencies Fund)

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): On 29 September 2004 the Economic Secretary informed the Treasury Select Committee that

> "In parallel with the Operation Gestalt investigation the Metropolitan Police have also provided advice on a number of other Customs and Excise investigations concerning money service bureaux (MSB). David Varney, Chairman has asked the police to extend their investigation to cover these additional issues."

The police are examining the preliminary material and will soon be ready to start the investigation. In order to progress the investigation most efficiently, the police have proposed using a joint team. This would mean a team of Customs investigators working with the police. Departmental accommodation will also be made available.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £5,000 for this new service has been sought in the spring supplementary estimate for HM Customs and Excise. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure of this £5,000 has been met by repayable cash advances from the contingencies fund.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Family Justice System (Family Courts)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My noble Friend the Baroness Ashton of Upholland, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, has made the following written ministerial statement:

> "With the agreement of the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, I am pleased to inform the House that I have today placed in the Libraries of both Houses a copy of the Government's response to the Constitutional Affairs Select Committee's report of their inquiry into the operation of the family justice system".

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning Regulations (Hazardous Substances)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am announcing today the publication of a consultation document on draft regulations to amend the town and country planning regulations that give effect to the land use planning requirements of council directive 96/82/EC on the control of major accident hazards involving dangerous substances, as amended by directive 2003/105/EC. Amendments are proposed to the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992 No 656) and the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) (England) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No 3280).

The main change is an amendment to schedule 1 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1992 to reflect changes to some definitions and qualifying quantities of dangerous substances that fall within the ambit of the Seveso II directive and for which hazardous substances consent may now be required. A minor amendment is proposed to the Development Plan Regulations 1999. Similar, relevant changes have already been incorporated in the Development Plan Regulations made in 2004 for the new local and regional plan systems.

The consultation will run until 16 June 2005 and will apply to England only. Copies of the consultation document will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses and from The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website www.odpm.gov.uk.

Planning Policy Guidance Note 25

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am announcing today my intention to prepare and consult on a revision of Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 25, development and flood risk, and a direction in respect of certain development in areas at risk of flooding.

PPG25 was published in July 2001. Its key aim is to ensure that flood risk is properly taken into account in the planning of new developments, so as to reduce the risk of flooding and the damage which floods cause. Since it was published it has succeeded in raising the profile of flooding matters in the planning process. A review of its working last year, after three years of operation, showed that its core policies remain valid, but that more needs to be done to implement them fully.

I therefore plan to issue a draft of a new Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 25 for consultation later in 2005. In particular, the new version will clarify the core sequential test that matches types of development to levels of flood risk. It will also strengthen the requirement for flood risk assessments to be prepared to inform the consideration of development plans and of individual development proposals in flood risk areas.

The consultation draft of PPS25 will be prepared on the basis that a standing planning Direction in respect of certain proposed developments in areas at risk of flooding will be made under article 14 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995. This would require an application for major development to be referred to the Government Office, to consider whether it should be called in for decision by the First Secretary of State, if the Environment Agency sustains an objection to it on flood risk grounds, after having been re-consulted following an initial objection.

This consultation forms an important component in the Government's wider response to their general consultation last year on their forward strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in "Making space for water". My right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Environment and Agri-environment is making a separate statement on this today.

DEFENCE

Future Rotorcraft Policy

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): I am pleased to announce that the Ministry of Defence has agreed a Heads of Agreement with Agusta Westland which commits us to working together towards a long-term partnering and business transformation arrangement. Although the details are subject to further negotiation with the company over the coming months, we expect this to provide significant efficiency and effectiveness improvements in how we support our helicopter fleet.

Competition remains the cornerstone of our procurement policy. This applies to our Future Rotorcraft Capability requirements, as elsewhere, in particular for the Land Lift (Medium) element. As the Defence Industrial Policy makes clear, however, value for money judgments can sometimes suggest different approaches. Since the Agusta Westland Future Lynx project has already benefited from extensive assessment work and de-risking, it would be our preferred procurement option for meeting the Land Find and Maritime (Surface) Attack element. This is, however, subject to continuing negotiations with the company to agree acceptable contract conditions and prices, which must meet clearly defined parameters.

This approach is excellent news for Agusta Westland, for the highly skilled staff at its Yeovil plant, and for the British defence industry. Other key partners include Smiths Industries in Cheltenham and Thales(UK) in Raynes Park and Taunton, GD(UK) in St Leonards-on-Sea and South Dorset Engineering Ltd. in Weymouth.

We believe that, subject to negotiating the precise commercial details, the Future Lynx represents a highly capable, value for money, solution to our requirement. We expect to make a final "Main Gate" procurement decision later this year. The contract is potentially worth over £1 billion.

This is a key first milestone for the Future Rotorcraft Capability programme, and is part of the commitment we made in last year's supplement to the Defence White Paper to invest some £3 billion in our helicopter fleet.

Agency Status

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): With effect from 1 April 2005, the Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency and the Defence Intelligence and Security Centre will both cease to have agency status. This change will facilitate improved management across current agency boundaries, enable simpler management and budgeting processes, reduce overheads, and enable a more effective response to customers' strategic and operational requirements.

MOD Medal Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): In my previous statement, 16 September 2004, *Official Report*, column 162WS, I gave an undertaking to keep the House informed of the progress with regard to the creation of the Ministry of Defence Medal Office.

I am pleased to report that on 22 March I officially opened the MOD Medal Office which is now established at a single location within the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency (AFPAA) at Innsworth, Gloucester.

The change from separate offices for each service to the new office is affording the opportunity to adopt common procedures based upon best practice. The significant investment in personnel, laser engraving and computer technology has already led to a substantial reduction in the backlog of medals assessment and engraving and underlines the priority and commitment MOD attaches to the prompt delivery of medals to veterans, their relatives and serving personnel. Indeed, since the introduction of a new laser engraving facility at Innsworth, around 40,000 extra medals have been handed out to recipients.

AFPAA assumed full responsibility for the management of medal output, target setting and performance monitoring with effect from 1 October 2004 and has successfully filled all of the 61 medal-related posts. Whilst the introduction of the Suez Canal Zone and Iraq medals has resulted in unprecedented numbers of medal applications (117,425 since 10 April 2004), the backlog for the Canal Zone medal today is 13,275 compared with 21,371 as at 24 September 2004 and for the Iraq medal is 13,382 compared with 25,178.

The formation of the MOD Medal Office is already producing significant benefits and I should like to pay tribute to the staff of the single service medal offices and the MOD Medal Office for their part in bringing about this improvement.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): My right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced last week in his Budget statement that there would be a change to the tax regime for the new compensation scheme which will commence on 6 April 2005.

I am pleased to confirm that because of the special demands of service in our armed forces, the Government have now decided that lump sums awarded to those who are able to remain in service after their injury or illness will be paid tax-free.

This change reflects the importance that this Government attach to our armed forces in the event of injury or disability.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Flood and Coastal Erosion (Government Strategy)

The Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): Over the autumn of 2004 the Government carried out a proactive consultation exercise on "Making space for water", a new Government strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management. There were 268 formal responses to that consultation, and overall they were very supportive of the proposed new strategic direction.

I am pleased to announce that I am today publishing a First Government response to the points made during the consultation. Copies of the response "Making space

for water: Taking forward a new Government strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management in England, First Government response to the autumn 2004 Making space for water consultation exercise, March 2005", have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Government response confirms that strategic direction of travel on key issues, taking account of the points made during the consultation exercise.

The programme of work set out in the response will make a significant contribution to our ability to adapt to climate change, in line with the recently published UK sustainable development strategy, "Securing the future", and Defra's five-year strategy, "Delivering the Essentials of Life". The response considers how we should continue to incorporate allowances for climate change and build adaptability into our risk management measures.

The new strategy encompasses all types of flooding and a range of Government policies relevant to flooding and coastal erosion. We will be adopting a more holistic approach so as to achieve a better balance between the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, environmental and social). We will also make more use of a portfolio of measures so as to achieve multiple objectives from the way we identify and implement solutions. We will be seeking to make the involvement of stakeholders more effective at all levels of decision making.

To facilitate the new approach we will work towards extending the strategic role of the Environment Agency to cover all sources of flooding as well as coastal erosion.

The response covers a wide range of important issues. In relation to land use planning policies on development and flood risk, my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for Housing and Planning is today making a separate statement which supports the direction of travel and which I strongly welcome.

The response commits the Government to piloting a range of different approaches to improve the integration of the management of urban drainage, an area identified as a potential source of major future risk.

In response to the call for more attention to social impacts, we will be expanding our risk management tools to put greater emphasis on flood warning and flood awareness, and on developing measures to promote resistance and resilience to flooding, including the funding of a pilot scheme.

As far as coastal issues are concerned, the Government will take forward work both to improve the evidence base in relation to, and to investigate the practical implications of considering, a wider portfolio of coastal erosion risk management tools. We will also be exploring different models to ensure there is appropriate democratic input into future decision-making on the management of coastal risks.

The Government are committed to ensuring that the flood risk management programme takes proper account of the environmental impacts of our interventions. As a practical example of this I am pleased to announce that we shall be taking measures to offset damage occurring to the Ouse Washes Natura 2000 site. This will allow the site to continue to protect people and property from flooding at the same time as addressing the environmental value it provides for birds.

We will be announcing shortly details of a new challenge fund to stimulate innovative approaches to achieving multiple objective schemes, and we are also developing broadly based performance measures to track the impact of our programme and to ensure our management of flood and coastal erosion risk contributes to sustainable development.

Our new strategy will provide an excellent basis for guiding how we spend the record levels of funding we will be making available for flood and coastal erosion risk management so as to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits. Over the next three years this will be at £570 million per year compared with a total of £310 million in 1996–97.

Energy and Environment Ministerial Round Table

The Minister for the Environment and Agri-environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): Last week the UK held an Energy and Environment Ministerial round table, attended by Ministers from 20 countries and representatives from international organisations, business and non-governmental organisations.

Participants welcomed the opportunity to consider the key practical approaches to climate change and energy policy in an informal and innovative forum and contributed positively to the discussions which identified areas of common interest around the issues of the accessibility and affordability of modern energy systems, security of energy supply and the need for local and global environmental protection. The discussions also identified a range of priorities for further working, both in terms of methodology and in relation to specific issues such as energy efficiency.

The wide and committed participation of all concerned enabled the round table to provide a real opportunity to build trust and to look for ways in which the international community might continue to work together in future.

A record of the discussion has been captured in the co-chairs summary, which can be found on the DEFRA website at: www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/international/energy-env/index.htm

British Waterways

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): I am pleased to advise that DEFRA and the Scottish Executive have today published a joint report on the policy review of British Waterways.

The report confirms the prime purpose of British Waterways is to deliver public benefits and promote social inclusion. It provides a firm foundation for developing these objectives further as well as proposing a framework within which British Waterways can work towards its aim of become largely self sufficient.

DEFRA will now work with the Scottish Executive and British Waterways to consider how best to implement the review's recommendations and formalise a development plan for taking them forward.

A public consultation exercise formed part of the review.

Copies of the report on the review and the report on the analysis of responses to the public consultation exercise will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The reports can also be viewed on DEFRA's website at:

http://www.defra.gov.uk/

G8 Environment and Development Ministerial

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): Under the UK's Presidency of the Group of Eight countries, the Secretary of State for International Development and I co-hosted a meeting of G8 Environment and Development Ministers in Breadsall, Derbyshire on 17 and 18 March. Also attending were Luxembourg Ministers (representing the EU Presidency) and senior officials from the World Bank, United Nations Environment Programme, United National Development Programme, the European Commission and the World Conservation Union. This was the first time that G8 Environment and Development Ministers have met in this formation.

Ministers discussed two main items, climate change in Africa and action to tackle illegal logging. On climate change in Africa, Ministers considered a report, commissioned by my Department and the Department for International Development which outlined the lack of African capacity to monitor and make effective use of climate information and what more needs to be done to improve the scientific basis for adaptation to help "climate proof" Africa's development.

Ministers agreed that African countries are particularly vulnerable to climate variability and climate change, and noted that like many developing countries, they are already experiencing more frequent dangerous climate effects. Ministers then discussed what more needed to be done, including assisting Africa in reducing vulnerability by building resilience to climate variability and by developing capacity to adapt to climate change. Ministers then identified the key elements needed for an effective international response as building scientific capacity and integrating measures to address the impact of climate change in international development assistance and regional and national development plans. The vulnerability of developing countries to climate change in Africa and throughout the developing world will be discussed by Heads of State and Government at the Gleneagles summit. This meeting helped to define the priorities and options for international responses to these issues.

In response to this, my Department announced a further £100,000 towards regional predictions of climate change for Africa and £400,000 over the next three years towards a new multi-country initiative on advancing knowledge, capacity and networks in support of climate change in Africa.

On illegal logging, G8 Ministers agreed what would be done by both producer and consumer countries to tackle the problem. Ministers looked at what more would be done by G8 countries to support timber producing countries to improve governance of their forest resources and tackle wildlife trafficking. Ministers also agreed what G8 countries as major consumers of timber, would do to tackle the demand for illegally logged timber, including action such as halting the import and marketing of such timber, and using public procurement policies. There was also agreement that illegal logging policy experts would meet to review progress towards these commitments in 2006.

To help tackle illegal logging, the Secretary of State for International Development and I, committed extra resources to support producer countries, particularly those in west and central Africa. We have allocated up to £500,000 over three years to extend my Department's central point of expertise on timber to encourage the wider public sector to procure legal timber; and undertook to share our knowledge on procurement with the G8 and other countries. My Department also announced additional spending of over £1 million for forestry biodiversity projects under the Darwin Initiative spread over three years.

Ministers agreed that the outcomes on illegal logging will be forwarded as a statement to the G8 Summit at Gleneagles, while the discussions on Africa and climate change will be forwarded as a Chair's Summary for further consideration.

In addition, Ministers had an interactive meeting with civil society representatives (non-Governmental organisations, industry representatives and research institutes). Ministers also had informal discussions on the Commission for Africa Report, which was widely welcomed, reform of humanitarian aid and the importance of biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods.

Copies of the report on "Climate Proofing Africa" and the outcome paper from the G8 Environment and Development Ministerial will be available in the Libraries of both Houses.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Palestine: Security

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): In his written statement of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 89WS, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs informed hon. Members of the outcomes of the 1 March London meeting in support of the Palestinians. In respect of security sector reform the international community committed itself to providing financial support to re-equip the security services; establishing a fund for early retirement of security personnel; and helping to address the cost of pensions for security officers.

In his written answer to the hon. Member for Moray (Angus Robertson) on 3 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1109, my hon. Friend the Minister for Trade and Investment set out our on-going assistance to the Palestinians to improve the performance of their security forces, through provision of technical assistance and equipment. On 23 December we informed Parliament, by means of a Departmental minute, of a gift of equipment to the Palestinian Central Intervention Forces (CIF) to help them provide public order security for the 9 January Presidential elections and beyond. In the event, the CIF were disbanded as part of Palestinian moves towards rationalising their security services and members returned to their original units, notably the national security forces. Officials from the Consulate General in Jerusalem and the Embassy in

Tel Aviv have kept in close contact with Palestinian security officials to ensure that the equipment supplied (communications equipment, tents, uniforms and office equipment) will be used effectively by Palestinian security forces.

The Palestinian security forces, including the civil police, with whom we have also been working, performed well in the run-up to, and during, the 9 January elections, when security was good.

We had intended to donate twenty cars to the CIF but the delivery of these was delayed and did not take place before disbandment of the CIF. We have waited until after the London meeting to see how Palestinian security sector reform was likely to progress and have now decided to give the cars to the national security forces, units of which will play a security role similar to that envisaged for the CIF. We have received assurances from the Palestinian Minister of the Interior on the use to which these cars will be put. A recently appointed military liaison officer from the MOD is working closely with the NSF to improve their capacity. He has identified a shortage of transport as one of their strategic weaknesses and will monitor closely the deployment of these vehicles.

We are working closely with US security co-ordinator General Ward who is leading the Quartet's oversight committee on security. We will continue, in co-ordination with General Ward and the rest of the international community, to assist the Palestinian security sector to improve its capacity to maintain public order security and prevent terrorist attacks, in the crucial period leading up to the proposed Israeli withdrawal from Gaza in July, and beyond.

HEALTH

Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The eighth report to Parliament on the pharmaceutical price regulation scheme (PPRS) was published today.

The report, entitled "PPRS: Eighth Report to Parliament", covers the negotiations and the 2005 scheme and the management and operation of the 1999 scheme including the delivery of the 4.5 per cent. price cut and consolidated information on company annual financial returns. The report sets out the contribution made to the economy by the UK based pharmaceutical industry and gives an update on international price comparisons.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

HOME DEPARTMENT

United Kingdom Passport Service Corporate Business Plans 2005–10

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): The United Kingdom Passport Service has today published its corporate and business plans for 2005–10. Copies of the plans have been placed in the Library of the House.

The Prison Service Business Plan 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Paul Goggins): The prison service business plan for 2005–06 (including the previously agreed key performance indicator targets) has been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

Police Pensions Finance Reform

The Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety (Ms Hazel Blears): We have today published a consultation paper which sets out detailed proposals for implementing a reformed system of police pensions financing. We intend that the new system should be in place by April 2006 in line with the introduction of a new police pension scheme.

In 2001 a working party from the Treasury, Home Office and the Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions completed a joint review of arrangements for the financing of police and fire pensions. The police pension scheme is currently financed on a pay-as-you-go basis. This means that officers' pension contributions go into police authorities' operating accounts from which the pensions of retired officers are paid. Authorities receive central Government funding support to pension payments as part of police grant.

The joint review recommended revised financial arrangements based on officers' contributions and a new employer's contribution being paid into a separate pensions account from which pensions payments would be made. The new pensions account would be locally administered but central Government would either top up the account or recover any surplus as necessary. The recommended system is similar to those used for other unfunded public service pension schemes such as for NHS staff, teachers and civil servants. Similar changes have been proposed for the firefighters' pensions.

The new arrangements would cover the financing of both existing and new police pension schemes, but would have no impact on their terms and conditions. The arrangements would benefit police authorities by removing year-to-year volatility in pensions expenditure arising from the uneven incidence of lump sum retirement payments. They would also enable the rising burden of police pensions expenditure due to increasing numbers in retirement over the coming years to be kept separate from police forces' operational expenditure.

While welcoming the recommendations of the joint review it was recognised that work was still needed to map out the details of how the new system could be successfully implemented. A Home Office led working group has now considered these issues in the context of the police pension scheme and has produced a report with recommendations. A key point of the report is that the changes, at an aggregate level, will be cost neutral and will have no impact upon either the local or national tax payer. However, we recognise the need for police authorities, forces and other stakeholders in the police service to contribute to the debate on these detailed proposals before we come to a final decision on implementation.

Copies of the consultation document are available in the House Library and on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk/.

The consultation period will last for 12 weeks and will close on 17 June 2005.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Prison Service Pay Review Body

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): The third report of the Prison Service Pay Review Body (PSPRB) on the pay of governor and officer grades in the Northern Ireland Prison Service has been published today and copies placed in the Library. I would like to thank the chair and members of the PSPRB for their hard work in producing their recommendations.

This completes the PSPRB's work for the current year, their recommendations for HM Prison Service having been published and accepted by the Government last month.

My right honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has decided that the recommendations will be implemented in full, with effect from the operative date of the award of 1 April 2005. The cost of the award will be met from within the existing budget allocation for the Service.

Rosemary Nelson Inquiry

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): On 16 November 2004, I announced the terms of reference for the inquiries into the deaths of Robert Hamill, Rosemary Nelson and Billy Wright. All three inquiries have now begun their work.

In the light of its considerations so far, the Rosemary Nelson inquiry has asked me to consider amending its terms of reference in order to make clear beyond any doubt that the actions of the Army and the security and intelligence agencies fall within their scope.

I am happy to do so and I am giving notice today that I am amending the Inquiry's terms of reference at their request so that they now read as follows:

> "To inquire into the death of Rosemary Nelson with a view to determining whether any act or omission by or within the Royal Ulster Constabulary, Northern Ireland Office, Army or other state agency facilitated her death or obstructed the investigation of it, or whether attempts were made to do so; whether any such act or omission was intentional or negligent; whether the investigation of her death was carried out with due diligence; and to make recommendations".

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Insolvency Service: Performance Targets 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): Against a planning assumption of dealing with 45,000 new insolvencies and 81,000 new claims for redundancy payments, I have set the Insolvency Service the following targets for the year 2005–06.

Published Targets 2005–06	*Target*
Process Redundancy Payment claims for payment within:	
3 Weeks	70 per cent
6 Weeks	92 per cent
Reduce the unit cost of enforcement activity by	25 per cent
Increase enforcement activity outputs (disqualification, bankruptcy restrictions orders and reports by official receivers of criminal conduct) by	41 per cent
Reduce average time for concluding disqualification proceedings to	22 months
Increase the level of public confidence in the service's enforcement regime to	55 per cent
Increase the level of user satisfaction index to	88 per cent
Reduce the bankruptcy administration fee by 1 April 2006 to	£1,600*
Reduce the company administration fee by 1 April 2006 to	£1,920*

* Not adjusted for inflation

In addition to the above targets I have asked that, as part of its efficiency promise, the service looks to reduce the costs of accommodation and procurement by 8 per cent. by 31 March 2006 from the 2003–04 baseline and further reduce the costs of redundancy payment processing by 2.5 per cent. by 31 March 2006. Overall I have asked the Service to produce efficiency gains of at least £6 million over the period to 2007–08.

The Service will also be seeking re-accreditation to the Investors in People standard by January 2006. The Service is also required to meet centrally promulgated targets relating to replying to correspondence from hon. Members, reducing the level of sick absence and processing payments to suppliers. From 1 April 2004 the Service's case administration work has been funded by its fee income and the Service is also required to ensure that it balances its costs and income over a three-year period.

Companies House (Performance Targets)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): I have set Companies House the following targets for the year 2005–06:

By March 2006 to provide the capability for 80 per cent. of documents,[1] which it would be possible to e-enable, to be submitted on line.

To ensure that the following services: Companies House Direct; WebCheck; and webfiling, are available for 99 per cent. of the time between the hours of 7 am and midnight, Monday to Saturday.

To achieve 35 per cent. take-up for electronic submission of documents[1] by the end of 2005–06, 55 per cent. take-up by the end of 2006–07 and 75 per cent. take-up by the end of 2007–08.

To achieve, on average, a monthly compliance rate for accounts and annual returns submitted of 92 per cent.

To ensure that 97.5 per cent. of all forms submitted to Companies House are captured error-free.

To ensure that of 99.5 per cent. of images placed on the Companies House image system are legible.

[1] a document is an individual transaction that a company can make with Companies House to submit or register information.

To achieve for 2007–08 a reduction in real terms of 10 per cent. compared to 2004–05, in the unit cost of the range of transactions covering registration, company search and active register size.

To achieve a score of more than 85 per cent. in each quarterly Companies House Customer Satisfaction Survey.

To resolve 97 per cent. of complaints within five days.

To achieve, taking one year with another, a 3.5 per cent. average rate of return based on the operating surplus expressed as a percentage of average net assets.

To pay all bills due within 30 days, or on other agreed credit terms, on receipt of goods or services or a valid invoice whichever is later.

The Chief Executive to reply within 10 days to all letters from Members of Parliament delegated to her for reply.

TRANSPORT

Highways Agency Business Plan

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): The Highways Agency's 2005–06 business plan is published today and contains eight key targets for the agency to deliver by 31 March 2006. These are:

Indicator	*2005–06 Target*
1. Deliver the programme of improvements to the strategic road network.	Achieve: At least 450 of 474 progress points for the major national schemes (contributing to a 3 year target of 1,424 progress points). Achieve at least 565 of 595 progress points for the approved major regional schemes (contributing to a 3 year target of 1,397 progress points). Introduce variable speed limits on the Active Traffic management (ATM) pilot on M42 by December 2005. Complete a cumulative total of at least 60 of 92 priority action sites at junctions.
2. Deliver a demonstrable reduction in incident-related congestion and minimisation of road works-related congestion.	In rolling out the Regional Control Centres (RCCs) and Traffic Officer Service, achieve at least 430 of 505 progress points (contributing to a 2 year target of 649 progress points). For the busiest sections of motorway in the West Midlands, HA Traffic Officers will attend 75% of incidents within 15 minutes of being deployed. In the West Midlands, HA Traffic Officers will clear 75% of incidents within 30 minutes of taking full responsibility for re-opening the road to traffic.
3. Make information available to influence travel behaviour and inform decisions.	Make a demonstrable improvement to the accuracy of the variable message signs (VMS) by March 2006 and develop an action plan for further improving their accuracy and effectiveness. Introduce travel plans to at least three sites by March 2006. Identify and announce a further pilot site for car sharing lanes on the motorway network by December 2005.
4. Deliver the Agency's agreed proportion of the national target. By 2010 reduce by a third (ie to 2,238) the number of people killed/seriously injured on trunk roads compared with the 1994–98 average of 3,357.	Reduce by 653 to 2,704.
5. Maintain the network in a safe and serviceable condition.	Maintain a road surface condition index score of 100 ± 1.
6. Mitigate the potentially adverse impact of strategic roads and take opportunities to enhance the environment taking into account value for money.	Achieve at least 95% across the 5 sub targets: Air Quality: implement measures to improve the air quality of at least 2 out of 21 prioritised Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). Biodiversity: Achieve at least 7% of the published HA Biodiversity Action Plan (HABAP), which extends across 15 priority targets (making a cumulative total of 35% of the HABAP complete). Landscape: Introduce at least 12 planting schemes to enhance the landscape. Noise: Treat at least 200 lane km of concrete road surface with lower noise surfacing. Water: Treat at least 4 pollution risk water outfall sites.
7. Deliver a high level of road user satisfaction.	Customer satisfaction of 83.5% for trunk roads and 87.5% for motorways.
8. Deliver the Highways Agency's contribution to the Department's efficiency target.	Deliver improvements in roads procurement through adding value to service delivery of £66 million in 2005–06. Deliver our programme within the allocated administration budget, which requires an efficiency improvement of at least 2.5% per annum.

Explanatory notes against each of these indicators are provided in the business plan, copies of which have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Road User Charging Scheme Accounts 2003–04

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): The Dartford-Thurrock Crossing Road User Charging Scheme accounts for 2003–04 have been laid before Parliament today under section 3(1) of the Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (Keeping of Accounts) (England) Regulations 2003. Copies of the accounts have been placed in the House Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Agency Business Plans 2005–06

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Alan Johnson): I am today able to announce the annual performance targets in 2005–06 for each of the executive agencies of the Department for Work and Pensions.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

The targets I have agreed are set out below.

Further information on the plans of each of the businesses in 2005–06 is contained in their individual business plans which have been published today. Copies have been placed in the Library.

JOBCENTRE PLUS

Job entry target[1]

To achieve 6,659,148 points based on Job Entry outcomes achieved.

This excludes performance in the seven Jobcentre Plus Districts piloting a new Job Outcome Target (JOT) measure. As the existing target and the new JOT are completely different measures of performance, it is not appropriate to include the pilot areas in the national target. By way of comparison, the 2004–05 target would have been 6,580,647 points had the seven Districts been excluded. The pilots will be set separate performance targets.

Monetary value of fraud and error target

By March 2006, to reduce losses from fraud and error in working-age Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance to no more than 5.2 per cent. of the monetary value of these benefits paid during the year.

Employer outcome target

To ensure that at least 84 per cent. of employers placing their vacancies with Jobcentre Plus have a positive outcome.

Customer service target

To achieve an 81 per cent. customer service level in the delivery of the standards set out in the Customers' and Employers' Charters.

Business delivery target

To ensure that specified key Jobcentre Plus business processes are delivered efficiently, accurately and to specified standards in 90.3 per cent. of cases checked[2].

Unit cost target

Targets for benefit processing and job-broking (cost per job entry point) are being finalised and will be published after the Easter recess.

Notes:

[1] This target is measured by a points score system, which focuses efforts and resources on helping people in priority groups into work such as lone parents and Incapacity Benefit customers. For each person that Jobcentre Plus helps into work, it earns from one up to 12 points. For example, earning one point for already employed customers to 12 points for a customer with a health condition or disability in receipt of an inactive benefit.

[2] These processes are: Income Support accuracy, Jobseeker's Allowance accuracy; Incapacity Benefit accuracy; Labour Market Interventions; attendance at an independent assessment following a Basic Skills referral; action taken with lone parent customers who are due a review/trigger Work Focused Interview.

THE PENSION SERVICE

Pay the guarantee element of Pension Credit to at least 2.1 million pensioner households.

Reduce losses from fraud and error in Pension Credit, with a 20 per cent. reduction by 2006 against the 2001–02 Minimum Income Guarantee baseline.

Ensure that 92 per cent. of telephone calls to The Pension Service Centres are answered by Customer Advisors and less than 1 per cent. of attempted telephone calls receive the engaged tone or message.

Ensure Pension Credit applications are processed on average within 10 days.

Achieve a Pension Credit accuracy rate of 96 per cent.

Clear 95 per cent. of State Pension claims in 60 days (non-complex cases)[3].

Clear 91 per cent. of State Pension claims in 85 days (complex cases)[3].

Achieve a State Pension claims accuracy rate of 98 per cent.

Deal with State Pension Forecast requests in an average of 15 days.

Issue Winter Fuel Payments for 2005–06 (all automatic payments, and successful claims received before 24 September 2005) by Christmas 2005.

Unit cost targets are being developed and will be published later in the year.

Notes:

[3] Complex claims are claims to State Pension from customers who have been widowed or divorced and the spouse's National Insurance contributions are taken into consideration.

CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

The performance targets for 2005–06 will focus on progressing CSA's priorities. The targets set out below, with the exception of the debt target which is new, have been rolled forward from 2004–05. Ministers will review the overall package of targets once the new Chief Executive is in post and has had a chance to develop more detailed plans for the delivery of the child support service in 2005–06. Revised targets resulting from this review will be published as appropriate later in the year.

Case compliance	By 31 March 2006 to be collecting child maintenance and/or arrears from 78 per cent. of all cases with a maintenance liability using the collection service.
Cash compliance	By 31 March 2006 to be collecting 75 per cent. of child maintenance and/or arrears due to be paid through the collection service.
Accuracy	By 31 March 2006 accuracy on the last decision made for all maintenance calculations checked in the year to be correct to the nearest penny in at least 90 per cent. of cases.
Debt	To collect arrears equivalent to 30 per cent. of the amount accruing between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2006.
Unit Costs	Achieve a cost per case of £202.

DISABILITY AND CARERS SERVICE

		2005–06 target
Accuracy of decision making and payment		
Disability Living Allowance		90%
Attendance Allowance		90%
Carer's Allowance		96%
Average actual clearance time		
Disability Living Allowance	New claims	39 days
	Reconsiderations	35 days
	Appeals	37 days
Attendance Allowance	New claims	22 days
	Reconsiderations	35 days
	Appeals	35 days
Carer's Allowance	New claims	22 days
	Appeals	35 days
Helpline—telephone service		90% of calls answered with less than 1% receiving engaged tone.

THE APPEALS SERVICE

The average waiting time for an appeal to be heard will be no more than 11 weeks from the time of receipt by the Appeals Service[4];

The number of cases over 20 weeks old as at 31 March 2006 will be at the same level, or lower, than the projected number as at 1 April 2005 (It is assumed that the number of cases over 20 weeks old as at 1 April 2005 will reflect delivery of our 2004–05 target of a 15 per cent. reduction in these cases);[4] and

For cases returned by the Commissioner, the average waiting time for an appeal to be re-heard will be no more than eight weeks from the date of return to the Appeals Service.[5]

Notes:

[4] Excludes stayed cases awaiting decision in lead cases in a higher court (the effective date will commence from withdrawal of stay being notified).

[5] Excludes cases requiring further evidence.

THE RENT SERVICE

Service delivery

Type of determination	*Timescale*	*2005–06 target*
Housing Benefit		
With an inspection	Within 15 working days	93%
Without an inspection	Within 3 working days	93%
Pre-tenancy	Within 4 working days	93%
Redetermination	Within 15 working days	93%
Fair Rents	Within 40 working days	93%
Value for money Element		
Productivity: increase by		3%
Cost per case: reduce by		1%
Quality		
1. Proportion of Local Reference Rent housing benefit determinations to be upheld on redetermination:		90%
2. Proportion of Fair Rent valuations to be upheld on Judicial Review:		90%
Customer satisfaction Element		
Local authority Housing Benefit departments: proportion rating The Rent Service's performance as "Satisfactory" to "Good".		95%
Fair Rent customers and Housing Benefit inspections: Proportion of customers rating the Rent Service's performance as "Satisfactory" or "Good".		92%
Supplier Payment Performance To pay 98 per cent of all undisputed invoices within 30 working days of receipt.		98%

Social Fund Allocations 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Chris Pond): I am pleased to announce that the gross discretionary Social Fund budget for 2005–06 will be £719 million. This includes a further increase in net treasury funding of £10 million compared with last year and means that net funding is now £40 million higher than 2002–03. It is the final one of three annual increases from a £90 million boost for the discretionary Social Fund announced in the autumn 2002 pre-budget report.

After careful consideration, I have decided to allocate all the extra net funding to community care grant needs. I have therefore increased the community care grant (CCG) budget by £10 million. This is a further significant increase that will help the most vulnerable. It has been distributed so that every district benefits by an increase in their CCG budget and districts move closer to meeting the same proportion of demand nationally.

My current priorities are for the grants budget. The net loans budget, however, received a significant investment of £10 million in the first year (2003–04) and this, plus higher loan recoveries have promoted steady growth in the gross loans budget. The gross loans budget for 2005–06 will be £580 million, which represents an increase of £20 million over the April 2004 allocation. To maintain fairness within the scheme, the gross loans budget will continue to be allocated to districts to support consistency of outcome for applicants wherever they live.

£1 million will be retained centrally as a contingency reserve. For example to provide additional help to districts facing unexpected and unplanned expenditure.

Details of individual district budget allocations have been placed in the Library.

The discretionary social fund budget is cash limited. Budgets are allocated to districts on 1 April each year.

The gross discretionary SF budget allocated for 2005–06 is £719 million made up of:

New money (AME)	£178.2m
Forecast loan recovery	£540.8m
This was allocated as follows:	
Loans	£580m
Grants	£138m
Contingency reserve	£1m

If the forecast for loan recoveries proves to be an underestimate, any additional recoveries can be allocated to districts during the year.

The contingency reserve is held centrally and allocations made from it re-imburse districts for expenditure resulting from a local accident or disaster (eg, flooding)

Since April 1997, the gross discretionary social fund budget has increased by £251.5 million from £467.5 million to £719 million, an increase of over 53 per cent.

Since April 1997, the community care grant budget has increased by £41 million from £97 million to £138 million, an increase of just over 42 per cent.

New Child Support Scheme

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Alan Johnson): The new arrangements for child support came into operation for new cases and some linked old scheme cases from 3 March 2003. Despite recent progress, some significant problems remain with the new computer and telephony systems. These continue to slow progress on business recovery. The Department continues to retain substantial payments from EDS. The payment each year is determined by the contract and is linked to

service levels and to the degree of functionality delivered. Between 27 January 2003 and 16 January 2005, the agency retained £13.3 million of payments otherwise due to EDS.

This report forms part of the Department's response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee report into the performance of the Child Support Agency. It therefore includes information up to the end of February 2005 (my last progress report covered the quarter ending September 2004). During this period the agency's performance has continued to improve. More families continue to benefit from the new scheme—a further 16,600 families have received child maintenance premium. The quarter ending December 2004 produced the highest quarterly total since the new arrangements were introduced and this upward trend is continuing. It brings the total number of beneficiaries to almost 50,000. Similarly, the number of first payments of maintenance received through the agency's collection service during the quarter ending December was the highest achieved so far.

The number of cases cleared during the period from October to February (both calculations and closures) was over 72,000, bringing the overall total of clearances to around 310,000. The position fell back somewhat in the run up to Christmas. However, this was not unexpected and the underlying position is recovering as we move through the next quarter. During both October and November, the monthly volume of clearances grew faster than at any other point in the year.

Based on regular monthly sampling the current level of accuracy (to the nearest penny) is estimated at around 78 per cent. against a target of 90 per cent. This is lower than the preceding quarter. The agency is taking urgent action to correct this trend but it is now clear that the end of year target is unlikely to be achieved. Regular monthly sampling will continue to be used to monitor accuracy levels and determine the end of year position. As a result of improvements with the agency's management information systems, case compliance performance will now be reported on a rolling last quarter basis. Previously published estimates of case compliance in the new scheme have been measured on a monthly basis. This is not consistent with either the definition used to measure old scheme compliance, or the basis on which the new scheme target was set. Both relied on a rolling last quarter measure. Reporting performance using a rolling last quarter basis provides a more accurate reflection of performance and gives a direct comparison between old and new scheme performance.

This change in reporting has resulted in an uplift in case compliance performance by around eight percentage points. At the end of February case compliance stood at 65 per cent. against a target of 78 per cent. Cash compliance at end of February stood at 58 per cent. against a target of 75 per cent. Focus on improving compliance continues, with activities targeted on core operational service teams together with the creation of the agency's enforcement directorate. Early indications show that for cases newly calculated in September and October 2004, case compliance in February 2005 has stabilised at around 75 per cent.

Although the rate at which work-on-hand is increasing has slowed down, clearances are still less than intake. An agency business transformation programme is being developed, which will contain short-term tactical initiatives and also places significant emphasis on ensuring medium to long-term sustained recovery.

The agency has made progress in investigating the anomalies in its management information. Some over counting of cases has been identified, which has reduced intake reported since March 2003 by 34,000 cases. Indications are that there is potential for further reductions in intake of around 12,000 cases and an understatement of around 17,000 clearances. Overall this is likely to equate to a downward revision in the work on hand of 63,000 cases. Some of these cases are still within the system and some operational intervention will be required. Work is continuing to identify and examine the full range of issues and apply necessary remedies. The revised data in the tables is the agency's best current estimate.

Summary of Agency Performance to February 2005

The method by which these figures are calculated has been changed to include, in the calculation, those collections of child maintenance made (on behalf of the Secretary of State) in those cases in which the parent with care is on benefit.

	1 Qualifying Child	*2 Qualifying Children*	*3+ Qualifying Children*
Average Weekly Payment [1]	£28	£41	£44

Table 2—Agency Quarterly Performance

	Quarter 1 Mar—Jun 2003	*Quarter 2 Jul—Sep 2003*	*Quarter 3 Oct—Dec 2003*	*Quarter 4 Jan—Mar 2004*	*Quarter 1 Apr—Jun 2004*	*Quarter 2 Jul—Sep 2004*	*Quarter 3 Oct—Dec 2004*	*Jan—Feb 2005*	*Scheme to Feb 2005*
Applications received	73,582	78,982	85,306	83,652	83,094	73,534	69,395	46,718	594,263
Double counting of intake [2]	- 1,171	- 5,313	-	- 6,027	- 5,211	- 3,316	- 3,406	- 2,395	- 33,836
Applications received (adjusted) [2]	72,411	73,669		77,625	77,883	70,218	65,989	44,323	560,427
Applications cleared [3] of which:	12,648	38,583	49	51,876	45,097	40,465 [3]	39,645	32,732	310,499
Maintenance Calculations	6,671	23,857	29,672	31,229	25,657	23,526 [3]	23,816	18,866	183,294
Closures [4]	5,977	14,726	19,781	20,647	19,440	16,939 [3]	15,829	13,866	127,205
First payments made through the Agency	461	5,164	11,473	14,017	14,974	15,098	18,119	9,992	89,298

Table 2—Agency Quarterly Performance

	Quarter 1 Mar—Jun 2003	*Quarter 2 Jul—Sep 2003*	*Quarter 3 Oct—Dec 2003*	*Quarter 4 Jan—Mar 2004*	*Quarter 1 Apr—Jun 2004*	*Quarter 2 Jul—Sep 2004*	*Quarter 3 Oct—Dec 2004*	*Jan—Feb 2005*	*Scheme to Feb 2005*
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made [5]	77	3,314	6,173	7,484	8,070	8,055	10,300	6,326	49,799

Table 3—Agency Monthly Performance

	October 2004	*November 2004*	*December 2004*	*Quarter 3 Oct—Dec 2004*	*January 2005*	*February 2005*	*Jan—Feb 2005*
Applications received	24,653	24,868	19,874	69,395	22,536	24,182	46,718
Double counting of intake [2]	1,412	1,108	886	3,406	1,153	1,242	2,395
Applications received (adjusted) [2]	23,241	23,760	18,988	65,989	21,383	22,940	44,323
Applications cleared [3] of which:	14,171	15,307	10,167	39,645	14,710	18,022	32,732
Maintenance Calculations	8,317	8,648	6,851	23,816	8,783	10,083	18,866
Closures [4]	5,854	6,659	3,316	15,829	5,927	7,939[5]	13,866
First payments made through the Agency	5,681	6,278	6,160	18,119	4,736	5,256	9,992
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made[6]	3,139	3,685	3,476	10,300	3,098	3,228	6,326

Table 4—Agency Compliance Performance

	Apr 2004	*May 2004*	*June 2004*	*July 2004*	*Aug 2004*	*Sept 2004*	*Oct 2004*	*Nov 2004*	*Dec 2004*	*Jan 2005*	*Feb 2005*
Cash Compliance [3 month rolling average] [7]	41%	44%	49%	50%	51%	52%	53%	55%	55%	58%	58%
Case Compliance [rolling last quarter basis]	55%	57%	59%	61%	61%	62%	62%	63%	64%	65%	65%

Notes:

1. Average weekly child support maintenance payments to parents with care are shown in the table. The method by which these figures are calculated has been changed to include, in the calculation, those collections of child maintenance made (on behalf of the Secretary of State) in those cases in which the parent with care is on benefit. Figures are for February 2005 only and are calculated as the total amount received and allocated divided by the number of cases.
2. Based upon our best information on the extent of the double-counting of applications that has taken place and emerging findings from the management information improvement project. These figures may be subject to change.
3. Figures from quarter four 2003–04 onwards and scheme to date figures include clerical cases (new scheme cases unable to be progressed on the new system). Quarter two 2004–05 figures also incorporate some adjustments to take account of a reconciliation of clerical cases. The clerical case position is as follows:

	Scheme to date June 2004	*Scheme to date September 2004*	*Scheme to date December 2004*	*Scheme to date February 2005*
Applications cleared	1,345	2,130	2,340	3,063
Maintenance Calculations	1,134	1,937	2,069	2,673
Closures	211	193	271	390

4. Closures: Applications close for a variety of reasons. The main reasons are that the parent with care withdraws the application, perhaps due to reconciliation, or having agreed private arrangements with the non-resident parent.
5. Closures for February include 1,000 un-progessable cases that have been deleted from the IT system.
6. Figures for child maintenance premium payments include an estimate of the number of parents who receive the premium by way of a disregard to their income support/income-based jobseekers allowance.
7. Cash compliance is measured on a three-month rolling average basis, as this best illustrates performance. Case compliance is measured on a rolling-last quarter basis (in line with old scheme reporting).
8. A proportion of cases that have a maintenance calculation in place may already be receiving payment directly, but will not be reflected in the figures shown above.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 4 April 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Mental Capacity Bill: (Draft Code of Practice)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): A note has been placed with the Mental Capacity Bill's draft code of practice in the Libraries of both Houses. The note lets Members know what changes we expect to make to the draft code of practice as a result of discussions on the Bill and code in both Houses.

Asylum and Immigration

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): On 4 April 2005, the Department for Constitutional Affairs introduces the new Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, hereafter referred to as the AIT, under the provisions of clause 26 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004.

At present, ministerial and non-ministerial correspondence concerning asylum and immigration appeals are the responsibility for the Home Office and handled by the immigration and nationality directorate.

As from 4 April 2005, the responsibility for dealing with all new correspondence (ministerial and non-ministerial) items relating to appeals will be transferred to the Department for Constitutional Affairs and will be handled by the AIT.

Correspondence should be addressed to:

The Department for Constitutional Affairs,
Ministerial Correspondence Unit,
Selborne House,
54 Victoria Street,
London, SW1E6QW.

This change will also affect correspondence relating to asylum and immigration appeals lodged before 4 April.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Gambling Bill: Amendments

The Minister for Sport and Tourism (Mr. Richard Caborn): This statement provides information about a number of amendments tabled on the Gambling Bill, which is currently being considered in Committee in the House of Lords. The Government believe it may be of assistance to Members of both Houses if they were to provide their view on amendments to the Bill that have not yet been considered formally, but which have been the subject of extensive discussions between Ministers and Members in both Houses, as well as a range of interested parties. The Government have also placed a copy of associated letters to Opposition spokespersons, setting out its position on all amendments tabled to the Bill, in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Government hope that this statement reflects the level of consensus that these constructive discussions have brought about, which has been reflected in a considerable number of improving amendments being tabled by the Government. References to clauses and schedules in this statement are to those in the Gambling Bill, in the draft brought from the House of Commons on 25 January.

Schedule 1 and 2: Payment to enter lotteries and betting prize competitions

This section deals with amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to clarify the meaning of payment to enter which concern entry into betting prize competitions and lotteries.

The Government acknowledge that effective definitions in this area are of great importance, and sympathise with the intention of the amendments. However, we do not believe that the amendments would add clarity to the schedules or improve their effect.

We consider that the addition of the words "has been calculated so as to reflect", in relation to the cost of goods that may constitute payment to enter the competition or lottery, would not make a practical difference. Where the cost of an item "reflects" the opportunity to enter an arrangement, the price of that item must include a calculated increase that is attributable to the opportunity to enter the arrangement. We also believe that amendments relating to the normal rate are unnecessary as this will necessarily exclude any supplement or premium that reflects the opportunity to enter the lottery or competition.

The Government agree with amendments requiring free communications—offered as an alternative to a payment to enter the competition or lottery—to be genuine, realistic and not unduly inconvenient nor more expensive than payment to enter. We believe, however, that this is the effect of schedules 1 and 2. Paragraph 8 of both schedules requires a choice between paying to enter and entering through a form of communication. If the communication is not a genuine or realistic option, the requirement for a choice cannot be said to have been fulfilled.

This paragraph also requires that the free communication route must be no less convenient than entry by paying. This is designed precisely to rule out schemes that are not genuine or realistic, if, for example, an individual has a choice between paying to enter, and travelling to an inconveniently located office. It will not prevent companies from using what might be legitimate free entry routes such as e-mail.

Amendments have been tabled that seek to clarify that a requirement to pay in order to collect a prize will only be deemed to be payment to enter where the payment is to the arrangement promoter or his associate. The Government do not believe these amendments are necessary: payment for anything other than possession of the prize itself cannot be payment to enter for the purposes of the Bill.

Clause 14: Definition of lottery

This section concerns the definition of "lottery" included in clause 14 of the Gambling Bill and, specifically, amendments tabled about the level of skill needed to fall outside lottery regulation.

A number of amendments have been tabled that represent contrasting views in the debate over the level of skill required in a prize competition for it to fall outside lottery regulation under the Bill.

The Government do not agree with the amendments which would weaken the protection of charity lotteries, offering commercial prize competitions a wide discretion to encroach on the area of activity that the Government believe should remain the preserve of charity lotteries. Conversely, the Government believe that the amendments that introduce the notion of 'substantial skill' into the definition of a lottery bring an unreasonably stiff test.

The Government prefer their own amendments to clause 14, which seek to make the definition of lottery more user-friendly, without diluting the level of the test or the principle underpinning it.

The Government amendments introduce the notion of "reasonable expectation" into the test. This changes the nature of the test from a strictly empirical one to a normative one, and thereby improves its practical application. It is also important to note too that the Bill provides for a gambling commission with the powers it needs to investigate and tackle any abuses.

Clause 24 Sports betting codes of practice

This section concerns proposals relating to sports betting codes of practice, and their inclusion in the Gambling Bill.

Amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill would require the proposed gambling commission to issue, to betting licensees, codes of practice on betting on sports. Clause 24 of the Bill already provides the commission with powers to issue such codes.

The Government agree that protecting the integrity of sport from potential threats posed by betting will be a priority for the commission. Indeed, one of the commission's licensing objectives is to ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way. The Government also published, last month, their code of practice for betting on sports. In future, this code will complement codes of practice issued by the gambling commission. The Government believe, therefore, that further requirements to issue codes of practice are unnecessary, as both the powers and objectives of the commission are already in place to tackle this issue.

Clause 25: Guidance to local authorities

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that would involve the Government, rather than the proposed gambling commission, offering guidance to local licensing authorities about the exercise of their functions under the proposed legislation.

Amendments tabled require the Secretary of State to issue guidance to licensing authorities under clause 25, in place of the gambling commission. The Government disagree with these proposed amendments. The commission, not the Government, will be the primary regulator of gambling in Great Britain and, with its experience of regulating and communicating with the industry, will be the main source of knowledge on gambling issues.

The commission, along with licensing authorities will also be responsible for monitoring and inspecting gambling activities, ensuring those activities take place in accordance with licence conditions.

In the light of this, the Government hold to the view that the gambling commission is best placed to guide licensing authorities in the pursuit of their functions.

Clause 26: Duty to advise Secretary of State

This statement concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that relate to the release of advice offered by the proposed gambling commission to the Government.

Amendments tabled require the gambling commission to make any advice given to the Secretary of State available to the general public. The Government agree with the objectives of this amendment, but do not think it necessary to add this amendment to the Bill.

The gambling commission will be bound, like other bodies, by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Requiring the commission to publish all the advice given to the Secretary of State will, however, put an unnecessary burden on the gambling commission. However, where it is appropriate to do so (having regard to the 2000 Act), the Government agree that the gambling commission should make public the advice it gives to the Secretary of State.

After Clause 26: Test purchasing

This section concerns Government amendments that have been tabled to the Gambling Bill to allow the gambling commission to assess whether the offences under the Bill are being complied with.

The main purpose of the amendments is to enable test purchasing to be carried out to assess compliance with under-age gambling. The commission will be able to use children and young persons in test purchasing activities to assess whether the offences of under-age gambling are being complied with. The amendments follow the model suggested by the Trading Standards Institute, which is involved in the protection of children from harm and the prevention of children from access to restricted goods, such as alcohol, cigarettes and lottery tickets.

Clause 35: Territorial Application

This statement addresses concerns raised by remote gambling operators about licensing of remote gambling under the Gambling Bill. The Government have held detailed discussions with the operators on these issues, and has accordingly tabled Government amendments Nos. 79, 82, 84, 89, 142, 143 and 158.

Clause 35(4)(a) of the Bill defines remote gambling equipment as that which registers a person's participation in the gambling. Operators believed this an unduly onerous approach. Amendment No. 80, therefore, would require gambling operators to only verify the identity of customers. The Government do not think this sufficient, so Government amendment No. 79 requires this and requires operators to keep records of customers' gaming and transaction history.

Amendment No. 81 deals with operator concerns that clause 35(4)(c) would capture all poker-room equipment used by British operators, which is often based overseas and whose location in Great Britain need not be necessary for the effective regulation of such remote gambling. The Government acknowledge that this is a legitimate concern and accordingly tabled Government amendments Nos. 142, 143 and 158 which allow the gambling commission to take a case by case approach to deciding which items of gambling equipment can be located outside Great Britain.

Amendment No. 83 and Government amendment No. 82 address the same issue—the records which remote gambling licensees must keep. We believe that amendment No. 83 would retain a requirement on the operators to maintain financial records, whereas Government amendment No. 82 has withdrawn this requirement and replaced it with a requirement to record game result history.

Amendment No. 84 is a minor drafting amendment, which recognises that equipment other than computers may be used for remote gambling e.g. mobile phones.

Amendment No. 88 seeks to exclude remote communications software from the offence of installing or supplying gambling software. The Government agree with this objective, but believe that Government amendment No. 89 achieves it more effectively by clarifying that a person does not supply or install gambling software if they provide solely communications equipment, e.g. a mobile telephone network, even if it is subsequently used to download gambling software.

Amendment No. 141 would require the gambling commission to regulate equipment outside its jurisdiction. The Government believe this impractical, but have instead tabled amendments Nos. 142, 143 and 158, which allow the gambling commission flexibility to judge which equipment can be located offshore.

The Government are confident that their amendments, which were shown in draft to the Association of Remote Gambling Operators, deal effectively with the remaining issues of concern to the remote gambling industry.

Clause 41: Cheating

This section concerns amendments that have been tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to alter or supplement the definition of cheating in the Bill.

Amendment No. 90 seeks to replace clause 41(1), which makes it an offence to cheat at gambling (without defining cheating) with a new subsection which includes a definition of cheating. The Government appreciate that the intention of the amendment is to make the scope of the offence more specific; but we believe that, while it may achieve this objective, it involves undesirable consequences.

First, and most importantly, it narrows the scope of the offence, by excluding forms of cheating which do not alter the element of chance in a game of chance or its outcome. Second, by tying the definition of cheating specifically to games of chance it raises a question mark about cheating in the context of other forms of gambling than gaming, such as betting and lotteries.

The Government believe that it is an important strength of clause 41 that the expression "cheating" is not defined. This will enable the commission and the courts, in prosecuting and punishing cheats, to deal with the full range of culpable conduct. The Government believe that the practical effect of a specific definition (however desirable from a drafting perspective) will make things easier, not harder, for cheats.

Amendment No. 91 appears to be intended to broaden the definition of the offence. It would bring within the definition of the offence any act which allows an advantage not intended by the manufacturer or operator of a game. The Government fear, however, that the effect of the amendment will be uncertain, because the operator's intention can only be a wholly subjective concept.

Amendment No. 92 seems intended to ensure that the offence of cheating catches the type of scam that involves using electronic equipment to reduce the odds on games like roulette, of which there was a high profile alleged incident last year at a London casino. The amendment makes specific provision concerning use of equipment in a casino that could be used to record, analyse or predict the outcome of, or the manner in which a game is played. The amendment would make the possession of any electronic equipment capable of recording games in a casino an offence. The Government are unclear about whether such activity will always constitute cheating, and accordingly think it unsafe to accept the amendment.

Following the incident last year, the Government considered carefully the use of electronic equipment to narrow the odds of casino games, and whether we needed to strengthen the offence of cheating in the Bill. We concluded that the Bill already covers everything that it should. A person who does anything unfairly to increase the chance of winning is cheating at gambling, and already falls within the offence. We are afraid that being more specific than this would risk making the clause too complicated, and vulnerable to evasion.

Clause 50: Employment to provide facilities for gambling

This section concerns amendments to the Gambling Bill, which relate to the employment of children, particularly those intended to allow gambling operators to employ children to work on category D machines and otherwise than in the provision of gambling in betting offices, adult gaming centres and casinos.

The Government believe that children should not be employed in a way that involves interfering with any category of gaming machine, even category D machines.

The control of machines is an adult responsibility and we think it would be irresponsible to allow children to be involved. Of course, children can be employed in family entertainment centres and in other places, to man the change counter or to serve food. There is no harm in that and the Bill allows it to continue.

The Bill prevents children from entering betting offices and adult gaming centres when they are being used in reliance on the premises licence, and the Government think this is an important principle. The Bill does not prevent persons aged under 18 from

entering these premises at other times, however, so that 16 and 17 year- old apprentice joiners could work on the refurbishment of the premises.

Clause 58: Age limit for Category D gaming machine

This section concerns Government amendments to the Gambling Bill which require that the Secretary of State, before setting any age limit for playing category D gaming machines, consults the gambling commission, the industry and those with knowledge of the social problems relating to gambling. Government amendments also allow age limits to be set for only certain types of gaming machine e.g. we could exclude cranes and grabbers from any age limit.

These Government amendments follow up the commitment made by the Government during the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, to give Ministers power to limit the effect of any new age requirements for category D machines to particular types of gaming machines.

Government amendments insert new subsection (3) into clause 58. This subsection means that, before using this power, the Secretary of State must consult the gambling commission, relevant parts of the gambling industry and people involved with problem gambling. Government amendments also insert new subsection (4) into clause 58. This subsection allows the Government to distinguish different types of category D machines. This means that the Government can exclude machines such as penny pushers and crane machines from any future age restriction, if necessary.

Clause 79: Credit and inducements

This section concerns Government amendments proposed to the Gambling Bill which prevent the use of credit cards for gambling payments in casinos. This delivers on a commitment the Government offered at Second Reading.

The Bill as drafted already prohibits the use of credit cards in gaming machines, and these amendments extend the effect of that prohibition to all gambling in a casino. The amendments tabled do allow cash machines to remain in casinos, as long as there is no commercial relationship between the casino and the machine provider. The casino must also ensure that conditions about the location of such machines are observed properly.

Clause 91: Pool betting operating licence

This section concerns amendments to the Gambling Bill relating to greyhound pool betting.

The Government understand the concerns of the greyhound racing industry. At present, occupiers of greyhound tracks have an exclusive right to offer pool bets on the races taking place at their tracks. Betting offices cannot offer pool bets on greyhound tracks. The Government propose to lift this restriction; to widen consumer choice and allow the more substantial off-course pools to flow into on-course pools, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of greyhound pools.

The Government acknowledge, however, that there have been concerns expressed in the greyhound industry about the potentially disruptive effects of a rapid move to an open market.

Following detailed discussions with representatives of the greyhound industry, the Government have therefore decided to table their own amendment on this issue. This will require pool bets on greyhound racing to be offered in betting premises only where they are offered in accordance with an arrangement with the greyhound track occupier. This restriction will apply until 31 December 2012, after which it will cease to have effect. The Government hope this transitional measure will provide reassurance to the greyhound industry, but note that it will also allow a wider range of betting choices for the betting consumer than exist at present.

Clause 97: Mandatory conditions of lottery operating licence

This section concerns amendments that have been tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to alter or supplement the limits on the proceeds of society and local authority lotteries licensed under part 5.

Amendment No. 147 seeks to remove the limits altogether; amendment No. 148 would increase the maximum permitted proceeds of any one lottery (£10 million); amendment No. 149 would remove any limit on the annual proceeds of a lottery (currently £10 million); amendment No. 150 doubles the maximum prize that can be won in a lottery to £50,000 (if 10 per cent. of the proceeds is less than £50,000); and amendment No. 152 would make it a statutory obligation for the gambling commission to review proceeds and prize limits every three years.

The Government acknowledge that society lotteries raise a great deal of money for good causes, in part as a result of the recent increases in maximum permitted prizes and proceeds. In most cases, it seems unlikely that the limits in the Bill will act as a restraint for most lotteries—as few approach the limits on proceeds set out in the Bill.

The Government think it important to retain some control over the size of large society lotteries. In particular, prizes for these types of lottery are limited to a maximum 10 per cent. of the proceeds of the lottery. If the limits on the proceeds were removed it could lead to a situation where people were tempted to gamble more to chase higher prizes. We think the existing limits, which were doubled in 2002, are fair, but we agree that there should be flexibility to alter them.

The Secretary of State has the power to vary any monetary amount or percentage in clause 97. She will, of course, keep these limits under review and increase them as necessary. With respect to the proposals in amendment No. 152 for a triennial review, it will be well known that the arrangements for a review have arisen as a matter of custom and practice on the part of the Gaming Board. We expect those arrangements to continue, and the Bill already makes provision, in clause 26, for the gambling commission to offer advice to the Secretary of State.

Amendment No. 151 is intended to remove the requirement that electronic tickets must be sent in a way that enables them to be retained, replacing it with a requirement only that the information contained on it should be accessible. The Government do not think it prudent to accept this amendment.

We do think it important that a person should be sent his ticket in a way that enables him to retain it, whether electronically or otherwise. This is both so that he can

prove his entry, and so that the information is there to be checked if necessary by those responsible for monitoring gambling activity. We believe these are reasonable requirements.

Clause 121: Levy

This section concerns amendments which have been tabled to the Gambling Bill which seek to ensure that any levy raised under clause 121 is not raised in such a way that society lotteries pay more than reflects their impact on problem gambling or their relative size in terms of gambling revenue.

The Government hope that it will not be necessary to commence the levy provisions of clause 121. If, however, that proves necessary, there are a number of options for determining the levy allowed under the current clause 12—including provision to determine it by reference to receipts. In raising any levy, the Government will of course discuss with the gambling commission how best to ensure that contributions, including any from the society lottery sector, are fair and reasonable. We do not consider that we should limit our options in the way that these amendments imply.

In addition, we do think that to tie the levy applicable solely to the incidence of problem gambling—whether or not linked also to revenue, and for society lotteries only, would be unfair. We, therefore, believe that the possible operation of a levy should be dealt with in the round, in the manner facilitated by clause 121.

Clause 157 etc: Fees

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that would remove the Secretary of State's power to set annual premises licence fees. Licensing authorities would be able to set their own fees for premises licences in accordance with guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

The Gambling Bill gives to the Secretary of State a power (in respect of England and Wales) to set bands of fees for premises licences, with a prescribed maximum. This maximum is proposed because the Government believe it important that fees are fair and consistent. Within these bands, authorities will be able to set the precise fee in order for them to be able to recover their costs. We recognise that, in some circumstances, it would be appropriate to devolve fee-setting to licensing authorities, so long as the principle of cost-recovery is maintained.

Therefore, the Secretary of State has a power under clause 206 to devolve fee-setting to some, or all, licensing authorities. The Government have been, and will continue to liaise with the local government association and LACORS regarding the setting of all fees charged by licensing authorities under the Gambling Bill. The Government consider that this approach balances a desire for a degree of local autonomy with a reasonable desire on the part of gambling operators for a level of consistency.

Clause 166: Default conditions

This section concerns amendments to the Gambling Bill that seek to restrict the opening times of betting offices during winter months.

The Government intend to use powers under clause 166 (default conditions), to set opening hours for gambling premises. The Government have no detailed proposals to make about the future opening hours of betting offices, other than to confirm that they believe they should be standard over the year. The Government will continue to consider this matter in consultation with all interested parties.

Clause 174: Bingo door supervision

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that address requirements for door supervision of gambling premises. Amendment No. 250 would exclude bingo hall door supervisors from needing to be licensed, as security operatives, under the Private Security Industry Act 2001. The Government have now tabled Government amendments Nos. 247, 248, 249 and 381. These ensure that where bingo and casino operators use their own staff for door supervision purposes, they continue to be exempt from being licensed under the Private Security Industry Act 2001. We believe that the controls in the Bill are sufficient to regulate these matters. As a result, there is no longer a need for amendment No. 250. We understand that the Bingo Association is also satisfied that the matter has been dealt with satisfactorily.

After Clause 177: Christmas Day

This section concerns Government amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill. The Government note concerns in the House of Commons and Lords about the availability of commercial gambling services on Christmas day. Accordingly, the Government have tabled amendment No. 251, which will have the effect of preventing licensed premises from being used to offer facilities for gambling on Christmas day.

Clause 230: Gaming machines: categories A to D

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to allow the practice of trading up of two smaller prizes from a gaming machine, for a larger one to continue. The Government agree with this aspiration and believe that this is achieved in clause 337(3), which permits trading up so long as the value of the prize received is not greater than the total value of the prizes that could have been lawfully won by the player.

However, the proposal to introduce the phrase "be permitted without restriction", which is included in amendments, is of concern to the Government because it could be interpreted to mean that trading up to any value of prize could occur. If the amendment were interpreted in this way, two £5 prizes could be traded up to a prize of the value of £100, which would clearly be undesirable.

Clause 230: Gaming machines: categories A to D

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that would have the effect of making a triennial review of gaming machine stakes and prizes a statutory obligation. It also concerns amendments that would increase the maximum prize payable by a category C machine from £25, as proposed by the Government, to £35.

A triennial review of stakes and prizes has been carried out by the Gaming Board for Great Britain, as a matter of custom and practice. However, the Government do not think it desirable to make the process binding. The proposed gambling commission (which will take on the responsibilities of the Gaming

Board in this area) might have reason to undertake a review more frequently than every three years. Conversely, there may be circumstances that lead the commission to conclude that a review of stakes and prizes is certainly not appropriate. Nor would the Government wish to encourage an assumption that they had ruled out adjustments to stakes and prizes that were thought necessary in response to advice and research from sources other than the gambling commission, even if the Government would always consult the commission about the use of its powers in part 10 to adjust stakes and prizes.

As will be known, the Gaming Board for Great Britain recommended, in their triennial review last year, an increase in category C machine prizes to £35.

The Government gave careful consideration to the board's advice, but came to the conclusion that stakes and prizes for these gaming machines, which are available in pubs and other premises not dedicated to gambling, should stay where they are, pending the passage of this Bill. That means retaining the £25 maximum prize for category C machines for now, while keeping this under review in the future. The Government are not minded to change their view on this point.

Clause 230: Gaming machines: categories A to D

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to ensure that the stakes and prizes for category D machines under the Bill will be, respectively, 30p and £8.

During the Second Reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, on 22 February, the Government announced that the existing maximum prize of £8 for gaming machines that offer non-monetary and non-exchangeable prizes (i.e. goods, like teddy bears) will remain. The Government have previously announced that maximum stake for these machines will remain at 30p.

For other types of category gaming machine, like those that pay out in either cash or in tokens that can be accumulated and traded for significant prizes (known generally as 'redemption' machines, the Government continue to take the view that the appropriate stake and prize limits for these machines are 10p and £5.

Machines with cash or exchangeable prizes involve incentives for repeat play that the Government believe justify a more cautious approach than for non-monetary and non-exchangeable prizes, particularly where these machines can be played by children. Clause 230 gives Ministers power to adjust stakes and prize limits for all categories of machine. The Government believe that this flexible approach is the correct one in relation to machine stakes and prizes.

Clause 258: Preventing Repetitive play

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that seek to ensure that the gambling commission cannot arbitrarily attach conditions to licences for rapid draw lotteries, without first having evidence that these lotteries are harmful.

The Government agree with the intention of this amendment, and can confirm that we have no desire to place restrictive conditions on lotteries in the absence of compelling evidence of harm.

Following discussions with representatives of lottery providers, the Government have decided to take a slightly different approach to this issue, but with the same objective of protecting consumers.

The Government have therefore tabled amendments to delete clause 258. The Government intend, instead, to rely upon the powers in clauses 73, 75, and 76 to facilitate such conditions, as are necessary, on the offering of lotteries. Under clauses 73 and 75, the gambling commission may attach conditions to lottery operating licences. Under clause 76 the Secretary of State may make regulations which require specified conditions to be added to operating licences. The Government will consider, with the gambling commission and lottery providers whether it is necessary to use these powers in relation to lotteries. We will do so through the processes for consultation provided for in parts 2 and 5 of the Bill.

Schedule 13: Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permits and Clause 279: Removal of Exemption

This section concerns amendments tabled to the Gambling Bill that address the provision of gaming machines in pubs and other alcohol licensed premises.

Amendment No. 316 seeks to prevent a licensing authority from taking away the entitlements of alcohol licensed premises to provide gaming and up to two gaming machines until representations relating to the licensing objectives have been received and upheld. Amendment No. 310 imposes the same requirements on a licensing authority before it can cancel a licensed premises gaming machine permit.

Amendment No. 317 removes the condition under which a hearing is only required to be held if the licence holder requests one. It provides for a hearing to be held specifically to consider the relevant representations; and for that hearing to take place unless the authority, the licensee and each person who made representations agreed that a hearing is unnecessary. Amendment No. 311 makes the same provisions with regard to the cancellation of a licensed premises gaming machine permit.

The Government take the view that these amendments are unnecessary. Clause 279 and paragraph 16 of schedule 13 already restrict the circumstances in which an authority can take away an alcohol licensed premises' entitlements to offer gaming and gaming machines. We are confident that licensing authorities will act reasonably in the exercise of their functions in this regard. If the licence holder believes the authority's actions are unjustified, there is a right of appeal to the magistrates' court (or, in Scotland, to the sheriff). We believe this provides an adequate protection for licence holders.

There are also dangers in preventing a licensing authority from being able to act unless it has considered representations from a responsible authority. There may be cases where the authority has received information from other sources, or has gathered on its own initiative, that would justify it in taking action urgently to remove gaming or gaming machine entitlements. In these circumstances, the amendments would potentially put consumers and children at risk, if the licensing authority could only act in response to representations.

The Bill also already provides for a licensee to request a hearing if he or she wants one. The Government believe that this provides sufficient opportunity for the licensee to make representations to a licensing authority before any entitlements can be taken away.

Clause 325: Foreign gambling

This section concerns amendments to the Gambling Bill proposed by the Government. These amendments provide further clarification in respect of foreign gambling. Government amendment No. 345 is a technical amendment designed to rectify an overlap between parts 11 and 16 of the Bill. As a result of this amendment, lotteries will be regulated, largely, under part 11. This will mean that advertising foreign lotteries will not be prohibited. However, there will be little point in doing so because no ticket for such a lottery will be permitted to be sold to a person in Great Britain.

Government amendment No. 346 fulfils a commitment that the Government gave to clarify the position that gambling operators based in Gibraltar will be permitted to advertise in the United Kingdom. Government amendment No. 347 widens the Secretary of State's powers to specify "places" as well as "countries" that can be 'white listed' under clause 325(3).

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Following Ministerial approval of the business plan, key performance targets have been agreed for the Queen Elizabeth II conference centre for the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

The agency's principal financial target for 2005–06 is to achieve a minimum dividend payment to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of £1,400,000.

An operational target has been set to achieve combined room occupancy of the three key conference areas within the centre in excess of 470 days and not less than out-turn in 2004–05.

The agency also has the following quality of service targets:

Overall score for value for money satisfaction of 90+ per cent.

The number of complaints received to be less than two per 100 events.

An average response time when answering complaints of less than four working days.

Telecommunications Developments

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): The Government are today announcing they will be commissioning research to identify the future direction of mobile phone technology and the future need for mast developments. The research will also look at the potential for increased sharing of masts. The research will consider the effectiveness of the Sitefinder database and options for its future development. The Government are currently reviewing planning arrangements for mobile masts.

DEFENCE

Defence Medical Education and Training Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The following key targets have been set for the Chief Executive of the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency (DMETA) for the financial year 2005–06:

Key Target 1—Meeting Operational Manpower Requirements

To meet 100 per cent. of the commanders-in-chief requirements for secondary care

personnel under DMETA command for operational deployments.

Key Target 2—Individual Military Continuation Training

To ensure that 90 per cent. of all DMETA personnel, whose medical category permits,

achieve their service's annual mandatory individual military training.

Key Target 3—Medical Professional and Career Training

Initial Training (Phase 2)

To provide initial training (phase 2) that meets the requirements, professional standards and timescales defined by the single services.

Career. Professional and Continuation Training (Phase 3)

To provide career, professional and continuation training (phase 3) that meets the requirements, professional standards and timescales defined by the single services.

Key Target 4—Efficiency DMETA Estate

Ensure the rationalisation and efficient usage of the current DMETA estate, reducing the balance sheet value of the estate as at 1 April 2003 by at least 50 per cent. by 2010, thereby reducing the cost of training.

Cost Measurement

To comply with centrally led Departmental initiatives in support of the cost of defence outputs and RAB exploitation.

Key Target 5—Customer Focus.

To improve upon the customer confidence index baseline score, as assessed at the end of financial year 2004–05, by 5 per cent.

Key Target 6—Harmony/Separated Service

To ensure 100 per cent. compliance with the single services' harmony guidelines for all deployable personnel under DMETA's command.

Fleet and Second Sea Lord Budgets

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): In the 2004 Defence White Paper "Future Capabilities" we announced plans to merge the Fleet and Second Sea Lord Headquarters in Portsmouth. This is part of a programme to create a modern, effective and efficient command structure for the Royal Navy. It will build on the collocation of both headquarters in Portsmouth in 2002 and the enhanced capabilities provided by Fleet's new Leach Building on Whale Island, which opened last year.

Since that announcement work has progressed and our aim is to stand up the new merged headquarters on 1 April 2006. By cutting out duplication, streamlining back-office functions, and maximising the benefits of collocation, modern working practices and better IT, we expect to redirect significant resources to the front line. In particular, the new headquarters will require some 450 fewer posts (125 military, 325 civilian) than the two existing headquarters. These reductions will contribute to the wider MOD manpower reductions also announced in the White Paper.

We are doing everything possible to mitigate the impact on the people concerned. Our current plans envisage that the civilian reductions, most of which will take place in the Portsmouth area, will be achieved through a combination of natural wastage and voluntary early release. Should compulsory redundancies prove necessary, we will do all we can to keep them to a minimum. There will be no service redundancies. Staff and the trade unions are being kept fully informed of developments through meetings, briefings and a formal consultation exercise.

Creation of the new headquarters will have no impact on the Royal Navy's footprint in the Portsmouth area. The main focus of the headquarters will be Whale Island, but elements of the new command structure will remain in the naval base.

Support Vehicle Contract

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce that following the successful completion of negotiations MAN ERF UK Limited has been awarded the contract for the Ministry of Defence's support vehicle programme.

The award of this contract, which has a value of £1.1 billion, will see the delivery of a modern, more effective and more efficient fleet of trucks and trailers—a vital support capability—to our armed forces. The contract will create and secure a large number of jobs in the automotive sector across the UK, and is an excellent deal for both UK industry and the British armed forces.

Defence Fixed Telecommunications System

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to announce that a five year extension to the Defence Fixed Telecommunications System (DFTS) contract with British Telecommunications plc (BT) was signed on 1 April. The extension takes the contract term to July 2012. The extended contract will secure the continuation of voice, data and video telecommunications which are vital to the daily operations of the Department and UK armed forces. It will involve the introduction of new technology, producing benefits which contribute to operational effectiveness and the Department's future capabilities, as set out in the Defence White Paper on "Delivering Security in a Changing World (July 2004)". It will provide substantial savings, in the order of £15 million a year, and improve the ability of the Department to ensure ongoing value for money. The five year extension has a value in excess of £1.5 billion and will bring the total value of the DFTS contract to over £3 billion.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Student Loans Company

The Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education (Dr. Kim Howells): A copy of the annual performance and resource agreement with the Student Loans Company (SLC) for 2005–06 has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses today.

The SLC plays a key role in the delivery of the Government's student finance arrangements and the agreement sets five objectives for the company over the coming year. The main objective is to provide an accessible an effective system for handling applications for student support and processing payments, so that students get paid the correct amount of support at the start of term. The other objectives relate to improving the collection of student loans; providing a high quality service to customers; offering information to the Government to assist in developing policy and strategy; and securing the best use of funding provided to the company. Performance measures have been set for the SLC in these areas and new monitoring arrangements will track the company's progress in delivering against these.

The agreement is also available on the SLC website at www.slc.co.uk

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Ivory Coast

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Chris Mullin): It is with regret that last Friday my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, decided temporarily to suspend operations in our embassy in the Ivory Coast with immediate effect. This decision is based on the uncertain security situation and our inability adequately to protect our staff or UK nationals in the case of a further outbreak of violence. But the decision also reflects the lack of progress in the peace process; until leaders truly commit to finding a political solution, there is little point in us remaining.

On Friday we changed our travel advice to urge British nationals to leave while there is calm and commercial means are available. Consular and visa services will be provided from Accra.

We have informed the Government of Ivory Coast of our decision, and that we will review the situation in June.

UN Report: "In Larger Freedom"

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): The Government warmly welcome United Nations Secretary-General Annan's report "In Larger Freedom", released in New York on 21 March.

As my right hon. Friends the Foreign Secretary and International Development Secretary said in a joint press statement on Monday 21 March, the report offers bold proposals to enable the UN to deal with the challenges faced by the international community. We agree with Kofi Annan that we need a shared global agenda that recognises that security, development and

human rights are not competing priorities, but fundamentally interrelated goals, underpinned by rule of law. Nations will never be truly secure unless they are built on stable institutions, social progress and development, the rights of the individual and rule of law.

We are studying the report carefully and hope that it will lead to a successful outcome at the UN millennium review summit in New York in September. We intend to play a major role in helping deliver a successful outcome, not least as G8—and from July, EU—presidency.

We strongly support the SG's lead in putting key issues on the agenda for leaders in September, including:

the need for action now to make faster progress towards the millennium development goals, including on related sustainable development commitments, and to improve human rights;

support for: increased aid and launch this year of the international finance facility; the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Commission for Africa; and UK ideas for more effective international responses to natural and man-made humanitarian crises;

more effective support for countries emerging from conflict, including in particular through the establishment of a new peace-building commission: and

the development of comprehensive strategies to meet threat of terrorism and proliferation.

The Government will make a full contribution to the summit and its preparations. Our G8 priorities—on Africa and climate change—reflect key themes on the UN summit agenda. We hope the Gleneagles summit will help build momentum for a successful UN summit.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has launched, with the UN association, an extensive public debate on the secretary generals' earlier high level panel report aimed at informing our approach.

I have placed copies of the "In Larger Freedom" report in the Library of the House. It is also available on the internet at: www.un.org/largerfreedom

Westminster Foundation for Democracy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): The Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is well known to many Members of this House who have committed time and effort to work on behalf of the WFD, promoting democracy around the world through training; sharing experiences; and mentoring. I would like to make particular mention of the efforts of those Members who have served on, or are current members of, the WFD's Board, and especially to the hon. Member for Ilford, South (Mike Gapes), the chairman of the board.

In May 2004, the FCO and WFD commissioned jointly a firm of consultants, River Path Associates, to conduct a full review of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. The review was conducted according to Government guidelines on reviewing non-departmental public bodies.

The final report of the review has now been presented to me and I am placing copies of it in the Library of the House. The report is also available on the FCO website, www.fco.gov.uk.

The Government have considered the recommendation of the review carefully. We are seized in particular of a need for the WFD to operate with proper accountability and transparency. We have decided not to accept the recommendation that the work of the non-political part of the WFD, known as WFD central, be brought back into the FCO. WFD central will remain in its current form and the FCO will work with it to continue to improve the effectiveness of WFD central in building democracy overseas. This decision is based on two points: *(i)* our judgement that WFD central deserves recognition for the progress made in recent years; and (ii) the added benefits of conducting democracy building work through an arms-length body, rather than directly through Government.

We have also considered carefully the review's recommendations on the WFD's work with British political parties. We see merit in the recommendation of the reviewer, that this work be funded through Parliament. But this is an important issue and we want to be sure that we reach a decision that has broad support.

To this end I am announcing today the beginning of a three-month consultation exercise on the future of the WFD. I would encourage all Members of both Houses to involve themselves in the consultation.

There are two elements to the exercise:

consideration of the River Path Associates report;

consideration of a response to the report, produced by WFD.

These documents are all available on the FCO website. Alternatively, I would be happy to send copies to Members who write to me to request them.

We will also be seeking views from a wide range of others in the consultation process. We will particularly target those who know the WFD, but will also welcome views from specialists in democracy promotion from within the UK and abroad. I would encourage Members to make this exercise known to those they believe might be interested in commenting.

HEALTH

Cancer Drugs

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): Following continuing interest in both Houses about variations across the country in the use of cancer drugs approved by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), this statement informs the House of the key messages from cancer network action plans provided to the Department of Health by strategic health authorities (SHAs) following the National Cancer director's report of 14 June 2004 on this subject.

SHAs have confirmed that:

funding is available for NICE approved cancer drugs;

where cancer networks were significantly below the national average for specific drug usage their investigations have identified that the drugs are available if required or there are reasons for low usage such as clinical preference for alternatives and cross boundary flows;

where areas such as staffing and capacity have been highlighted, actions to address them are being taken including demand and capacity modelling, recruiting to new posts (including medical & clinical oncology and nursing) and investment in infrastructure such as new facilities;

many networks have taken the opportunity to strengthen their arrangements generally to ensure appropriate implementation of NICE appraisals.

The National Cancer Director has analysed the action plans and said that they are encouraging, confirming that the profile of implementing NICE appraisals has increased and that where problems have been identified they have been, or are in the process of being, addressed. A repeat analysis will be conducted in the autumn to confirm if variations have been reduced as a result of this action.

A letter to key cancer stakeholders in the National Health Service, voluntary sector and pharmaceutical industry has also been issued today setting out these messages in more detail. Copies will be placed in the Library.

The Department will continue its work to support the NHS in implementing NICE guidance.

NHS Foundation Trusts

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Mr. John Hutton): The chairman of Monitor (the statutory name of which is the Independent Regulator of NHS foundation trusts) announced on 1 April 2005 that, in accordance with section 6 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, Monitor authorised the following NHS trusts to operate as NHS foundation trusts from 1 April 2005, as part of its second group in wave 1a:

Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull NHS Trust

Frimley Park Hospitals NHS Trust

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Trust

The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch NHS Trust

The Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Trust

Monitor has deferred consideration of the applications from Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust, East Somerset NHS Trust and Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust. Further decisions on these trusts may be made at a later date by Monitor.

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust and Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust have not been authorised. In the coming weeks, officials at the Department will work with these trusts to ensure that full support is provided for a further application for authorisation at a later date.

A copy of Monitor's press notice has been placed in the Library.

Monitor's announcement brings the total number of NHS foundation trusts to 31.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Attenuating Energy Projectile

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Caroline Flint): The then Home Secretary, my right hon. Friend the Member for Blackburn, announced on 2 April 2001, *Official Report*, column 372W, that the Government were continuing with a programme to establish whether an acceptable, effective and less potentially lethal alternative to the baton round was available.

A new safer attenuating energy projectile (AEP) is now available and is being issued to police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and to the Army in Northern Ireland. The existing baton round, the L21A1 will be withdrawn once all personnel have been trained in the use of the AEP. It is planned to begin deployment of the AEP on an operational basis from 21 June 2005.

The AEP will be used only in accordance with guidance which is intended to provide authorised firers with a less lethal option in situations where they are faced with individual aggressors whether such aggressors are acting on their own or as part of a group. It is not a crowd control technology; it is designed to be used against specific individuals in a variety of scenarios. Although there will be a reduced risk of serious injury or death when the AEP is used, that risk has not been completely eliminated. Where a round inadvertently strikes the head, the risk of serious and life threatening injury from the AEP will be less than that from the L21A1 baton round, which already has a low risk of such injury. This has been verified by an independent medical assessment, a copy of which I have placed in the Library today. Police guidance produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers and Army guidance on the use of the AEP will be published shortly and copies will be available in the Library of the House.

Details of use by the police will be reported on every occasion to the Independent Police Complaints Commission in England and Wales and to the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and copied to the policing board. Details of use by the Army in Northern Ireland will also be reported on every occasion and copied to the Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police (SIB RMP) and the Independent Assessor of Military Complaints Procedures (IAMCP).

The Government and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) remain committed to research and development in furtherance of recommendations 69 and 70 contained in the report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland. A research programme is continuing with the intended publication of a report marking the end of the fifth phase of the programme in the near future.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Indonesia Earthquake

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I would like to report to the House on the relief effort following the earthquake in Indonesia on 28 March 2005.

On 28 March an earthquake measuring 8.7 on the Richter scale hit northern Sumatra at 22:09 local time (16:09 GMT). It was 30 km deep and was felt in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The epicentre was between the Indonesian islands of Nias and Simeulue. This is about 180 km south south-east of the major earthquake of the 26 December 2004, which was the second largest in recorded history at 9.3 on the Richter scale.

The 28 March earthquake prompted tsunami alerts across the region. Early warning and disaster preparedness initiatives were tested for the first time since the 26 December earthquake and tsunami. In Thailand and Malaysia, populations vulnerable to the effects of a tsunami were immediately alerted and where necessary, evacuated. The Government of India issued a tsunami warning through the media to coastal areas including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, where tremors were also felt. In the Maldives, the Government issued a tsunami warning through the media and a national disaster management centre was fully activated.

The destruction and loss of life caused by the 28 March earthquake was mostly localised to the islands off the west coast of Sumatra, which have a total population of around 525,000. Early estimates from assessments still ongoing give the estimated death toll as around 1,700. Latest figures from the national authorities in Nias place the death toll at around 560 with the number of injured at about 3,000 (10 per cent. seriously injured). On Simeulue there are nine confirmed dead and 47 injured, although the UN estimates some 100 dead and 177 injured, whilst on the mainland there are unconfirmed reports of nine deaths. Figures received today indicate that there may be as many as 300 killed (from a population of about 5,000) on the Banyak Islands, according to the authorities. It is likely that the final death toll will be between 1,500 and 2,000.

Because of the extensive relief and recovery operation already underway in Sumatra, following the earlier earthquake and tsunami, the Government of Indonesia and the international community were well placed to respond quickly to the new earthquake. Assessment teams were formed quickly by the Government, the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme, and international non-governmental organisations to carry out rapid assessments in Nias and Simeulue. This included British non-governmental organisations, and I would like to commend them for their immediate response to those in need on the affected islands.

Initial feedback from rapid assessments of the islands confirm that the earthquake hit the island of Nias, with a population of around 450,000, hardest. Estimates of building damage in the capital, Gunungsitoli, range between 20 per cent. and 50 per cent. severely damaged. Most damage was done to cement and brick buildings. Damage is also reported to essential infrastructure, roads, airport, electricity distribution and water supplies. On Simeulue, the most recent reports indicate that 12,000 homes may have been destroyed or damaged.

Over the weekend we heard the news that a helicopter operated by the Australian Navy had crashed while on operations near Nias. Nine military personnel were, tragically, killed, and another two survivors are being treated for their injuries. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families of those killed, and wish those injured a speedy recovery.

The rescue and relief operation is well underway, although damage to infrastructure, including to the airport runway on Nias, and adverse weather conditions have caused difficulties. Search and rescue teams, medical teams and medicines, tents, food, water and non-food items have been arriving on the islands by air and sea and distributed to the affected areas. Medical evacuations from Nias are being carried out to Medan and Meulabpk on the mainland. The World Food Programme have estimated that 200,000 Nias residents will need food assistance for about two months.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been co-ordinating the relief effort jointly with Government of Indonesia from Bandah Aceh, consulting closely with the Red Cross Movement, non-governmental organisations and other agencies. An on-site Operational Coordination Centre has been established in Sibolga, on the west coast of Sumatra, and over the weekend, a six-person United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team was mobilised to reinforce UN co-ordination. Relief assistance for Nias is now being channelled through Medan, while assistance for Simeulue is channelled through Banda Aceh.

The Department for International Development had two humanitarian advisers in Indonesia, one in Banda Aceh and one in Jakarta, at the time of earthquake. They have worked alongside the United Nations and other humanitarian organisations to support the relief effort. From the outset we offered whatever assistance might be appropriate, including financial support if needed. The main requirement was to support fast needs assessment and transport provision. Department for International Development funded Mi8 and Super Puma helicopters were used for the initial assessments and were also used for the transport of medical supplies and water to Nias as well as medical evacuations. Department for International Development supplied tents have been moved by the UN to Sibolga for use as shelter on the islands. Following the tsunami, there were already large quantities of relief items in Indonesia, together with numerous humanitarian workers. Nevertheless, gaps in provision might become evident as the assessments on the islands provide more information. Through our staff on the ground and contact with the UN, Red Cross and NGOs, we are monitoring the situation constantly and, should any gaps in provision emerge, we remain prepared to provide additional assistance that may be requested by the United Nations or the Government of Indonesia.

The Government of Indonesia have not requested further international assistance to respond to the earthquake and has allocated approximately £2 million for emergency relief.

In general there appears to be sufficient personnel and material in the immediate region, following December's tsunami, to meet all additional needs, including search and rescue capacity. As a result United Kingdom search and rescue teams that were put on standby did not need to deploy to the region.

This earthquake will have come as a terrible shock to those still recovering from last year's devastating tsunami, and the further loss of life and suffering will be hard to bear. On behalf of the House, I send our condolences to those affected.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Education and Library Boards

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Barry Gardiner): Last November, following substantial overspends by the Belfast and the South Eastern education and library boards in 2003–04, I announced that a statutory inquiry would be held into financial management and control standards in the two boards. The inquiry, conducted by Dr. Bill Jack, former Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland, considered the extent to which the boards and their chief executives, as accounting officers, fulfilled their responsibilities.

The report highlights serious failings in the execution of responsibilities within both boards and makes 49 specific recommendations for improvement relating to each board, its chief executive and chief finance officer. I would like to thank Dr. Jack for his professionalism in conducting the inquiry and for producing a comprehensive and meticulous report. Copies of the inquiry report have been placed in the Library of the House of Commons.

The overspends have had serious consequences — this was real money, not paper deficits on a set of accounts. In total it is estimated that the SEELB has now overspent by £21.4 million and the BELB by £11.4 million. If the boards had contained spending within their approved limits, additional resources would have been available for education and wider public services.

The problem of overspending is a matter of grave concern. The Government cannot and will not tolerate persistent failure to exercise control of expenditure, which is a fundamental responsibility of public bodies and of accounting officers, who are answerable to Parliament for their stewardship of public funds. The boards are obliged under statute only to incur expenditure within plans approved by the Department, and the Government will take all the steps necessary to ensure this is secured, and that there is no recurrence of the overspending. The recommendations in the inquiry report represent a strong reminder, not only to the two boards in question, but to all those responsible for managing public funds, of the need to live within their budgets.

Proper stewardship of public moneys allocated to each board must be restored. This will require full and speedy implementation of the 49 recommendations contained within the Jack report. I will ensure that the necessary steps are taken by the boards and the Department of Education to achieve this, including the establishment of an effective regime to monitor progress on implementation. Through these arrangements, proper standards of financial management and control will be re-established in the Belfast and South Eastern education and library boards.

I have asked the permanent secretary to write to the chief executives of both boards making it clear that accounting officer status will continue only on a probationary basis until June 2006, at which point it will be reviewed formally by the Department. It is my intention that, during this period, there will be continuous monitoring to ensure the effective implementation of Dr. Jack's recommendations.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Financial Assistance Scheme

The Minister for Pensions (Malcolm Wicks): Today we have published for consultation draft regulations setting out our detailed proposals for the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS). In our previous statement on 22 February, *Official Report*, columns 16–18WS, we said that there are at least 380 schemes in which members might be potentially eligible for financial assistance, and placed a list in the Library. That list is indicative and based on information provided by scheme representatives.

We will be unable to confirm formally that any scheme will definitely qualify for the FAS until the regulations containing detailed eligibility criteria have been approved by Parliament and until schemes have been formally assessed under those criteria.

However, if the information we hold is confirmed during the qualification process and if the further information which may be needed to confirm scheme eligibility is provided by scheme representatives within prescribed timescales, then those schemes will meet FAS scheme qualification criteria. There is no reason to expect that any scheme should otherwise be taken off the list.

As indicated in the statement made on 22 February, the FAS will provide assistance to members of defined benefit pension schemes in circumstances where the sponsoring employer is insolvent. We are aware that some trustees and members of schemes that start to wind up with a solvent employer before 5 April 2005, but where the employer may enter insolvency after 5 April 2005, have been concerned that they will be excluded from both the FAS and the Pension Protection Fund (PPF).

I can reassure members of those schemes that start winding up before 5 April 2005 that they will potentially be eligible for assistance from the FAS should a relevant insolvency event occur after 5 April 2005. This is in order to minimise the administrative risk that members of those schemes will find themselves falling between the FAS and the PPF. However, to ensure its effective operation, it will still be necessary to set a cut-off date for the occurrence of the insolvency. That cut-off date will coincide with the end of the period by which schemes must have notified the FAS of their potential eligibility. The date will be prescribed in the regulations.

As solvent employers have a duty to support their schemes and provide the benefits members were expecting, it is right that the FAS focuses on insolvent employers. We have however taken action to facilitate operation of the arrangements for deemed buy back which enables some members of severely under-funded contracted-out pension schemes in wind-up, who meet the qualifying conditions, to choose to be reinstated into the state system.

On 31 March we laid new regulations to speed up the process and ensure schemes get their calculations quickly. These regulations clarify that as well as being available to members of some insolvent schemes (helping ensure that the funding allocated to the FAS can help as many people as possible), this option is also available to some members in schemes with solvent employers.

As we announced on 22 February, the FAS will provide help to those within three years of their scheme pension age on 14 May 2004. The assistance will top up individuals' pensions to a level broadly equivalent to 80 per cent. of the core pension rights accrued in their scheme. The draft regulations provide a detailed explanation of what this will cover.

Payments will commence at age 65 and assistance will only be provided to those who will receive at least £10 a week (or equivalent) from the FAS. There will also be a cap on the total amount of assistance and pension payable so that FAS payments do not top up people's pensions to more than £12,000 per year.

Payments will be backdated to the date we announced the Financial Assistance Scheme (May 2004) or the recipient 65th birthday, whichever is the later. These are likely to be in the form of a lump sum.

Surviving spouses of scheme members who were within three years of their scheme pension age on 14 May 2004 (or who would have been had they not died) will be eligible to receive payments from the date of the death of the member, regardless of the survivor's age. The FAS will provide support at 50 per cent. of the member's level of assistance.

Getting assistance quickly to people who are older, especially where they are ill, is obviously a pressing concern. So, although not included in these regulations, we are exploring how to ensure that seriously ill people within three years of their scheme pension age can be paid very soon, before their pension scheme has finally wound up, and including survivors' rights. We are also exploring whether we might be able to fast track payments to people who are already 65 and putting in place arrangements to ensure those reaching 65 start receiving FAS payments as soon as possible after their 65th birthday.

We will make a further announcement on these options as soon as possible.

More details on these issues are in the draft regulations. A copy has been placed in the Library. We have invited comments on these for a period of six weeks until 16 May. Subject to the outcome, we plan to lay the regulations in June with the intention that they come into force as quickly as possible.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 5 April 2005

TREASURY

UK Debt Management Office

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Timms): The UK Debt Management Office (DMO) has published its business plan for the year 2005–06, together with an updated executive agency framework document. Copies of both documents are available in the Libraries of both Houses and are accessible from the DMO's website: www.dmo.gov.uk.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Ratification of Protocol Number 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): Her Majesty's Government ratified protocol 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on 28 January 2005.

Protocol 14 is designed to maintain and improve the efficiency of the European Court of Human Rights for the long term, mainly in the light of the continuing increase in the workload of the Court, to ensure that the Court can continue to play its pre-eminent role in protecting human rights in Europe.

Judicial Appointments Commissioners

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My right hon. and noble Friend the Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place.

"I am pleased to announce that, with the agreement of the Lord Chief Justice, I have invited Sir Nigel Wicks to chair the panel to be appointed under the Constitutional Reform Act to select the members of the Judicial Appointments Commission. Sir Nigel, who has a distinguished record of public service including as a former chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, has kindly agreed to do so".

DEFENCE

Defence Transport and Movements Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of DTMA for the financial year 2005–06.

The targets are as follows:

Key Target 1

To achieve at least a "Satisfactory" rating in the provision of planning and delivery of transport and movements support to emerging operations, an increase in the tempo of existing operations or other requirements.

Key Target 2

To achieve at least a "Satisfactory" rating in the planning and delivery of transport and movements support to enduring operations.

Key Target 3

To provide roll-on/roll-off (ro-ro) vessel capability at the readiness states required.

Key Target 4

To meet customers' requirements as negotiated and agreed in customer supplier agreements (CSAs) to deliver:

(1) 98 per cent. (previously 97 per cent.) or more of agency transactions and services, however provided, to be within agreed time, quantity, quality and cost (TQQC) criteria.

(2) At least 94 per cent. (previously 92 per cent.) of transactions against each service to be within agreed TQQC criteria.

Key Target 5

To reduce the average unit cost of output by 1 per cent. (previously 2 per cent.), on the actual unit cost achieved in 2004–05, in real terms.

New Call-out of Reservists for Operations in the Balkans

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): A new call-out order has been made under section 56 of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 so that reservists may continue to be called-out into permanent service to support military operations in the Balkans. The order will take effect from 4 April 2005.

At present, over 80 reservists are serving in the Balkans. They are providing a wide range of individual skills. We are most grateful for their continuing support to an important stabilisation operation.

Special Reconnaissance Regiment

The Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Geoffrey Hoon): The Strategic Defence Review (SDR) New Chapter published in July 2002 stated that we planned to enhance and build upon the capabilities of UK special forces. As part of this programme, the "Special Reconnaissance Regiment" (SRR) will stand up on 6 April 2005. This regiment has been formed to meet a growing worldwide demand for special reconnaissance capability. Consistent with the SDR New Chapter, this regiment will provide improved support to expeditionary operations overseas and form part of the defence contribution to the Government's comprehensive strategy to counter international terrorism. The SRR will bring together personnel from existing capabilities and become the means of the further development of the capability. Due to the specialist nature of the unit, it will come under the command of the director special forces and be a part of the UK special forces group.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ordnance Survey

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Following ministerial approval of the business plan, the following performance targets have been set for Ordnance Survey in 2005–06:

Ordnance Survey will report externally against a set of agency performance monitors (APMs) as required of all executives agencies in Government:

To achieve an operating profit before interest and dividends of £5.8 million for the financial year 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006.

Some 99.6 per cent. of significant real world features are represented in the database within six months of completion.

To continuously improve the timeliness of the supply of our data to customers with a success rate not lower than 95 per cent.

To achieve an efficiency gain in our data collection activity averaging at least 5.5 per cent. per annum over the period April 2003 to March 2006.

To reduce carbon emissions from Ordnance Survey Headquarters by 26 per cent. against the base year of 2000–01.

To achieve an increase of at least 5 per cent. in business with customers transacted through our OS Options and OS Leisure Map shop e-channels.

These targets reflect Ordnance Survey's continuing commitment to customers, improved value for money for all of its stakeholders and commitment to Government policies.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Microbicide Development Programme

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am pleased to announce the approval of additional DFID funding of up to £23.8 million to the Microbicide Development Programme (MDP). The MDP is co-ordinated by the UK Medical Research Council's clinical trials unit and Imperial College, London. This funding will enable the completion of a phase III clinical trial of one of the leading candidates for a microbicide protecting against HIV infection.

The potential benefits of an effective microbicide are very significant. Research has shown that an effective microbicide could prevent up to 2.5 million infections worldwide over three years. Microbicides, prepared in the form of a gel, provide a potential means for women to protective themselves against infection.

This investment is part of the Government's strategy for tackling HIV and AIDS in the developing world, as set out in "Taking Action" published in July 2004.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Security Vetting Review

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): In December 2002, my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, announced a review of security vetting arrangements in Northern Ireland, with the aim of ensuring that these were effective; proportionate; compliant with human rights and other statutory requirements; and in line with UK-wide best practice.

The review, which has involved representatives from Government Departments, the police and security agencies, and Government legal services, has now completed its detailed work. I have accepted its recommendations, which have improved security vetting procedures through the following significant changes:

a range of enhancements to protective security in the areas of personnel, physical and IT security;

an increased focus on risks and improved safeguards in vulnerable areas, enabling a major reduction in the number of posts requiring vetting on grounds of national security across government while improving, through better use of resources, the protective security of key areas; and

the introduction, now underway, of internal appeal processes for existing employees against the refusal or withdrawal of national security vetting clearances, to provide better transparency and fairness.

I believe that these are positive steps which will both promote confidence in the equality of opportunity afforded by Government employment, and improve the protections for and integrity of important Government activities and public services.

The Government attach particular importance to addressing all aspects of protective security. Work to drive the changes forward will continue. It is essential that in Northern Ireland, as in the UK as a whole, sound protective security regimes are in place to protect vulnerable and critically important public functions and activities from the whole range of threats, including domestic and international terrorism.

Independent Monitoring Commission Report on Paramilitary Activity

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): On 3 February 2004 I received a report from the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC). The IMC concluded that the Northern Bank robbery was planned and undertaken by the Provisional IRA. The commission also concluded that PIRA was responsible for a number of other robberies that are referred to in the report.

The commission concluded that Sinn Fein must bear its share of responsibility and recommended that I should consider exercising the powers I have in the absence of the Assembly to implement the measures which are presently applicable, namely the financial ones.

I announced in Parliament on 22 February that I was minded to remove for a period Sinn Fein's entitlement to financial assistance payable to political parties in Northern Ireland. Yesterday, having provided Sinn Fein with an opportunity to make representations to me, I laid in Parliament a direction to remove Sinn Fein's entitlement to financial assistance for 12 months from 29 April 2005, the maximum period permitted under the relevant legislation.

Discretionary Social Fund

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): I am pleased to announce that the Northern Ireland discretionary social fund budget for 2005–06 will be £59.59 million. £13.32 million will be allocated to grants; £46.17 million to loans and £0.1 million will be held as a contingency reserve. The new allocations represent an increase of £1.34 million over the initial gross budget set at April 2004. This increase will be funded through higher loan recoveries, plus an increase in net treasury funding of £0.68 million for this year. This £0.68 million is the third and final instalment of the increases to the discretionary social fund announced in the autumn 2002 pre-budget report.

The community care grant budget has been increased by £0.68 million to £13.32 million. This will provide more help to customers, in particular families with children and the disabled.

The loans budget has been increased to £46.17 million, an increase of £0.66 million on the initial 2004–05 loans budget. To improve the fairness of the scheme, budgets will be allocated in a way that will over time achieve greater consistency of outcome for customers wherever they live.

Details of the budget allocations, together with a note explaining the basis on which they have been made, have been placed in the House of Commons Library today.

Juvenile Justice Centre

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): The Government have received and welcome a report from the chief inspector of criminal justice in Northern Ireland, Kit Chivers. The report is on the Juvenile Justice Centre and has today been published.

Copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

MCA Ministerial Targets 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): I am pleased to announce the ministerial targets for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for 2005–06.

The Ministerial Targets are:

1. In at least 96 per cent. of incidents, within five minutes of being alerted, take a decision on the appropriate search and rescue response and initiate action if necessary;

Deliver at least 97 per cent. of planned ship inspections;

Carry out 95 per cent. of mandatory expanded ship inspections.

2. Ensure, by working with UK shipowners, that no more than 3 per cent. per cent. of UK ships inspected under the Paris memorandum of understanding (MOU) arrangements are detained, and also ensure that the UK shipping register maintains a position on the Paris MOU white list which is comparable to registers of a similar size and reputation.

3. Reduce the proportion of people who suffer death or injury while involved in beach activities, coastal swimming and recreational diving, by increasing MCA prevention activities, working in partnership with other organisations.

4. From a baseline of 76 per cent., increase customer satisfaction with seafarer documentation services to at least 80 per cent.

5. Establish a fully operational automatic identification system (AIS) network around the UK coast, to implement real-time tracking and monitoring of shipping movements from the shore. This will ensure the UK meets its obligations under the vessel traffic monitoring directive, and will assist monitoring of SOLAS convention traffic in transit through UK coastal waters, providing real time situational awareness to all rescue co-ordination centres within their operational area for the first time. This will enhance capability for SAR co-ordination activity, Marine pollution control co-ordination, monitoring of voluntary (MAREP) reporting schemes and vessels in transit through traffic separation schemes around the UK.

Development Targets:

Prevention—in addition to Target 3 above

6. In 2006–07, reduce the proportion of machinery failures on commercial ships and leisure craft in the UK, by increasing prevention activities, working with other relevant organisations.

In 2007–08 review the implementation, effectiveness and impact of the comprehensive prevention strategy.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Gravesham Borough Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Gravesham borough council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2003–04, Gravesham borough council administered some £21 million in housing benefits, about 41 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. Between April 2001 and March 2004 the council raised only two administrative penalties and no formal cautions or prosecutions had been made. Weaknesses in counter-fraud work included a lack of up-to-date policies and procedures, limited awareness of benefit fraud as an issue and ineffective work with Jobcentre Plus and the Pension Service.

However, some progress had been made since the appointment of a benefits manager and a fraud and inspections manager, including the completion of 48 investigations, with three sanctions administered and the recruitment of four staff to carry out reviews of postal claims and home visits from October 2004. There are also plans to recruit two more fraud investigators.

The performance development team is now working with the council to help develop a long-term performance improvement strategy for the counter-fraud unit.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFPs findings.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Hinckley and Bosworth borough council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2003–04 Hinckley and Bosworth borough council administered some £10 million in housing benefits, about 35 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. BFI's comprehensive performance assessment in April 2004 found weaknesses in the council's counter-fraud activity. The inspection found that since then the situation has improved and the counter-fraud service is now performing to a reasonable standard. It is clear that the council is now committed to improving its counter-fraud service and this was shown by the prompt and positive reaction from members, senior managers and staff to BFI's findings and recommendations.

There is now a comprehensive set of policies and procedures to guide staff and investigators are experienced and generally well trained, although did not fully comply with legislation and guidance in some investigations.

Senior managers and members need to ensure that internal and external auditors support their efforts to ensure that the benefits system is safe and secure.

In September 2004, the council made a successful bid for performance standards funding to provide training and support officer and was keen to explore further funding for other counter-fraud initiatives.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings.

South Buckinghamshire District Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on South Buckinghamshire district council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2003–04, South Buckinghamshire district council administered some £9 million in housing benefits, about 38 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. BFI found that the council's counter-fraud work and audit arrangements were not at standard.

The council had contracted out counter-fraud work in 1997 but little meaningful counter-fraud work was done under these arrangements. Following a best value review of the revenues and benefits service, direct responsibility for managing counter-fraud was returned to the council on 1 September 2004.

BFI found that existing strategic and policy plans contained too little detail to be fully effective and that some were still in draft. In many cases no fraud file was set up to hold details of the investigation and where a fraud file did exist it contained insufficient information. The management of the council's counter-fraud resources and quality of the investigative work was poor. No fraud sanctions had been applied in over 10 years. The performance development team is now working with the council to develop a long-term strategy to improve counter-fraud work.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings.

Flintshire County Council (Benefit Fraud Inspectorate)

Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the BFI inspection report on Flintshire county council was published today and copies have been placed in the Library.

In 2003–04, Flintshire county council administered some £26.5 million in housing benefits, about 10 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure. In the final quarter of 2003–04 the council was taking 89 days on average to process new claims to housing benefits against the Standard of 36 days. This performance placed it in the bottom quartile of performance.

BFI found that the council had bought a new benefits IT system in November 2003 but had some difficulty implementing it and this led to backlogs of work. The council had cleared these by June 2004 but in doing so training and the development of effective management information were neglected. By October 2004 Flintshire county council was processing new claims in 70 days, a useful improvement but still almost twice the standard time. Significant problems remain with the IT system and these must be addressed urgently. While the benefits service is integral to the council's corporate aims, objectives and targets for it were not prioritised, job descriptions did not reflect staff duties and lines of responsibility for benefits staff were not clear.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and may ask the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 6 April 2005

CABINET OFFICE

Members/Peers Correspondence

The Minister for the Cabinet Office (Mr. David Miliband): I am today publishing a report on Departments' and Agencies' performance on handling Members' and Peers' correspondence for 2004. Details are set out in the attached table. Departmental figures are based on substantive replies unless otherwise indicated.

The footnotes to the table provide general background information on how the figures have been compiled.

Correspondence from MPs/Peers to Ministers and agency chief executives[1]

	2003			*2004*		
Department or Agency	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*Percentage of replies within target*	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*Percentage of replies within target*
Cabinet Office	15	443	90	15	637	88
Department for Constitutional Affairs[2]	20	2,746	49	20	3,416	64
Court Service	15	464	95	15	429	95
HM Land Registry	20	48	96	20	44	95
National Archives	15	30	90	15	149	100
	10*	34	100			
Northern Ireland Court Service	—	—	—	15	14	92
Official Solicitor and Public Trustee	—	—	—	15	17	100
Public Guardianship Office	15	95	88	15	134	93
* *Target for correspondence sent direct to Agency Chief Executive.*						
Crown Prosecution Service	15	298	88	15	520	98
Department for Culture, Media and Sport	18	5,460	85	18	4,817	78
HM Customs and Excise[3,4]	18	2,040	62	18	1,321	51
Ministry of Defence[5]	15	5,565	76	15	5,989	62
Armed Forces Personnel	15	93	98	15	126	99
Administration Agency						
Army Personnel Centre	15	16	94	—	—	—
Defence Estates	15	24	88	15	11	100
Defence Housing Executive	15	14	79	—	—	—
UK Hydrographic Office	15	14	100	—	—	—
Veterans Agency	15	251	94	15	287	99
Warship Support Agency	—	—	—	15	15	91
Department for Education and Skills	15	14,424	92	15	15,313	93
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	15	10,410	68	15	14,305	81
Food Standards Agency	20	981	13	20	782*	59
				20	78**	95
* *Letters where Health Ministers have replied.*						
** *Letters where Chief Executive/Chairman has replied.*						
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	20	30,168	80	20	26,942	83
UK Visas[3]	15	16,964	86	15	12,849	45
Department of Health[6]	20	19,029	54	20	20,140	80
NHS Estates[7]	—	—	—	20	112	73
NHS Pensions Agency	10	63	84	—	—	—
NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency	—	—	—	20	57	60
Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	10	26	85	10	284	81
Home Office (non IND correspondence)	15 (20 days for IND)	37,153	58	15	9,445	76
Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)[8]	—	—	—	20	35,802	34
Criminal Records Bureau	10	461	92	10	272	95
HM Prison Service[9]	20	1,437	65	20	1,154	73
UK Passport Service	10	337	79	10	486	74
Inland Revenue[3]	18	2,803	81	18	2,993	85

Correspondence from MPs/Peers to Ministers and agency chief executives[1]

	2003			2004		
Department or Agency	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*Percentage of replies within target*	*Target set for reply (working days)*	*Number of letters received*	*Percentage of replies within target*
• *Local Tax Office delegated figures (where local tax offices have replied to direct to MPs)*	18	1,795•	35	18	1,601•	45[10]
Valuation Office	18	13	77	18	18	83
Department for International Development	15	3,676	88	15	4,686	80
Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Lord's Office	15	43	88	15	60	87
Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers	15	325	65	15	404	63
Northern Ireland Office	10	503	69	10	567	68
Compensation Agency	—	—	—	7	125	67
Northern Ireland Prison Service	10	44	68	10	48	85
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	15	8,737	73	15	10,135	81
Planning Inspectorate	8	384	89	8	379	81
Office of the Leader of the House of Commons	15	385	96	15	504	95
Scotland Office	15	73	87	15	82	77
Department for Trade and Industry	15	14,678	58	15	11,807	72
Companies House	10	33	100	10	56	98
Employment Tribunals Service[11]	—	—	—	10	61	93
Insolvency Service	10	34	88	10	33	94
Patent Office	10	484	98	10	297	84
Department for Transport	15	10,196	88	15	8,593	86
Driving Standards Agency	15	108	90	15	198	79
DVLA	7	1,028	99	7	1,276	100
Highways Agency	15	263	85	15	285	95
Maritime and Coastguard Agency	10	33	97	10	20	100
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency	15	25	92	15	13	77
HM Treasury[3]	15	4,036	83	15	4,316	86
National Savings and Investments	15	24	70	15	74	92
National Statistics	15	193	84	15	189	95
• *Letters where National Statistician replied on Ministers' behalf*	10	104•	84	10	133•	73
Treasury Solicitor's Department	10	34	100	10	49	98
Wales Office	15	120	82	15	109	92
Department for Work and Pensions	20	12,157	74	20	13,319	86
Appeals Service	15	84	88	15	50	98
Child Support Agency[12]	20	3,521	87	15	5,390	88
Jobcentre Plus	15	1,052	69	15	1,136	90
The Pension Service	15	1,157	50	15	1,340	89
Disability and Carers Service	15	554	99	15	451	100
Debt Management	15	31	85	15	25	100
Child Benefit Centre	20	11	91	—	—	—
Health and Safety Executive	10	195	91	10	127	70

[1] Departments and agencies which received 10 MPs/Peers letters or less during 2004 are not shown in this table. Holding or interim replies are not included unless otherwise indicated.
[2] Internal restructuring and changes to the correspondence handling system undertaken during second half of 2004. As a result, performance improved to 88 per cent during that period.
[3] Includes all ministerial correspondence.
[4] Downturn in performance due to internal restructuring and changes in the correspondence handling system. Introduction of new system improved performance to 82 per cent in the last quarter of 2004.
[5] Unit is aware of poor performance in 2004 and is taking the necessary measures to improve performance in 2005.
[6] Performance improved to 91 per cent in final quarter of 2004.
[7] Includes eight letters sent directly to agency chief executive, 100 per cent were answered within the 10 working day response target.
[8] IND experienced a 46 per cent increase (a 13 per cent increase in ministerial correspondence) in correspondence in 2004. Difficulties following the roll out of a new correspondence handling system led to significant delays. Necessary measures are being implemented to improve performance in 2005.
[9] Includes a small number of interim replies.
[10] Performance suffered due to exceptionally high volume of complaints received concerning working and child tax credits generally as claimants became familiar with a new system. Further efforts are being made to improve internal correspondence handling systems which will lead to an improvement in performance.
[11] Includes four letters sent directly to agency chief executive, 100 per cent were answered within the 10 working day response target.
[12] Response target reduced from 20 to 15 working days in 2004.

DEFENCE

Sea King Helicopter

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am announcing today the award of a contract to Westland Helicopters Ltd. for phase one of the Sea King Integrated Operational Support Programme, part of the wider Defence Logistics Transformation Programme, which is seeking to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of military logistics support to the front line. The contract is worth £300 million over the first five years, with a price review thereafter, and includes the provision of technical and spares support to the Sea King fleet. It will result in savings of some £50 million over ten years, which is a considerable improvement on current support costs.

There are seven different variants of Sea King currently in service with the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force in a variety of roles including maritime, air sea rescue operations and support to land forces. The Sea King Integrated Operational Support programme will improve the way in which support is provided for the Sea King platform, focusing on maximising aircraft availability, improving spares delivery and reducing through-life costs. It will secure the ability of the Sea King to continue operations in support of the UK Armed Forces in the future.

Phase 2 of the programme is expected to be implemented in around eighteen months' time, subject to a successful performance review against Phase 1 implementation.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Houses in Multiple Occupation

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Government are today publishing the summary responses on the key issues raised in our consultation on the implementation of HMO licensing. Copies of these responses have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. In addition, the Government are announcing the decisions we have made in respect of a number of issues which are necessary to achieve implementation in October 2005. An analysis of responses on the complete range of questions asked will be published in due course.

"Licensing in the Private Rented Sector: Consultation on the Implementation of HMO Licensing" sought to explain the Government's proposals for licensing in the private rented sector, as contained in the Housing Act 2004. It invited interested parties to comment on how these powers should be implemented, in particular through asking questions about the possible form that the necessary items of secondary legislation should take.

The paper asked a series of questions on a number of different subjects, including the following key issues:

the threshold for mandatory licensing,

the property types to be exempted from HMO licensing,

whether to enact management regulations for all HMOs (licensable and non-licensable),

whether to prescribe national amenity standards,

whether to specify a cap for licensing fees.

The consultation period ended in February and we have now analysed responses and reached decisions on these key issues so that we can start drafting the appropriate secondary legislation that will allow these important measures to be commenced by autumn this year. We are also keen that all relevant stakeholders are made aware of these decisions as early as possible to allow them to begin preparing for the introduction of licensing.

On most of these issues, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals set out in the paper. Discussions have also been held between officials and stakeholders at a working group comprising representatives of local government, landlords and tenants.

The Government are introducing licensing as a measured response to the problems of the private rented sector. And in doing so we are keen to strike the right balance between setting clear national benchmarks and giving local authorities the discretion to respond to local housing market conditions. This is a difficult trade off and there is no single solution that applies in all cases. We propose a mixed solution as follows:

i) the threshold for mandatory licensing will apply to HMOs comprising of three or more storeys and occupied by five or more persons (comprising at least two households);

ii) we will define for these purposes, "storeys" as including basements and attics if they are occupied (including by a resident landlord) or have been converted for occupation or which are in use in connection with the occupation of the HMO. Commercial premises on the ground or any upper floor will also be included in the calculation of number of storeys, but not basements in purely commercial use. We will not specify when a mezzanine floor is to be included, as this will depend on a case by case basis the actual use of such a floor in the HMO e.g. whether or not it used for habitable purposes,

iii) we will not make any rules concerning the calculation of persons for licensing purposes, in effect this means children will be counted from birth in the same way as adults;

iv) student accommodation owned and managed by educational establishments will be exempted from the licensing requirements, on condition that the body has in place an approved code of practice;

v) we will not specify a cap on licence fees at this stage, relying on CBPFA guidance on the treatment of costs and the audit process to ensure that fee levels remain proportionate. Discussion will begin shortly with the landlord associations and local government on ways in which license applications can be processed as quickly as possible, subject to important safeguards;

vi) we will enact management regulations that will apply to all HMOs, whether licensed or not. The regulations will take the form as set out in the consultation paper listed at SectionS;

vii) we will set national minimum amenity standards that will enable authorities to ensure that HMOs are licensed for the requisite number of occupants. We will make a further statement in May which sets out the details of those standards.

viii) we will not set maximum national room sizes for HMOs as we believe the appropriate sizes will depend on the quantity and condition of the often diverse HMO stock in an authority's area as well as the pressure on the rented market.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Parliamentary Database

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): In order to ensure that we can provide hon. Members with a better service, both in London and when they travel overseas, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has set up a new database which will enable us to record the foreign affairs issues in which they are interested. We will keep solely factual information which is already in the public domain, for example details of the all party groups and assemblies of which hon. Members are a member, and of overseas and inward visits (eg Inter-Parliamentary Union and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association delegations) in which they have taken part. This should enable us better to tailor information and assistance to hon. Members' needs.

Hon. Members who wish to register an interest in a particular country, region or foreign affairs topic, or to see a copy of their entry in the database, are invited to e-mail to PRDTEnquiries@fco.gov.uk

Barcelona Process

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): At last November's EuroMed Foreign Ministerial in the Hague, EuroMed Foreign Ministers launched a review of the first 10 years of the Barcelona process and its future direction. A copy of the UK's national contribution to the Barcelona review has been placed in the Library of the House.

We believe that the review provides the opportunity to refocus the priorities of the Barcelona process and help ensure it delivers results that have a real positive impact for EU and Med Partner citizens. We want to see the review generate a real debate among all EuroMed Partners, and in their civil societies, of how to enhance the partnership. We believe that EuroMed should be guided by the principles of the EU's strategic partnership with the Mediterranean and Middle East and the European Neighbourhood Policy, but mostly by the desire of Mediterranean Partners for the EU's engagement and assistance in meeting the challenges of political, social and economic development.

Our national contribution proposes a strategic approach to achieving the vision set out in the 1995 Barcelona declaration. We want to focus EuroMed on achieving a limited number of 10 year targets on governance, education and economic reform. Improved education systems and more vigorous open market competitive economies are crucial to economic growth in EuroMed countries. Without these countries will not be able to take advantage of trade liberalisation and the creation of a EuroMed Free Trade Area by 2010. And improved governance based on democratic institutions, and civil society institutions especially for women and free media, will facilitate the achievement of these targets, as will focused and effective development assistance from the EU.

This is an ambitious agenda, but one whose success is critical to removing the barriers to development in the Middle East and North Africa and to enhancing the relationship between Europe and that region. The review will be negotiated amongst the 35 EuroMed Partners, all of whom will have their own aims and objectives. It will be submitted to Ministers at the EuroMed Foreign Ministerial in May and will constitute the main input to the EuroMed 10th anniversary event, which the UK will host jointly with Spain in November in Barcelona.

Sudan

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): With the support of Her Majesty's Government, the United Nations Security Council on 29 March 2005 adopted resolution 1591, which extends the Darfur arms embargo to cover all parties to the N'djamena Ceasefire Agreement and any other belligerents in the states of North Darfur, South Darfur and West Darfur.

Resolution 1591 (2005) also imposes an assets freeze and a travel ban, with conditional exemptions, on individuals who impede the peace process, constitue a threat to stability in the Darfur region, commit violations of international humanitarian law or human rights law or other atrocities, violate the arms embargo or are responsible for offensive military overflights in an over the Darfur region. The measures are effective 30 days after the adoption of the resolution, unless the Security Council decides that the parties concerned have complied with their commitments in the peace process and demands made by the Council in this and previous resolutions. Resolution 1591 (2005) also established a UN sanctions committee and a panel of experts to monitor implementation and enforcement of the measures.

PRIME MINISTER

General Election Guidance (Civil Servants)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have written to ministerial colleagues providing guidance on the conduct of Government business during the election period. Guidance for civil servants on their conduct during this period has also been issued to Departments. The guidance comes into force with immediate effect.

Copies of all the documents have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Cabinet Office website.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 7 April 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

General Election Costs 2005–06

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): Subject to parliamentary approval, the Department for Constitutional Affairs Departmental expenditure limit (DEL) will be increased by £71,000,000. This will be in addition to the DEL limit due to be published in the main estimate for 2005–06.

The change in the resource element of the Department for Constitutional Affairs DEL follows HM Treasury approval to transfer £71,000,000 from the non-voted consolidated fund in relation to general election costs.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Football Betting

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): The Government are aware of the recent European Court of Justice rulings concerning sport and the use of database rights. I have recently met representatives of the football sector, who have concerns about how these rulings affect them.

In light of the on-going domestic court case, currently before the Court of Appeal, it would be inappropriate for me to pass comment on the details of any case.

This Government take the integrity of sport very seriously. I am aware that in its present data licensing arrangements with betting operators, the football authorities include a code of practice covering integrity issues. I am also aware that in some cases these licensing arrangements have now come to an end, and not been renewed. The vast majority of betting on sport in this country is conducted lawfully. Betting operators, sporting organisations and the Government have worked together in the past to safeguard the integrity of British sport. I expect all parties to continue to do so in the future.

The Gambling Bill will provide substantial new powers and protections to help achieve this. Indeed, one of the Gambling Commission's licensing objectives is to ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way. The commission will have powers to issue codes of practice to betting operators. The Bill also makes it an express condition of all operating licences that operators comply with any codes concerning social responsibility. This is in addition to the commission's powers to investigate suspicious betting patterns, and void unfair bets or bring about prosecutions.

We will monitor the situation carefully, and officials in my Department will continue to discuss this issue with football and betting operators. We will also continue to explore the wider impact on sport of the EC database directive with Patent Office colleagues.

DEFENCE

Queen Victoria School

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): Hon. Members will wish to be aware that with effect from 1 April 2005, the Queen Victoria School (QVS), Dunblane, Perthshire, will cease to hold agency status.

QVS is presently the smallest of the Ministry of Defence agencies with a budget of less than £5 million per annum, compared to an average of £473 million. Following a recent review it has been decided that the additional overheads relating to agency status are no longer proportionate to the size of the school.

The removal of agency status will not affect the role or outputs of the school and the headmaster will remain fully accountable for the school's performance. In terms of governance the school will have an improved reporting regime within the Adjutant General Command, while maintaining a link with the Directorate of Educational and Training Services (Army) who has an interest in wider educational matters and in promoting the benefits of the QVS to service families. The school will continue to publish an annual report and, as now, academic results will be published in the Scottish league tables.

Otterburn Accidents

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): On 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 241W in response to the question raised by the hon. Member for Christchurch (Mr. Chope) about accidents at the army training ground at Otterburn, I stated that six people had been injured as a result of accidents at the Otterburn military training area. It has since come to light that this figure was incorrect. This was brought to my attention when a branch of the Department not previously known to hold information relating to this matter came forward.

The answer should have stated that 35 people have been injured as a result of accidents during exercises at Otterburn since 1 January 2000.

I apologise to the House for this error.

Oman

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) purchased Challenger 2 main battle tanks (MBT) from the UK and is the only operator of this tank other than the UK. They currently use Discarding Sabot/Training (DS/T) ammunition as their training round but production of the DS/T round (L20 shot and L5 charge) has now ceased. RAO have purchased a new training round (CHARM 3 training round (C3TR)) but their tanks require an upgrade to allow these new rounds to be fired. This will take a minimum of 12 months from contract signature. During this period, their current stocks of the

DS/T round will be exhausted and unless additional DS/T rounds are made available their tank crews will be unable to train. This will adversely affect the proficiency of the crews and the operational readiness of the Royal Army of Oman.

DS/T ammunition is no longer produced and is no longer used by the British Army. All remaining stocks were gifted to Jordan under the Al-Hussein arrangement under the auspices of a departmental minute laid before the House of Commons in July 2004. It is proposed to divert 3,000 rounds of DS/T ammunition from this Jordanian consignment (22,874 L5 charges and 26,044 L20 shot), due to be shipped in May 2005. and gift them to Oman in order to alleviate the training shortfall. This will have negligible effect on Jordan.

This proposal will have no cost for the UK. Oman will meet all transport and handling costs.

Disposal Services Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Disposal Services Agency (DSA) for financial year 2005–06. The targets are as follows:

KEY TARGET—1

To achieve a disposal sales income of £50 million from sales of surplus Government-owned equipment and repayment business within an agency net operating cost of £7.5 million.

KEY TARGET—2

To meet the key performance standards required under the Internal Business Agreements (IBA) with MOD customers including the Customer Supplier Agreement (CSA) with the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO).

KEY TARGET—3

To ensure that the agency is at the standard or above the public sector benchmarking report for overall customer satisfaction. The agency should maintain the level of current customer satisfaction (89 per cent.) and improve to 19 per cent. the number of very satisfied customers.

KEY TARGET—4

To develop a benchmark to enable the agency to both measure and exceed HMG's target (currently 25 percentage by volume) for environmental re-use and recovery for all MOD material through the DSA.

KEY TARGET—5

To secure £370,000 sales per person employed for commercial sales activities.

HEALTH

Trade Union Recognition

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): The following organisations are recognised for collective bargaining purposes by the Department of Health and the NHS.

British Medical Association (BMA)

British Dental Association (BDA)

UNISON

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

The Royal College of Midwives (RCM)

Amicus including MSF, AEEU and EESA

GMB

The Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU)

The Union of Shop, Allied and Distributive Workers (USDAW)

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)

The Community and District Nursing Association (CDNA)

The Society of Radiographers (SoR)

The Federation of Clinical Scientists (FCS)

The British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT)

The Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT)

The British Orthoptic Society (BOS)

The Society of Chiropodists and Podiatrists (SoCP)

The British Dietetic Association (BDA)

The following organisations are recognised for collective bargaining purposes with its own staff by the Department of Health.

Public and Commercial Services Union

Prospect

First Division Association

NHS Pay Bill Costs

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): Total expenditure on pay bill costs, whole time equivalent staff numbers and average pay bill costs for hospital doctors, general practitioners, all doctors and qualified nurses for 2003–04 are given in the table.

	Total pay bill Expenditure 2003–04 £ million	*Staff numbers Whole time equivalents*	*Average pay bill costs £ 000s*
Hospital doctors	6,142	72,260	85
General practitioners	2,200	29,777	74
All doctors	8,342	102,037	82
Qualified nurses	8,677	291,925	30

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Prison Service Corporate and Business Plan 2005–08

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): I have placed copies of the Northern Ireland Prison Service's corporate and business plan for 2005–08 in the Libraries of both Houses.

The corporate and business plan contains the key performance targets I have set for the service for 2005–06. They are:

No escape for top and high-risk prisoners.

No more than three escapes per 1,000 medium and low risk prisoners.

The number of staff assaulted by prisoners is less than a ratio of 3 per 100 prisoners.

The number of prisoners assaulted by prisoners is less than a ratio of 4 per 100 prisoners.

An average of at least 20 hours constructive activity per week for each sentenced prisoner.

An average of at least 10 hours constructive activity per week for each remand prisoner.

To ensure 87 per cent. of prisoners serving six months or more are working to a resettlement plan and that 97 per cent. of lifers work to a resettlement plan, including preparation of the plan, in the first six months from sentence.

Each member of staff should receive an average of five training days.

Reduce the rate of absenteeism across the service by 100 per cent.

Lay the annual report and audited accounts before Parliament prior to the summer recess.

Ensure the average cost per prisoner place does not exceed £86,290.

PRIME MINISTER

Intelligence and Security Committee Annual Report 2004–05

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I am grateful to the Intelligence and Security Committee for its latest annual report. Following consultation with the Committee over matters that could not be published without prejudicing the discharge of the function and operation of the intelligence and security agencies, I have laid the report before the House today.

I have also laid the Government's response to this report before the House today. Copies of the report and the response have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Intelligence Personnel (Handling of Detainees)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I am today laying before the House the Government's response to the Intelligence and Security Committee's report "The Handling of Detainees by UK Intelligence Personnel in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq". Copies have also been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Official Histories: Special Operations Executive in Italy

The Prime Minister (Mr. Tony Blair): I have appointed Professor David Stafford, from the Centre for the Second World War Studies at the University of Edinburgh, to write Volume II of the history of Special Operations Executive (SOE) in Italy.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Trade Unions

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Mr. Gerry Sutcliffe): The certification officer maintains a list of trade unions. I am placing in both Libraries of the House a copy of the list of trade unions as at 31 March 2004, which was presented in the latest annual report of the certification officer.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 14 March 2005

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Leader of the House whether his Office sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220942]

Mr. Woolas: No.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Leader of the House what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Office was in each year since 2000–01. [220960]

Mr. Woolas: This Office has not sold any surplus assets since 2000–01.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Pollution

Mr. Heald: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Government intends to respond to the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's Report entitled Aircraft in Flight; and if he will make a statement. [221400]

Charlotte Atkins: The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution's (RCEP) report "The Environmental Effects of Civil Aircraft in Flight" was their response to the Government's 2002 consultation on the future development of air transport in the UK. The Secretary of State for Transport met the chairman of the RCEP, Sir Tom Blundell, in March 2003 to discuss the report. The report was one of over 500,000 responses to the consultation, which informed decisions on "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper published in December 2003.

M5

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when an evaluation was last carried out of the need for traffic light controls at Junction 14 on the M5; who was consulted on the results; and whether the results were published. [220902]

Mr. Jamieson: The last evaluation of the need for traffic light controls at Junction 14 on the M5 was undertaken by the Highways Agency in October 2004. The agency consulted South Gloucestershire council, who are the highway authority for the B4509 at Junction 14.

The traffic light controls will prevent traffic queuing back onto the motorway and improve safety for right turning traffic from the B4509 onto the M5, which has been the cause of a number of collisions. In accordance with normal practice, the results of the evaluation were not published.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the operation of the newly installed traffic lights at Junction 14 on the M5. [220903]

Mr. Jamieson: The lights at this junction have been installed to help improve safety for all road users by reducing the number of personal injury accidents and decreasing congestion. The Highways Agency and its contractor are currently working to rectify a component problem and the lights should be operational by the end of March.

Motor Cycling Strategy

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effects of the Government's motor cycling strategy, with particular reference to the proposal to amend the Government's guidance on bus lanes, on levels of use of powered two wheelers; and what assessment he has made of the consequent effects of any changes in levels on *(a)* the Government's objectives to encourage increased walking, cycling and public transport use, *(b)* the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, *(c)* overall road safety, *(d)* pollutant emissions and *(e)* noise emissions. [220851]

Mr. Jamieson: The National Motorcycling Strategy is a framework for developing policy and action to ensure that motorcycling is fully recognised as a mode of transport. The Department has published research by consultants Halcrow and Rand Europe and WSP into factors affecting the level of use of motorcycles, which included preliminary assessments of environmental effects of greater use, although not specifically in the context of allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes. The Government is aware of a number of concerns relating to motorcycling in bus lanes which is why we are working with local authorities to evaluate the safety and other effects of this before revising our guidance. We will consult widely on any resulting changes to the guidance.

Penalty Payments

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport where responsibility will lie for the collection of penalty payments from train operating companies once the Railways Bill comes into force. [221005]

Mr. McNulty: Penalty payment provisions are contained in some, though not all, passenger rail franchise agreements. Under the Railways Bill, responsibility for passenger rail franchises would pass to the Secretaries of State for Transport and Scotland as appropriate.

Pollution (Ships)

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received regarding the timescale for UK compliance with *(a)* MARPOL, *(b)* the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, *(c)* the Protocol of 1978 and *(d)* associated regulations. [221132]

Mr. Jamieson: The United Kingdom has ratified the MARPOL Convention and the protocols to the Convention. The United Kingdom has already implemented Annexes I, II, III and V to MARPOL in

national law, and is in the process of implementing Annexes IV and VI. I have received no representations regarding the timescale for UK compliance with MARPOL.

Rail Services

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will include the introduction of new rolling stock as part of the negotiations for the new East Coast Mainline contract. [220348]

Mr. McNulty: Bidders for the franchise have been allowed to propose their own rolling stock solutions for the provision of the service within the specifications laid out in the Invitation to Tender. This does not exclude new rolling stock as a potential option.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on increases in rail fares for 2005–06; and what action he plans to take to invest in the rail network and improve services. [220355]

Mr. McNulty: Following the Strategic Rail Authority Fares Review in 2003 we announced that regulated fares would in future rise by RPI plus 1 per cent. from January 2004. This would help redress the balance of funding between the taxpayer and the fare payer. Increases in unregulated fares are a commercial matter for the train operating companies.

Government funding and investment in the rail network continues to run at unprecedented levels. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, made a detailed statement on this matter on 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 93WS.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* Executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219885]

Charlotte Atkins: None of the non-departmental public bodies and Executive agencies within the remit of this Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure.

SS Richard Montgomery

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether there were *(a)* chemicals and *(b)* biological weapons or component parts on board the SS Richard Montgomery when it sank in the Thames Estuary. [220435]

Mr. Jamieson: The cargo manifest for the SS Richard Montgomery does not list any chemical or biological weapons, or component parts. However, I have recently commissioned work to examine the current risks posed by the ordnance that remains on board. The results of this study will inform consideration of possible future management options for the wreck.

Thameslink

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the reliability of Thameslink services from Mill Hill and Hendon. [220522]

Mr. McNulty: Reliability problems with the train fleet used by Thameslink during the CTRL blockade affected the performance of its services in the run up to Christmas. Action has been taken to address these problems and performance has since improved.

Train Operating Companies (Compensation)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was paid, and on which dates, through the Strategic Rail Authority to train operating companies in respect of compensation for loss of revenue during industrial disputes in each of the last three years. [221003]

Mr. McNulty: The arrangements under which the Strategic Rail Authority is able, at its discretion, to compensate train operators for loss of revenue in these circumstances have existed only since March 2003. Since then, payments have been made in March 2003 (£12.65 million); June 2003 (£3 million); January 2004 (£6.8 million); July 2004 (£143,000); and November 2004 (£701,000).

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funds he has set aside to compensate train operating companies in the event of industrial disputes on the railways in the 2004–05 financial year. [221004]

Mr. McNulty: None. Payments of this sort are made entirely at the discretion of the Strategic Rail Authority and there may well be years in which none is made. No specific provision is therefore made and any payment would have to be funded from within the SRA's existing budgets.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of whether the 29 March deadline for the introduction of the Working Time Directive regulations applicable to road haulage operators will be met. [218634]

Mr. Darling: I have laid the implementing regulations for this directive before Parliament today.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bird Control

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she plans to issue to the police on criteria to be used in deciding whether non-lethal methods of control under General Licence WLF18 are ineffective or unpracticable. [221095]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* There is no requirement for the police to decide whether non-lethal methods of control are either ineffective or

impracticable. There are, therefore, no plans to issue guidance to the police on criteria to be used in making such an assessment.

Farmland Rental Prices

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average rental price of farmland in each *(a)* Welsh and *(b)* English county was in each of the last five years. [221327]

Alun Michael: Farmland rental prices are collected through the Tenanted Land Survey (TLS), previously called the Annual Survey of Tenanted Land (ASTL). We do not produce results on a regional basis for two reasons.

Firstly, analysis has shown that most of the variation in rental prices is between farm types, with rental consistent across regions within this—i.e. rental prices for a cereal holding are similar no matter where the holding is located.

Secondly, the relatively small sample size means that data would not be sufficiently robust to make valid and precise conclusions on a county level basis.

Instead we publish data by farm type. Results, by farm type, for the each of last five years for Full Agricultural Tenancies (FATs) and Farm Business Tenancies (FBTs) are shown as follows:

England

Average rent (£/ha)

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2004*	*Percentage change 2002–04*
All Agreements of one year or more	122.92 (±2.34)	125.11 (±2.42)	124.22 (±4.73)	119.34 (±2.26)	-4
Seasonal Agreements (less than one year)	123.77 (±15.71)	129.71 (±10.40)	102.85 (±7.29)	113.22 (±8.90)	+10

All FATs

Average rent (£/ha)

Type of holding	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2004*	*Percentage change 2002–04*
Cereal	128.88 (±4.98)	124.39 (±6.58)	125.14 (±9.16)	124.63 (±7.66)	-0.4
General Cropping	143.89 (±4.87)	140.66 (±9.86)	134.64 (±13.88)	140.18 (±8.52)	+4.1
Dairy	143.15 (±4.50)	137.61 (±5.47)	131.67 (±7.06)	128.64 (±6.51)	-2.3
Cattle and Sheep (LFA)	34.74 (±1.81)	31.42 (±2.15)	32.94 (±2.84)	33.04 (±2.10)	+0.3
Cattle and Sheep (Lowland)	85.39 (±3.48)	102.37 (±6.39)	101.15 (±7.55)	111.96 (±5.45)	+10.7
All	114.76 (±2.57)	111.33 (±3.16)	110.13 (±3.57)	109.97 (±2.37)	-0.1

All FBTs of one year or more

Average rent (£/ha)

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2004*	*Percentage change 2002–04*
Cereal	190.24 (±6.59)	182.30 (±6.35)	175.67 (±8.60)	160.24 (±22.64)	-8.8
General Cropping	217.38 (±9.86)	214.78 (±7.67)	219.24 (±11.52)	205.31 (±22.97)	-6.4
Dairy	177.76 (±8.82)	173.06 (±6.93)	164.37 (±10.10)	176.64 (±20.04)	+7.5
Cattle and Sheep (LFA)	51.63 (±3.50)	52.90 (±4.64)	48.78 (±8.04)	46.77 (±4.14)	-4.1
Cattle and Sheep (Lowland)	112.61 (±9.04)	112.41 (±7.72)	110.65 (±10.26)	98.02 (±16.90)	-11.4
All	164.98 (±3.46)	161.33 (±3.54)	156.05 (±4.69)	143.33 (±4.47)	-8.1

Wales

	Average rent (£/ha)
	2000
All agreements—one year and over	82.77 (±4.80)
Other agreements—one year and over	103.65 (±18.54)

All FATs

	Average rent (£/ha)
Type of holding	
Dairy	118.01 (±13.45)
Cattle and Sheep (LFA)	48.6 (±6.77)
Cattle and Sheep (Lowland)	93.61 (±11.66)
All	69.55 (±5.23)

All FBTs of one year or more

	Average rent (£/ha)
Type of holding	2000
Dairy	162.06 (±20.85)
Cattle and Sheep (LFA)	81.56 (±8.22)
Cattle and Sheep (Lowland)	105.15 (±20.02)
All	109.82 (±6.56)

A full set of results for England and Wales are available on the web at the following locations:

http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/statnot/astl.pdf

http://www.wales.gov.uk/keypubstatisticsforwales/content/publication/agriculture/2002/sdr71-2001.xls

Please note that the survey was not run in England in 2003. This is because we moved from the annual survey (ASTL) in 2002 to the biennial one (TLS) in 2004. No results for Wales are available since 2000.

Please note also that agriculture in Wales is a devolved matter and so falls under the remit of the National Assembly for Wales. The statistics are publicly available and so are quoted here with references.

The survey will next be run in England in 2006.

Horse Exports

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many horses have been exported live from the UK in the last 10 years. [220687]

Alun Michael: According to the Department's system for issuing export health certificates, the number of equines exported from the United Kingdom are as follows:

	Number
1996	1,169
1997	8,119
1998	11,086
1999	9,579
2000	9,176
2001	14,284
2002	10,785
2003	9,130
2004	21,936

The above figures were produced from data obtained from an electronic export health certificate issuing system which became operational towards the end of 1996.

These figures include the temporary export of equines as well as the re-export of imported animals.

These data do not include equines exported in accordance with the tripartite agreement, under which export health certificates are not required for the movement of horses to the Republic of Ireland or registered horses to France.

The tripartite agreement was suspended during the foot and mouth outbreak which led to exports of equines to the Republic of Ireland and France requiring export health certificates.

Soil Guideline Values Task Force

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what sub-groups have been set up to the Soil Guideline Values Task Force; when she expects them to report to the Task Force; and if she will make a statement; [220900]

(2) what the aims of the Soil Guideline Values Task Force are; and if she will make a statement; [220901]

(3) what discussions she has had with local councils regarding contaminated land and the Soil Guideline Values Task Force; and if she will make a statement; [220914]

(4) what guidance she has given local councils regarding dealing with *(a)* contaminated land and *(b)* contaminated residential land with regard to the Soil Guideline Values Task Force; and if she will make a statement; [220915]

(5) when she expects the Soil Guidelines Values Task Force to report; whether its report will be publicly available; and if she will make a statement. [220916]

Mr. Morley: The Soil Guideline Values Task Force is an initiative of the Cabinet Office Business Regulation team and the Government Departments and Agencies most involved in the publication of the Defra/Environment Agency soil guideline values and related materials. This technical guidance helps in assessing risk to human health in connection with land contamination, for example when considering regulatory action or proposals for development of land. Two subgroups have

recently been set up to explore training and possible additional guidance. The Local Authority Standing Conference on Land Contamination is represented on the Task Force, and all local authorities in England were notified about the initiative earlier this year. No other guidance has been given to local authorities in respect of the Task Force. We currently expect proposals from the Task Force later in the year, and that these will be made publicly available.

Sustainable Development

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what additional resources she plans to commit to the Sustainable Development Commission in support of the new role of evaluating and reporting progress made by Government in delivering their sustainable development commitments, as announced in the recent report on sustainability. [221443]

Mr. Morley: Work is ongoing to define and address specific requirements of the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) in meeting its enhanced role as watchdog for sustainable development. That role is still being developed alongside other changes to the way the SDC works and is managed which will ensure that the SDC continues to be viewed as making a valuable contribution.

Once we have a firmer view of these requirements Defra will provide the resources necessary for the SDC to carry out its enhanced remit effectively and efficiently.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Education Business Links (Kent)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the budget for Education Business Link in Kent is for 2004–05; and what she expects it to be in 2005–06; [221122]

(2) how much Business Link Kent has charged for administering the Education Business links in the county in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05. [221121]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Funding to support Education Business Link activities is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom the LSC's Chief Executive will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Direct Grants

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the private and voluntary organisations to which her Department has made direct grants since April 2004. [221215]

Derek Twigg: The information in the form requested is not held by the Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Department is developing a more comprehensive management information system and has data from April 2004 onwards for voluntary sector organisations, but does not yet hold data centrally about grants to other organisations. The following list sets out those voluntary organisations that have received direct grants from the Department since April 2004.

Action for Prisoners Families
Advisory Centre for Education
African Families Support Services
Agency for Culture and Change Management
Anyadwe Children and Family Welfare Association
ARC
BAPS Care 4 Children
Barnardo's
Bradford Family Service Unit
British Refugee Council
Calderdale Women's Centre
Care for the Family
Centre for Fun and Families
Chance UK
Change
Children's Legal Centre
Children's Society
Childrens Foundation
Circles Network
Coalition for the Removal of Pimping
ContinYou (CEDC)
Coram Family
Crime Concern
Dawson Films Exposure Partners
Eating Disorders Association
Families Need Fathers
Family Matters Institute
Family Nurturing Network
Family Rights Group
Fathers Direct
Forum on Prisoner Education
Good Shepherd Charities for Children
Henshaws Society for Blind People
Inclusive Play Opportunities Project
Island Volunteers
Kith & Kids
Lambeth Mencap
Learning Partnerships
Leeds Animation Workshop
Local NE Community Foundation
Lubavitch Youth
Mancroft Advice Project
Medway Ethnic Minority Forum
NACCC
Nacro (Sheffield)
National Autistic Society
National Children's Centre
National Deaf Children's Society
National Society (C of E)
National Tenants' Resource Centre
NCH South West
NCOPF
New Forest & Romsey Mobile Com.
NFPI
One Plus One
Oxfordshire Parenting Forum
Paces Sheffield
Parentline Plus

Parents First
Parenting Education and Support Forum
Pippin
Place to be
Positive Parenting Publications
Prader Willi Syndrome Association
Relate South Essex
Race Equality Unit
RNIB
SCOPE
Single Parent Action Network
South London Tamil Welfare Group
Springboard Family Project
Student Force for Sustainability
Talking Matters Association
The Warren
Trust for the Study of Adolescence
UNLOCK
Wai Yin Chinese Women Society
Yemeni Economic and Training Centre
YMCA England
Young Minds
YWCA England.

Education Funding

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money the Government allocated per child in *(a)* primary, *(b)* middle and *(c)* upper schools in each constituency in (i) Norfolk and (ii) Suffolk in 2004–05. [221320]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Funding is allocated to local education authorities by age rather than phase and cannot be broken down by constituency. The following figures show funding provided by the Government for pupils aged 3–10 and 11–15 in 2004–05:

£

LEA	*Pupils aged 3–10*	*Pupils aged 11–15*
Norfolk	3,420	4,200
Suffolk	3,230	4,070

Notes:
1. The government allocates funds to LEAs via Education Formula Spending and grants. These funds are then distributed by the LEA to schools within their area according to their own local formulae. Education Formula Spending is part of the wider local government finance system and is supported by council tax as well as central government grant.
2. Total funding includes funding via Education Formula Spending and revenue grants. These figures include the pensions transfer to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council, and are in cash terms.
3. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education EFS settlements and include the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC.
4. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3–10 and 11–15 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
5. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.
6. Figures are reported in cash terms and rounded to the nearest 10 as reported by the LEA.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level of funding per pupil in North Tyneside was in each year from 1996 to 2001. [221276]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: As a result of data changes and changes to the funding system, comparable figures are not available for 1996–97. The following table shows total funding per pupil aged 3 to 19 in North Tyneside from 1997–98 to 2001–02 in real terms.

North Tyneside LEA

	Per pupil (£)
1997–98	2,690
1998–99	2,750
1999–2000	2,870
2000–01	3,150
2001–02	3,320

Notes:
1. Price base: Real terms at 2003–04 prices GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004.
2. Figures include formula funding and grants within the DfES Departmental Expenditure Limit.
3. They exclude Education Maintenance Allowances and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Further Education (Tunbridge Wells)

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Tunbridge Wells to be closed. [221446]

Dr. Howells: The Department does not have information on what the funding gap is between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Tunbridge Wells specifically.

However, we have brought up funding levels for Further Education as we said we would, without penalising schools. The Learning and Skills Council's funding rates per course in FE have been rising faster than school sixth forms and the gap has narrowed.

Our policy has been to raise the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

GCSEs

Mr. Heal: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many entrants graded A*, A and B at GCSE level in *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* chemistry and *(c)* physics were from (i) independent, (ii) grammar and (iii) maintained schools in (A) 2003 and (B) 2004; and what percentage of each cohort this was in each case. [221216]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The tables show for (A) 2003 and (B) 2004 the numbers of entrants and those achieving grades A*-B at GCSE *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* chemistry and *(c)* physics by type of institution, together with the proportions of the whole cohort that these numbers represent.

(A) 2003

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
(a) Maths					
Grammar schools	21,706	21,633	100	18,675	86
All maintained schools	577,791	545,244	94	147,173	25
Independent schools	44,331	39,773	90	30,204	68
All schools	622,122	585,017	94	177,377	39
(b) Chemistry					
Grammar schools	21,706	6,868	32	5,631	26
All maintained schools	577,791	26,730	5	16,334	3
Independent schools	44,331	14,135	32	11,957	27
All schools	622,122	40,865	7	28,291	5
(c) Physics					
Grammar schools	21,706	6,871	32	5,761	27
All maintained schools	577,791	26,228	5	16,492	3
Independent schools	44,331	13,836	31	11,721	26
All schools	622,122	40,064	6	28,213	5

(A) 2004

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
(a) Maths					
Grammar schools	22,241	22,170	100	19,339	87
All maintained schools	596,615	564,488	95	155,257	26
Independent schools	46,959	41,492	88	31,971	68
All schools	643,574	605,980	94	187,228	29
(b) Chemistry					
Grammar schools	22,241	7,178	32	6,029	27
All maintained schools	596,615	28,624	5	18,485	3
Independent schools	46,959	14,446	31	12,274	26
All schools	643,574	43,070	7	30,759	5
(c) Physics					
Grammar schools	22,241	7,183	32	6,043	27
All maintained schools	596,615	28,344	5	18,620	3
Independent schools	46,959	14,164	30	12,004	26
All schools	643,574	42,498	7	30,624	5

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many entrants graded A*, A and B at GCSE level in *(a)* French, *(b)* German and *(c)* Spanish were from (i) independent, (ii) grammar and (iii) maintained schools in (A) 2003 and (B) 2004; and what percentage of each cohort this was in each case. [221218]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The following tables show for (A) 2003 and (B) 2004 the numbers of entrants and those achieving grades A*-B at GCSE *(a)* French, *(b)* German and *(c)* Spanish by type of institution, together with the proportions of the whole cohort that these pupil numbers represent:

(A) 2003

(a) French

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	21,706	13,553	62	10,525	48
Maintained schools	577,791	275,866	48	65,087	11
Independent schools	44,331	28,606	65	22,971	52
All schools	622,122	304,472	49	88,058	14

(b) German

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	21,706	8,163	38	5,619	26
Maintained schools	577,791	112,583	19	29,065	5
Independent schools	44,331	8,076	18	6,513	15
All schools	622,122	120,659	19	35,578	6

(c) Spanish

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	21,706	3,121	14	2,216	10
Maintained schools	577,791	43,273	7	11,981	2
Independent schools	44,331	8,026	18	6,445	15
All schools	622,122	51,299	8	18,426	3

(B) 2004

(a) French

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	22,241	13,723	62	10,445	47
Maintained schools	596,615	260,346	44	66,350	11
Independent schools	46,959	29,363	63	23,411	50
All schools	643,574	289,709	45	89,761	14

(b) German

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	22,241	8,204	37	5,685	26
Maintained schools	596,615	108,189	18	31,462	5
Independent schools	46,959	8,156	17	6,528	14
All schools	643,574	116,345	18	37,990	6

(c) Spanish

School type (admissions basis)	Number of 15-year-old pupils	Entered		Achieving A*-B	
		Number	Percentage of cohort	Number	Percentage of cohort
Grammar schools	22,241	3,358	15	2,410	11
Maintained schools	596,615	44,909	8	13,665	2
Independent schools	46,959	8,629	18	6,970	15
All schools	643,574	53,538	8	20,635	3

Liverpool Local Education Authority

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has provided to the Liverpool local education authority in each year since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [221190]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is contained within the following table:

	Total funding (£)
1997–98	252.9
1998–99	262.7
1999–2000	273.1
2000–01	302.1
2001–02	313.5
2002–03	318.8
2003–04	323.6
2004–05	327.9

Notes:

1. Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education SSA/EFS settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC in 2003–04 and 2004–05.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. Total funding figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million and funding per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest £10 as reported by the LEA.
5. 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

London Metropolitan University

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will undertake an inquiry into the management of the London Metropolitan University. [220259]

Dr. Howells: My right hon. Friend will not be undertaking such an inquiry as universities are autonomous, independent bodies that are responsible for determining their own management practice.

However, a condition of funding by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is that institutions must have effective governance and internal control. HEFCE monitors how institutions are meeting these requirements and reviews institutional systems of risk management.

Any individual who has concerns about an institution's governance and control, can raise these through HEFCE's public interest policy and procedure.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take-up representations urging her to seek a resolution of the industrial dispute at London Metropolitan University. [220260]

Dr. Howells: As universities are autonomous, independent bodies they are responsible for determining their own academic and administrative affairs, including terms and conditions for their staff. The Government play no part in setting conditions of service for higher education staff, and as such is unable to intervene in this matter. This dispute can only be resolved by the university, as the employer, in negotiation with the relevant trade union body, in this case, NATFHE.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography

Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was provided to support the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography project; at what stage; and through what channels. [220501]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography project received £3.7 million in public funding between 1992 and 2004. Funding was in the form of an annual grant from the British Academy, via Oxford University, to the Oxford University Press (OUP), and supplemented OUP's own investment in the project of over £22 million.

Plymouth Local Education Authority

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total per pupil funding in the Plymouth local education authority area was in *(a)* 1999 and *(b)* 2004–05. [221607]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In Plymouth LEA the total funding per pupil aged 3 to 19 was £3,000 for 1999–2000 and £3,640 for 2004–05.

Notes:

1. This figure includes funding via Education Formula Spending and grants allocated at an LEA level. It excludes the pensions transfer to EPS and the Learning and Skills Council, and is in real terms.
2. Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004 and rounded to the nearest 10.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3 to 19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.

Sex Education

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department issues to schools on the provision of sex and relationship education. [221221]

Derek Twigg: The Department issues to all maintained schools our sex and relationship guidance which we have provided since July 2000.

The responsibility for determining a school policy on sex and relationship education rests with governing bodies and head teachers. Copies of the guidance can be downloaded at www.dfes.gov.uk/sreguidance.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department has issued to local education authorities on reporting of expenditure under section 52 on special educational needs. [221212]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department issues detailed instructions and guidance on the reporting of expenditure under section 52 on special educational needs to every local education authority in England. I have placed a full copy of those instructions and guidance on section 52 in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department has taken to ensure the *(a)* descriptors and *(b)* guidance for the section 52 special educational needs (SEN) lines reflect practice in SEN provision. [221213]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department undertakes an annual consultation with every local education authority on the contents of the section 52 instructions and guidance notes. As part of this process, my Department also consults with practitioners responsible for the development and implementation of the SEN framework.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on interaction between local education authorities and the Learning and Skills Council in funding post-16 education for children with special educational needs. [221272]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In addition to the normal communications concerning funding matters, I expect the Learning and Skills Council and local education authorities to liaise and to plan their activities to best meet the needs of all learners including those with special educational needs.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has conducted on the accuracy and consistency of reporting by local education authorities, under section 52 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, of expenditure on provision for special educational needs; and if she will make a statement. [221273]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department undertakes a detailed and robust data checking process of all the section 52 data, submitted by local education authorities including that provided for expenditure on special educational needs. In addition, my Department analyses the validated data and discusses any inconsistencies found in the time series with the relevant LEA.

Student Loans

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list companies involved in the collection of student loan repayments. [221243]

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Dr. Howells: Mortgage-style student loans are collected by the Student Loans Company (SLC) on behalf of the Government and the Royal Bank of Scotland (the owner of a portfolio of loans sold in 1998). The SLC advises that it also uses the following companies as agencies for arrears collection, although some work might be further outsourced: Allied International Credit; Financial Trace and Collections; J B Debt Recovery; Lewis Group; Logic Group; NCO Financial Services (UK) Ltd.; and Wescot Credit Services.

A further portfolio of loans, sold to Honours Trustee Limited in 1999, is administered and collected by Ventura (Club 24 Limited), trading as Honours Student Loans. Ventura advises that it also uses the following companies as agents for arrears collection: Clarity Credit Management Solutions Ltd. and Dryden's.

Income-contingent student loans are collected by the Inland Revenue, mainly through deduction at source by employers.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent in 2004 on keeping graduates informed of changes in collection arrangements for student loan repayments. [221244]

Dr. Howells: The Department and the Student Loans Company (SLC) regularly keep students and graduates informed of the latest arrangements for student finance, and these communications have been updated to reflect the rise in the repayment threshold for income contingent student loans, to take effect from April 2005, and the annual change in the repayment threshold for mortgage-style loans. The Department and the SLC incurred no specific additional expenditure in 2004 for these changes to the collection arrangements.

Student Visas

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many overseas students requiring visas to study in the UK are studying in *(a)* higher education, *(b)* further education and *(c)* other education sectors in the academic year 2004–05. [218422]

Dr. Howells: The latest available figures are for 2003/04 and are given in the table. Corresponding figures for other education sectors are not held centrally.

Number of students from overseas requiring visas in HE and FE institutions

	Number
In HE institutions[1]	110,340
In FE colleges[2]	33,600

[1] Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency. Covers students on HE and FE courses in HEIs in the UK.

[2] Source: Learning and Skills Council. Covers students in HE and FE courses in FE colleges in England.

School Staff (Kent)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* teaching assistants were employed in (i) Dartford primary and secondary schools and (ii) the Kent local education authority area in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [221100]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The following table shows the full-time equivalent number of teachers and teaching assistants in maintained schools, pupil referral units and other non-school provision in Dartford constituency and Kent local education authority in January 2000 to January 2004.

	Dartford		*Kent*	
	FTE Teachers	*FTE Teaching Assistants*	*FTE Teachers*	*FTE Teaching Assistants*
2004				
Nursery	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Primary	390	220	5,440	2,820
Secondary	460	60	6,270	910
Special	60	50	430	570
PRU/Other	10	10	60	30
Total	920	330	12,200	4,330
2003				
Nursery	[1]—	[1]—	10	[1]—
Primary	390	190	5,200	2,640
Secondary	450	50	5,730	830
Special	50	70	420	650
PRU/Other	10	10	100	30
Total	900	310	11,460	4,160
2002				
Nursery	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Primary	390	160	5,050	2,350
Secondary	430	40	5,750	740
Special	40	60	410	500
PRU/Other	10	10	110	30
Total	870	260	11,310	3,620
2001				
Nursery	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Primary	400	90	4,960	1,680
Secondary	410	20	5,850	530
Special	40	60	390	500
PRU/Other	10	10	120	40
Total	860	170	11,320	2,750
2000				
Nursery	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Primary	400	80	4,970	1,520
Secondary	400	20	5,810	460
Special	40	50	400	450
PRU/Other	10	[1]—	120	40
Total	850	150	11,300	2,470

[1] 0 or less than 5.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual School Census, (teaching assistants) and Annual Survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher vacancies (teacher numbers). Figures are as at January of each year.

Teenage Mothers

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of teenage mothers aged under 18 years were in paid employment or full-time education in each year since 1997. [221444]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Between 1997–99 and 2002–04 there has been an increase in the proportion of teenage mothers in education, employment or training (EET), from 23.1 per cent. in 1997–99 to 29.7 per cent. in 2002–04.

Data on the proportion of teenage mothers in EET are derived from the Labour Force Survey and are presented as three year averages to smooth out annual fluctuations that can occur due to the small sample size from which the data are derived. Data for 2003–05 will be available in August 2005. EET figures include those in part-time as well as full-time EET.

Under-achievement

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to assist under-achieving pupils in schools in England. [221600]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Primary National Strategy and the KS3 National Strategy (which is developing into a secondary strategy covering the whole 11–16 stage) are designed to raise standards for all pupils by spreading effective teaching and learning to every classroom. Through the national strategies we have provided teachers with a suite of age specific intervention materials which allow children who are struggling to catch up with their peers. Specific programmes, such as the Strategies' English as an Additional Language (EAL) pilot and Aiming High "Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils", also address the needs of particular groups of under-achieving pupils which include African-Caribbean pupils, Gypsy and Traveller pupils, pupils from mainly Muslim backgrounds and isolated minority ethnic pupils. In addition, schools now have access to better data on individual pupils and comparative performance than ever before which enables them to identify underperformance and set appropriately challenging pupil targets.

PRIME MINISTER

Arctic Convoys Medal

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has received from the Honours and Decorations Committee concerning a medal for veterans of the Arctic convoys. [221282]

The Prime Minister: I have received advice from the Chairman of the Honours and Decorations Committee on this matter. Such advice is not disclosed as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Iran

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has held with President George W. Bush on relations with Iran. [221280]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton (Mr. Davey) on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 193W.

DEFENCE

Tsunami (Military Assistance)

16. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Air Force staff have been involved in delivering humanitarian aid and support equipment to Indonesia after the tsunami. [221305]

Mr. Caplin: I begin by paying tribute on behalf of the whole House to all those civilian and military personnel from the United Kingdom who were involved in the tsunami relief effort in December and January.

The RAF's main contribution has been the airlift of both aid and equipment. Eleven C17 Globemaster loads were delivered to Banda Aceh in Indonesia.

Several hundred RAF personnel have been involved in the operation, in one way or another, most notably from RAF Brize Norton and RAF Lyneham.

Defence Intelligence

19. **Harry Cohen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes have been made to Defence Intelligence in the last two years, with particular reference to quality, methods of gathering and relevant onward transmission. [221308]

Mr. Ingram: The mission of the Defence Intelligence Staff is to provide timely and highly valued intelligence that will guide departmental decisions on Defence policy and the commitment and employment of the United Kingdom's armed forces; inform decisions on the generation and maintenance of operational military capability, including through the equipment programme; and contribute to wider national intelligence collection and assessment. The Defence Intelligence Staff is continually striving to improve working methods and capabilities to meet both current and future demands. The Butler Review made a number of recommendations, which were accepted by the PM, and we are working to address those specific to Defence Intelligence.

Army Strength

20. **Jane Griffiths:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on changes in the number of trained personnel in the Army since 1997. [221309]

Mr. Caplin: In April 1997 the number of trained service personnel in the Army was 101,360. In January 2005, the latest period for which figures are available, the number was 103,560.

Future Infantry Structure Review

22. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the conduct of the Future Infantry Structure Review. [221311]

Mr. Hoon: Work to restructure the Infantry has been an important part of our effort to reshape the Army's structure to ensure that it evolves to meet the challenges of current and future operations. The Infantry work was led by the Army itself and involved a consultation period to allow the Infantry divisions to express their views on constructing the future Infantry structure. The

results were considered by the Executive Committee of the Army Board, which were then passed to me. I accepted this advice and announced the outcome to the House on 16 December last year.

Infantry Battalions

23. **Mr. Francois:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* regular and *(b)* territorial infantry battalions were in service in the British Army (i) in 1997 and (ii) on the latest date for which figures are available. [221312]

Mr. Caplin: On 1 April 1997 there were 40 regular and 33 territorial infantry battalions in service in the British Army. Today there are 40 regular and 15 territorial infantry battalions.

Aircraft Carrier Project

25. **Richard Ottaway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the first new aircraft carriers to become fully operational; and if he will make a statement. [221314]

Mr. Hoon: Full operating capability will be determined by both air group and ship readiness. The target date for the full operating capability will not be set before the main investment decision is taken.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's aircraft carrier programme. [221307]

Mr. Hoon: The Future Aircraft Carrier (CVF) programme remains in the Assessment Phase. Following the recent announcement of the selection of Kellogg Brown and Root UK Ltd. as the preferred Physical Integrator, the company has joined the Department, BAE SYSTEMS and Thales UK as a participant in the CVF Alliance. Work is continuing to discuss and agree the detailed alliancing arrangements, including the role and responsibilities of the participants, in preparation for taking the major investment decision for the Demonstration and Manufacture Phases, currently targeted for the latter half of 2005.

Armoured Vehicles

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the gross weight is of the Panther armoured reconnaissance vehicle; and which aircraft type can airlift such a vehicle. [208299]

Mr. Ingram: The current gross vehicle weight of a Panther Command and Liaison Vehicle is 7.1 tonnes. The vehicle is to be air transportable, underslung beneath a Chinook helicopter or carried inside C130, C17 and A400M aircraft.

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which nations *(a)* manufactured and *(b)* developed the Panther armoured reconnaissance vehicle. [208300]

Mr. Ingram: The Panther Command and Liaison Vehicle is based upon an Italian designed IVECO Multi-role Light Vehicle which is due to enter service with the Italian Army. BAE Systems Land Systems is responsible for converting the vehicle to meet UK specification.

Arms Ban (China)

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he had with his EU counterparts regarding the EU proposals for lifting the ban on arms sales to China; and if he will make a statement. [220928]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

The Government supported the decision of the European Council in December 2003 to review the EU Arms Embargo on China. This review is on-going.

Member states discussed the embargo at the European Council in December 2004. The Council invited the Luxembourg presidency of the EU to take forward work on the review. The Government could envisage embargo lift subject to satisfaction on the issues laid out in the Conclusions of that Council.

Until the review process is complete, the Government continues to implement the Arms Embargo as set out by the then Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the late Derek Fatchett, in his reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Gedling (Vernon Coaker) on 3 June 1998, *Official Report*, columns 240–41.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions his Department's officials had with US Department of Defense officials regarding the EU proposals for lifting the ban on arms sales to China; and if he will make a statement. [220929]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Government recognises that the US has a legitimate and understandable interest both in the effectiveness of the EU's system of arms control and in the stability of the East Asian region. Representatives of the UK and US governments, at all levels, have therefore discussed the issue. Such discussions will continue, as they will also between the US and our EU partners. Although the EU will take all relevant factors into account in its review of the EU Arms Embargo, any decisions arising from it are for the EU alone.

British Military Camps (Iraq)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements have been made for the disposal of sewage from British military camps in Iraq; what environmental assessment has been conducted in respect of such arrangements; and what liaison has taken place with the local environmental management authorities on these arrangements. [217605]

Mr. Ingram: Private contractors undertake the disposal of sewage from British military camps in Iraq. There are no central Government or regional government environmental management authorities in Iraq but UK standards are applied where it is reasonable to do so.

Civil Servants

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many civil servants were *(a)* suspended and *(b)* sacked from employment by his Department in each year since 2001 under suspicion of breaching the Official Secrets Act 1989. [220236]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Information on the number of civil servants suspended while under suspicion of breaching the Official Secrets Act is not held centrally, and would incur disproportionate cost to obtain the data from individual units or business areas. Civil servants are not sacked while suspended under suspicion of breaching the Official Secrets Act.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many civil servants were *(a)* suspended and *(b)* sacked from employment by his Department in each year since 2001 for gross professional misconduct. [220239]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Information is not held centrally on the number of MOD civil servants that have been suspended from employment for possible acts of gross misconduct, and it would incur disproportionate cost to collate the data. The number of MOD civil servants that have subsequently been dismissed from the Department in each year since 2001 for gross misconduct offences is as follows:

	Number of civil servants dismissed
2001	15
2002	17
2003	19
2004	18
2005[1]	1

[1] To date

Clothing Contracts

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many samples produced in China for battle dress under the cut and sew contract have been tested. [221039]

Mr. Ingram: All of the samples produced in China were tested at independent accredited test houses in China and the United Kingdom. All tests confirmed that Ministry of Defence specification requirements had been met. The Ministry of Defence requires proof that its specifications are being met and it is the responsibility of the prime contractor to ensure that sufficient samples are submitted for testing.

Deaths in Service (Northern Ireland)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what figure he recognises as representing the total number of personnel from each of the armed services that have died in or in connection with operations in Northern Ireland since 1969; and how many of those deaths were deemed to have been *(a)* accidental, *(b)* self-inflicted and *(c)* from natural causes. [217800]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Defence Expenditure (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the Defence Export Services Organisation spent in Scotland in (i) monetary terms and (ii) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each year; and if he will make a statement. [216283]

Mr. Ingram: From 1997–98 to 2001–02, the Defence Export Services Organisation employed no staff permanently based in Scotland other than those working in the Disposal Services Agency (DSA) in respect of which I have undertaken to write to the hon. Member.

Departmental Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on the production of in-house magazines in the Department in each year since 1997. [213636]

Mr. Caplin: Detailed expenditure on the many in-house magazines produced within the Ministry of Defence is not available and could be provided only by incurring disproportionate cost. However, details of production costs (excluding staff costs) of the principal MOD-wide publication, FOCUS, for each year since 1998–99 are as follows:

	Production costs (£)
1998–99	167,791
1999–00	174,329
2000–01	161,950
2001–02	164,750
2002–03	205,268
2003–04	179,280
2004–05 (to January 2005)	150,656

Information for 1997–98 is no longer available.

Departmental Efficiency Programme

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the cashable savings attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Disposal Services Agency, *(b)* Duke of York's Royal Military School, *(c)* Medical Supply Agency, *(d)* Ministry of Defence and Guarding Agency and *(e)* Naval Recruiting and Training Agency for financial years (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08; [209336]

(2) what the planned cashable savings attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency, *(b)* Army Training and Recruiting Agency, *(c)* British Forces Post Office, *(d)* Defence Analytical Services Agency and *(e)* Defence Bills Agency for financial years (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08; [209340]

(3) what the planned cashable savings attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Defence Communication Services Agency, *(b)* Defence Dental Agency, *(c)* Defence Estates, *(d)* Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency and *(e)* Defence Intelligence and Security Centre for financial years (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08; [209341]

(4) what the planned cashable savings attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Pay and Personnel Agency, *(b)* Queen Victoria School, *(c)* RAF Training Group Defence Agency,

(d) Service Children's Education, *(e)* Veterans Agency and *(f)* Warship Support Agency for financial years (i) 2006–07 and (ii) 2007–08. [209330]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 18 January 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 242W.

Equipment Programmes

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which equipment programmes have been *(a)* reassigned, *(b)* moved and *(c)* removed from (i) EP04 and (ii) EP05. [220547]

Mr. Ingram: The broad impact of the outcome of the 2004 equipment planning round (EP04) was described in the Defence White Paper supplement 'Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities' (Cm 6269), published in July 2004. However, changes to planning assumptions arising during our annual planning round form part of internal advice to Ministers on the overall affordability of the defence programme. Announcements will continue to be made as appropriate when decisions are taken on specific projects.

European Defence Agency

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the UK financial contribution to the European Defence Agency was in the last financial year; what it is expected to be over the next five years; and what percentage the UK contribution is of the overall agency cost. [221486]

Mr. Ingram: Member states' percentage contributions towards the budget of the European Defence Agency are based on assessments of their gross national income. The agency's budget for 2004 covered the period from its formal establishment in July to the end of that year. The United Kingdom contributed 17.28 per cent. of this budget, equating to €308,775.51. For the calendar year 2005, the UK contribution is 18.07 per cent. equating to €3,596,803. There are no formal estimates of the agency's budget for the next five years. However, the budget for 2006 is expected to be less than the 2005 budget which included non-recurring costs associated with the initial set-up of the agency.

Falkland Islands

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the feasibility of reintroducing the Southern Atlantic standing patrol task for the Royal Navy; and if he will make a statement on Royal Navy operations around the Falkland Islands. [220548]

Mr. Ingram: A Royal Navy frigate or destroyer, together with a Royal Fleet Auxiliary support tanker, is allocated 365 days per year to the Atlantic Patrol Task (South) APT(S). The APT(S) duty ship provides a tangible presence in the Falkland Islands Area of Responsibility (AOR) while also retaining a commitment, together with the Atlantic Patrol Task (North) ship, to provide a presence off the West African littoral. When not in theatre, the APT(S) duty ship remains within 14 days' sailing of the AOR. In addition, a permanent presence is maintained in theatre by the Falkland Island Patrol Vessel.

The Royal Navy's Ice Patrol Vessel, HMS Endurance, also deploys annually to the South Atlantic region during the austral summer.

Hercules Crash (Iraq)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his Written Statement of 7 March 2005 on Iraq: C130 Hercules Crash Update, *Official Report*, column 101WS, what the mission was of the UK soldiers on the Hercules flight which crashed in Iraq; what role they were due to fulfil; what related documentation they had in their possession; what joint mission they had with US forces *(a)* on the flight and *(b)* at the US base at Balad; and if he will make a statement. [221248]

Mr. Hoon: There was a single soldier of the Royal Corps of Signals and nine members of the Royal Air Force on board the Hercules C130K which crashed on Sunday 30 January 2005. The soldier was providing communications support to the flight. Standard RAF flight documentation was on board.

The mission of all United Kingdom forces in Iraq is to help it to become a stable, united and law abiding state, within its present borders, co-operating with the international community, no longer posing a threat to its neighbours or to international security, abiding by all its international obligations and providing effective representative government for all its people.

Our forces are in Iraq as part of a multinational effort (which includes the US) under UN Security Council Resolution 1546 to take all necessary measures to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq. The use of the C130K was entirely within the scope of that mission but for reasons of force protection we cannot give further details of the operation. The board of investigation continues to work to determine the cause of the crash.

Intellectual Property (Germany)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what intellectual property held by QinetiQ was obtained from the then German government *(a)* between the commencement of hostilities to the unconditional surrender of Germany in 1945 and *(b)* between the unconditional surrender of Germany and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany; [219024]

(2) what intellectual property held by Qinetiq was obtained from private companies *(a)* between the commencement of hostilities to the unconditional surrender of Germany and *(b)* between the unconditional surrender of Germany in 1945 and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany; [219025]

(3) what the status is of intellectual property obtained by his Department from *(a)* private companies and *(b)* ministries of the former German government between the unconditional surrender of Germany in 1945 and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany; and if he will make a statement; [219026]

(4) what the status is of intellectual property obtained by his Department from *(a)* private companies and *(b)* the then German Government between the

commencement of hostilities to the unconditional surrender of Germany in 1945; and if he will make a statement. [219027]

Mr. Ingram: The events mentioned occurred so long ago that it is unlikely that any intellectual property rights exist in any information within the Department originating from Germany prior to its unconditional surrender in 1945. However, as is well known, some technologies now used widely in defence have their origins prior to the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany.

No intellectual property rights owned by QinetiQ were obtained from Germany prior to the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Iraq

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost of UK military operations in Iraq and the theatre of conflict have been since September 2002, broken down by costs to the *(a)* Army, *(b)* Royal Navy and *(c)* Royal Air Force. [221425]

Mr. Ingram: The net additional costs of operations are calculated on a joint basis reflecting the joint nature of military operations. It is not possible, or meaningful, to break down these costs by individual service.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received from the recently elected political representatives of Iraq concerning the role of the UK armed forces in training Iraqi security forces. [221302]

Mr. Hoon: There have been no representations as yet, since the new Iraqi Government has still to be appointed.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects British troops to complete the present mission in Iraq. [221313]

Mr. Hoon: British Forces are serving in Iraq as part of the Coalition Force authorised under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. This mandate will expire upon the completion of the political process or if requested by the Government of Iraq.

The United Kingdom is committed to Iraq for as long as the Iraqi Government judge that the coalition is required to provide security and assist in the development of the Iraqi Security Forces.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many United Kingdom military personnel were in Iraq on *(a)* 1 January 2004 and *(b)* 1 January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [216425]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 16 February 2005]:* On 1 January 2004, some 8,700 personnel were deployed on Operation Telic, of which some 7,650 were serving within Iraq. On 1 January 2005, some 9,150 were deployed on Operation Telic, of which some 8,000 were serving within Iraq.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Rules of Engagement in Iraq were changed to reflect the transition from war-fighting to military occupation. [218604]

Mr. Ingram: Two adjustments were made to the United Kingdom Rules of Engagement in Iraq to reflect the transition from war-fighting to military occupation. These took effect on 11 July 2003 and 17 October 2003. A further ROE change was promulgated in November 2004 in recognition of the challenges UK armed forces face in dealing with the current insurgency.

We do not comment on the content of ROE for reasons of operational security.

Museums

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* revenue costs of the regimental museum based at Fort George Army Base were in the last year for which figures are available. [216579]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested for financial year 2003–04 is shown as follows:

	£
Capital costs	0
Revenue costs	77,000

Naval Refit Contracts

Rachel Squire: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the contracted price was for the refit package for HMS Richmond placed with FSL. [219454]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The contracted price agreed with FSL for the refit package of HMS Richmond is commercially sensitive information and is, therefore, being withheld. However, it can be revealed that the total cost of the work, including the FSL refit and the installation of additional MOD supplied equipment, is in excess of £20 million.

Naval Sector Strategy Study

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who the members are of the Naval Sector Strategy Study; what its terms of reference are; and when it will report. [220571]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The Naval Sector Strategy Study is an industry-led initiative. Its terms of reference and when it will report are matters for them.

Near Air Misses

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1342W, on Near Air Misses, when he expects to *(a)* complete his investigations and *(b)* publish his conclusions. [221125]

Mr. Caplin: Investigations into Airprox ("near-miss") incidents in the UK are carried out by the UK Airprox Board (UKAB), not the Ministry of Defence. UKAB is an independent body jointly sponsored by the Civil Aviation Authority and the Ministry of Defence. The timing of the investigation is a matter for the UKAB.

The UKAB publishes the results of its investigations twice a year in the form of the report "Analysis of Airprox in UK Airspace". Each report covers a six-month period, and is issued approximately nine months after the end of the period being reported on. Therefore, the report dealing with the Airprox in December 2004 will appear in September or October 2005, and that covering the February incident some six months later.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many parliamentary questions relating to manning control have not been answered due to disproportionate cost since 1997. [201843]

Mr. Caplin: Our records indicate that, since 1997, 11 parliamentary questions relating to manning control have not been answered due to disproportionate cost.

Pierre Bolangi

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the result was of the inquiry into the death of Pierre Bolangi on 9 August 2000 while in the care of the School of Physical Training at Aldershot. [220493]

Mr. Caplin: The police investigation into Mr. Bolangi's death was the responsibility of the Hampshire constabulary. The investigation led to the conviction of a serving soldier for manslaughter by gross negligence. A Service Board of Inquiry was also convened to investigate the circumstances surrounding Mr. Bolangi's death. The Board made a number of key recommendations related to the policy and conduct of income generation activity within the Army. The Ministry of Defence has since revised its guidance on Selling Government Services into Wider Markets which sets out the framework within which income generation activities can be conducted, and the constraints governing them.

RAF Marham

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost is of providing depth support facilities for the Tornado GR4 at RAF Marham. [220521]

Mr. Ingram: The cost of providing depth support facilities for the Tornado GR4 at RAF Marham was estimated in the investment appraisal to be some £13.8 million.

Further work is currently being undertaken to refine the estimate as the end-to-end programme is implemented.

RFA Tankers

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the planned decommissioning dates are for each of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary tankers. [221120]

Mr. Ingram: On current plans the RFA tanker decommissioning dates are as follows:

	Decommissioning dates
Fort George	2019
Fort Victoria	2019
Wave Knight	2028
Wave Ruler	2028
Grey Rover	2006
Gold Rover	2009
Black Rover	2010
Brambleleaf	2009
Orangeleaf	2009
Oakleaf	2010
Bayleaf	2010

Two of these vessels, Orangeleaf and Bayleaf, are chartered.

These dates are, however, kept under review in the light of the Royal Navy's requirements.

Royal Irish Regiment

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons the Home Service part-time officers and soldiers of the Royal Irish Regiment are excluded from the Armed Forces Pension Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [200351]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 29 November 2004]:* I will write to the hon. Member about this issue.

Tornado Aircraft

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the crisis manning requirement is for the Tornado GR4; and how this number is arrived at. [220842]

Mr. Ingram: The current planned Crisis Manning Requirement (CMR) for Tornado GR4 is around 1,850 posts.

The CMR is a complex equation, derived from totalling the RAF regular and reservist manpower required to meet deployed and non-deployed Defence outputs and commitments, taking into account personnel training requirements, the potential impact of illnesses or injury and guidelines on the amount of time RAF personnel should spend on deployed duties.

Trident

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the threats the UK's Trident nuclear weapons are *(a)* intended to deter and *(b)* targeted against; when this assessment was last (i) reviewed and (ii) changed; and if he will make a statement. [214377]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 577W.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date the last review of command and control procedures for the Trident missile system was *(a)* started and *(b)* completed; and if he will make a statement. [221032]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1148W. The last such audit took place between February and September 2003. Command and control procedures are routinely exercised.

UK Nuclear Capability

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the command and control procedures are for authorisation of the launch of a UK nuclear missile in the event of a nuclear attack on the UK which leads to the destruction of the UK Government. [221029]

Mr. Hoon: As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear in the answer he gave on 28 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 774W, to the hon. Member for Shrewsbury and Atcham (Mr. Marsden), the use of the United Kingdom's nuclear weapons may be ordered only by the Prime Minister. It would not be in the interests of national security to comment further on command and control arrangements for the nuclear deterrent.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure compliance with antisocial behaviour orders. [220449]

Ms Blears: Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) were introduced in April 1999. From data reported to the Home Office, we know that up to September 2004, 3,826 ASBOs have been issued since they were introduced. An ASBO is a civil order, but a breach of it is a criminal offence.

The granting of the ASBOs is not the end of the process. Local agencies need to work with those subject to ASBOs as well as their families to ensure that the ASBO is observed and complied with.

Since February 2004, Parenting Orders can be attached to ASBOs issued to 10–15 year olds. Since May 2004, Individual Support Orders can be attached to ASBOs issued to a 10–17 year old to direct the young person to activities that can address the underlying causes of the antisocial behaviour.

In the Drugs Bill currently, before Parliament there is a proposal for an Intervention Order that could be attached to an ASBO issued to an adult and which would direct the individual to activities to address the underlying causes of their antisocial behaviour when these are drug related.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many curfew orders have been issued in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend for antisocial behaviour since their inception. [220498]

Paul Goggins: Curfew orders were not made in Essex prior to 2000. The available information, for the years 2000 to 2003 is contained in the table.

The offences for which curfew orders are made are classified by statute and no further circumstances of the offences are collected centrally. Antisocial behaviour is not a statutory classification. The table therefore shows all offences for which curfew orders have been made in Essex.

Statistics for 2004 will be published in the latter part of this year.

Persons sentenced to curfew orders in Essex, by offence, 2000–03

	Number of persons sentenced	
	Of which:	
Offence	*Essex*	*Southend*
2000		
Going equipped for stealing	1	1
Shoplifting	1	—
Fraud	2	2
Assault on police constable	1	1
Common assault	1	1
Fear or provocation of violence	1	—
Drink driving	1	1
Driving licence offence	1	1
Driving without insurance	1	1
Total	10	8
2001		
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	1	—
Possession of offensive weapon	1	1
Burglary	1	—
Going equipped for stealing	1	—
Theft and handling	1	—
Fraud	1	—
Arson	1	1
Criminal damage	3	2
Taking and driving away	2	1
Malicious damage	1	1
Driving licence offence	1	—
Driving without insurance	2	—
Total	16	6
2002		
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	3	—
Possession of offensive weapon	2	1
Having an article with blade or point in public place	2	—
Putting people in fear of violence	1	—
Indecent assault on a female	1	—
Burglary	2	—
Robbery	1	1
Aggravated vehicle taking	5	2
Theft and handling	7	—
Arson	1	1
Criminal damage	3	1
Affray	2	—
Racially aggravated fear or provocation of violence	1	—
Drug offences	3	1
Other indictable offence	1	—
Assault on police constable	1	1
Common assault	6	2
Taking and driving away	2	—
Malicious damage	1	—
Harassment	1	—
Dangerous driving	2	1
Drink driving	2	—
Driving Licence Offence	1	—
Total	51	11
2003		
Grievous bodily harm	3	—
Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	7	2
Possession of offensive weapon	2	2
Assault with intent to resist apprehension	1	—
Having an article with blade or point in public place	4	—
Indecent assault on a female	1	1
Burglary	12	1
Robbery	3	1
Aggravated vehicle taking	8	—
Theft and handling	17	5
Arson	1	—
Criminal damage	4	1

Persons sentenced to curfew orders in Essex, by offence, 2000–03

Offence	Number of persons sentenced Of which: Essex	Southend
Affray	1	—
Racially aggravated fear or provocation of violence	1	—
Absconding while on bail	3	—
Drug offences	4	—
Assault on police constable	3	1
Common assault	6	1
Causing intentional alarm, harassment or distress	1	—
Fear or provocation of violence	5	2
Harassment, alarm or distress	1	—
Interference with motor vehicle	1	—
Taking and driving away	9	1
Malicious damage	2	1
Social security offences	1	1
Other summary offence	1	—
Dangerous driving	2	—
Drink driving	9	4
Driving licence offence	7	2
Driving without insurance	1	—
Total	121	26

Autonomy plc

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police authorities have contracts with Autonomy plc. [212204]

Ms Blears: This information is not held centrally and, in any event, decisions on who the police authority and force contract with are made locally.

Begging

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what percentage of individuals who were successfully prosecuted for begging in each year since 1990 *(a)* had a home address and *(b)* did not have a home address; and if he will make a statement; [220678]

(2) how many individuals convicted for begging in each year since 1990 were found to have psychiatric problems; and if he will make a statement. [220679]

Paul Goggins: Information relating to the residency or psychiatric condition of a defendant is not centrally collected on the Home Office court proceedings database.

However, available information on the number and percentage of successful prosecutions for begging under S3 and S4 Vagrancy Act 1824, England and Wales 1990–2003 is contained in the table.

Number and percentage of persons found guilty for begging under S3 and S4 Vagrancy Act 1824, England and Wales, 1990–2003[1]

	Total found guilty	Percentage found guilty
1990	1,478	90
1991	1,597	87
1992	1,186	83
1993	1,105	80
1994	1,295	85
1995	1,072	83
1996	1,540	83
1997	1,536	85
1998	1,693	84
1999	2,076	82
2000	2,776	84
2001	2,653	83
2002	3,289	84
2003	3,242	83

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Statistics for 2004 will be available in the autumn 2005.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of how the introduction of the National Offender Management Service will affect levels of drug use in prisons. [220922]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service published its National Drug Strategy for the management and treatment of problematic drug users on 20 January. It will strengthen the co-operation and effectiveness of those involved in the delivery of drug interventions across the criminal justice system and will ensure that problematic drug users are managed in a way that optimises chances of success. The strategy can be found online at the Home Office and Prison Service websites.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there will be duplication of responsibility between the headquarters of the National Offender Management Service and the headquarters of the Prison and Probation Services. [220391]

Paul Goggins: The new National Offender Management Service headquarters is being designed to ensure that there is no duplication of responsibility.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration was given to merging the Prison and Probation Services into one, prior to the publication of the Carter Report. [220392]

Paul Goggins: Organisational issues affecting prisons and probation are discussed from time to time. However there was no formal proposal for a merger of the prisons and probation services, nor any preparation of a business case for this, in the period prior to Lord Carter's review. The Carter review itself did not propose such a merger. The last time such a merger was considered was in the 1998 Prisons—Probation review (final report), available at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/pprcont.html

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the Departments within the National Offender Management Service headquarters that did not previously exist within either the prison or probation services. [220476]

Paul Goggins: The new National Offender Management Service headquarters, alongside the Prison Service and Probation Service headquarters, is being redesigned. A proposal, including the allocation

of individual units to directorates, has been put forward to staff and trade unions for their comments. The new headquarters is being planned for April 2005 and I will write to the hon. Member once the design of the new headquarters has been agreed.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate has been made of the change in the number of civil service posts consequent on the creation of the National Offender Management Service; and if he will make a statement. [220477]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) consists of the three former organisations—the Prison Service, Probation Service and Correctional Services. The number of civil servants has remained the same with the introduction of the new service, except for the development of a small programme office (12 new posts) to manage the organisation's change programme and the appointment of 10 new regional offender managers. The new NOMS headquarters is being redesigned by April 2005.

Although there may be temporary increases in civil service posts over the next two years, NOMS remains committed to reducing civil service posts by almost 900 posts to reach a target figure of 2,540 posts by March 2007. To date, 50 per cent. of this reduction has been achieved.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to move *(a)* Prison Service Headquarters, *(b)* Probation Service Headquarters and *(c)* National Offender Management Service Headquarters out of London; and if he will make a statement. [220518]

Paul Goggins: I am considering relocating the Headquarters of the National Offender Management Service, including the present National Probation Directorate and the Headquarters of the public sector Prison Service, out of London provided that a business case shows that this is cost-effective and that the move could be afforded. Any such relocation is unlikely to take place before 2007–08.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget is for the National Offender Management Service headquarters for each of the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [220519]

Paul Goggins: The budget for the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) for 2005–06 is £4.035 billion resource and £321 million capital.

The budget for NOMS central functions, including the office for contracted prisons, is currently £301 million resource for 2005- 06. This is expected to increase as functions are transferred from the prison and probation service headquarters.

Budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–08 have not been finalised but indicative budgets for the overall NOMS budget in 2006–07 are £4.253 billion resource and £287 capital and, for 2007–08, £4.512 billion resource and £312 million capital.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will provide a substantive answer to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Southend, West on 13 January 2005 for named day answer, reference 209465, on correspondence. [211452]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 27 January 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 822W.

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the decision to extend the jurisdiction of the Criminal Cases Review Commission's jurisdiction to court martial convictions; and when will this be implemented. [218714]

Paul Goggins: Agreement in principle has been reached between the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) and the Ministry of Defence concerning the extension of the CCR's jurisdiction to enable them to review convictions at court martial and Standing Civilian Court. Consideration is being given to the possibility of including appropriate provisions within the Armed Forces Bill planned for the 2006 legislative timetable.

Private Mario Clarke

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 847–48W, on Private Mario Clarke, what steps were taken by the family liaison officer to inform Deveen Clarke of the date of the inquest into the death of her husband; what steps were taken to inform her that public funds would be made available to enable her to attend the hearing; and if he will ensure she is provided with a full transcript of proceedings. [217803]

Ms Blears: The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis reports that Mrs. Deveen Clarke was informed of the impending inquest by telephone and by letter when the date of the inquest was known.

The Metropolitan police also contacted Mrs. Clarke by telephone when they had been informed that she had not been successful in obtaining a visa and to inform her that the coroner was not calling her as a witness.

As Mrs. Clarke had been unsuccessful in obtaining a visa and therefore could not travel back to the UK, the question of public funds being made available was not an issue.

Mrs. Clarke was informed of the result of the inquest by letter. The Metropolitan police will on request from Mrs. Clarke make arrangements to provide her with a full transcript of the proceedings.

Defence Equipment Projects

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the approved cost at main gate was for *(a)* A400M, *(b)* Astute Class submarine, *(c)* Bowman and *(d)* Nimrod, broken down by (i) direct resource DEL, (ii) indirect resource DEL and (iii) capital DEL. [219038]

Mr. Ingram: Approved costs at original Main Gate or equivalent approval were as follows:

Project	*Approved cost (£ million)*	*Year*
A400M	3,500	2000
Astute Class submarine	1,900	1997
Bowman	1,984	2001
Nimrod MRA4	2,200	1996

These projects went through the Main Gate or equivalent point prior to the full introduction of Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB). Approvals were therefore on a cash basis and not broken down in the format requested. The latest approved procurement costs at main gate or equivalent on a RAB basis taken from MPR 04 are:

Project	*Approved procurement cost at Main Gate or equivalent as taken from MPR 04 (out turn) (£ million)*
A400M	2,744
Astute Class submarine	2,578
Bowman	2,041
Nimrod MRA4	2,813

Departmental Policies (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Coventry, South constituency, the effects on Coventry, South of changes to his Department's policy since 1997. [220371]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Government have put in place policies in the areas of crime reduction, antisocial behaviour, policing and active communities that are yielding considerable benefits for the Coventry, South constituency, as well as for all parts of the UK.

For example, between March 1997 and September 2004, the number of police officers in West Midlands police force increased by 917 from 7,113 to 8,030. The Government's introduction of community support officers (CSOs) in 2002 has put 134 CSOs on West Midlands streets to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. Between 1997 and 2003–04, the West Midlands police force area has seen a reduction in recorded domestic burglary crimes of 35 per cent. and in recorded vehicle crimes of 28 per cent.

West Midlands police force is receiving £426.5 million in general grants for 2005–06, an increase of 6.81 per cent. (£27.2 million) over 2004–05. West Midlands also gains around £0.8 million from the Amending Report for 2003–04, bringing the overall increase to 7.0 per cent. General grants funding to West Midlands has increased by 34 per cent. between 1997–98 and 2005–06. In addition to general grants, West Midlands will also receive around £29 million in specific grants funding for targeted initiatives and capital provision in 2005–06. The distribution of resources locally is a matter for the Police Authority and the chief constable.

As crime prevention requires action across communities, every area has had a local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) since 1998 which brings together the police, health services, drugs agencies and council and community representatives to decide how to prevent and deter crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) was a pioneering Government intervention programme which ran for three years from April 1999 in England and Wales and took an evidence-based approach to crime reduction. Grants of over £340 million were allocated to over 1,470 projects, including CCTV, under 20 initiatives that formed part of the programme. Four CCTV projects in the Coventry CDRP area received a total of £528,226 from the CRP.

Since 2001, successive initiatives have provided direct funding to each of the 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and Wales. These initiatives include Communities Against Drugs, the Safer Communities Initiative, the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas scheme and the Building Safer Communities Fund. Since 2001, a total of £1.93 million has been allocated to Coventry CDRP under these initiatives. A further £2.03 million has been provided over the two years 2003–04 and 2004–05 to the Home Office regional director in the West Midlands for CDRP capacity building across the region.

It is estimated that out of a million active offenders, 100,000 have three or more convictions and are responsible for half of all crime. There is a Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO) scheme in Coventry set up to target those offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in the community.

The Government's crime reduction website provides further information on the work being done to reduce crime across the country, including information about action and results in local areas. It is available at http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk.

New legislation has given local agencies a raft of powers, from antisocial behaviour orders to local dispersal orders and crack house closure powers, to work with local people to tackle antisocial behaviour and nuisance. In Coventry a total of 73 antisocial behaviour orders have been issued as of 4 March 2005. Coventry is one of the 50 antisocial behaviour action areas across the country set to get extra help to tackle antisocial behaviour. In addition, £25,000 has been awarded to Coventry to tackle families who cause nuisance and misery. Nuisance neighbours are offered intensive family support and given a "last chance" to turn around their behaviour, by nuisance neighbour expert panels. Local contacts for tackling antisocial behaviour can be found on http://www.together.gov.uk/authority.asp.

Tackling drug misuse is a priority of this Government and their policy is set out in the 10-year National Drug Strategy launched in 1998 and updated in December 2002. (A copy of the updated Drug Strategy 2002 is held

in the Library.) Under this, the Government have invested substantially in measures to reduce the harms caused by illegal drugs, focussing on the four strands of:

reducing the supply of illegal drugs;

preventing young people from becoming problematic drug users;

providing effective treatment to all who need it; and

reducing drug-related crime.

Direct annual funding nationally to tackle drug misuse amounted to £1,244 million in 2003–04, rising to £1,344 million in 2004–05. Coventry has seen a significant increase in direct funding for tackling drugs, in particular for drug treatment services and the through care and aftercare elements of the Drug Interventions Programme. In 2003–04 the allocation for Coventry drug action team amounted to £2.08 million, rising to £2.83 million in 2004–05. Details of action taken to tackle drugs in the Coventry, South constituency can be obtained from the Coventry drugs action team, for contact details see http://www.drugs.gov.uk/Links/DrugActionTeams.

The Government are working to ensure that citizens, communities and the voluntary sector are more fully engaged in tackling social problems, and there is more equality of opportunity and respect for people of all races and religions. Active community participation in England has increased by 1.5 million people between 2001 and 2003. Charities have been supported more effectively, and £125 million is being invested across the country through the future builders fund in voluntary and community organisations that help provide valuable public services. Advice on ways to engage local people in helping their communities is available on the Active Citizenship Centre website http://www.active-citizen.org.uk.

This year, 2005, is the year of the volunteer which is being delivered by the Home Office in partnership with Community Service Volunteers and Volunteering England. This will include a whole range of events in local communities across the country that aim to celebrate the contribution which volunteers make to the quality of people's lives, and encourage more people to volunteer. We are particularly keen to encourage young people, black and minority ethnic groups, those with no qualifications and disabled people to get involved. More details can be found at www.yearofthevolunteer.org.

Detailed information on the impact of Home Office policies across the full range of responsibilities is set out in the Home Office Annual Report and in the Strategic Plan for 2004–08, available on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Driving Convictions

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions for *(a)* causing death by dangerous driving, *(b)* dangerous driving and *(c)* careless driving there were in Greater London in each year since 2000. [220107]

Caroline Flint: Available information for the years 2000 to 2002 (latest available) is given in the table.

2003 data will be available shortly.

Findings of guilt at all courts for specific offences, Greater London[1], 2000–02

Number of offences

Offence	*2000*	*[2]2001*	*2002*
Causing death by dangerous driving[3]	23	20	24
Dangerous driving[4]	444	485	561
Careless driving[5]	6,168	5,277	4,691

[1] Includes City and Metropolitan police forces.
[2] Figures amended since publication of the Home Office 'Offences relating to motor vehicles England and Wales 2001 Supplementary tables'.
[3] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988, s1 as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s1 and Criminal Justice Act 1993 s67.
[4] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s2 as amended by the Road Traffic Act 1991 s2.
[5] Offence under the Road Traffic Act 1988 s3, ss 12(1), 26(2), 33(3) and 168; Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 Regs 19,104–107 and 109.

Drugs

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what measures are being taken to educate and inform potential users of crystal meth of its dangers; [220488]

(2) what measures are being taken to encourage nightclubs to take action against the use of crystal meth; [220489]

(3) what measures his Department plans to take to prevent amyl nitrates in any form being sold in nightclubs; [220505]

(4) what plans he has to introduce new legislation to combat the use of illegal substances. [220506]

Caroline Flint: The use of the methylamphetamine or crystal meth in the UK is negligible. We continue to monitor the incidence of methylamphetamine through liaison with police and customs officials. There are no plans to embark on a general education campaign nor one specifically aimed at nightclubs. Talk to Frank provides general information on the harm of all amphetamines.

There have been no reports of methylamphetamine being sold as amyl nitrate. Methylamphetamine is predominantly in the form of crystals, powder or pill whereas amyl nitrate is a volatile liquid.

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD), set up a working group in 2004 with a remit of producing a comprehensive report on methylamphetamine. The report is to be discussed at the meeting of the ACMD on 19 May.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish the prevalence of drug use data relating to the British Crime Survey 2003–04. [221177]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I expect the report "Drug Misuse Declared: Key findings from the 2003–04 British Crime Survey" to be published shortly.

Mr. Osten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the resources saved from the reclassification of cannabis; to what extent savings have been reallocated to the policing of *(a)* dealing and *(b)* tackling misuse of class A drugs; and if he will make a statement. [220850]

Caroline Flint: Arrests for cannabis possession have fallen by a third in the first year since reclassification in January 2004, which amounts to an estimated saving of 199,000 police hours. It is an operational decision for each police force to determine the level of resources employed in tackling Class A offences. Operation Crackdown, launched in January and involving 33 forces, demonstrates how forces are working to combat drug misuse and dealing. In the first four weeks of the Operation, 963 arrests were reported for Class A supply offences.

Full Sutton Prison

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to develop the land owned by the Prison Service adjacent to Full Sutton Prison; whether plans for the site remain under consideration; when he expects to reach a decision on the future of the site; and if he will make a statement. [219567]

Paul Goggins: *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* We have no plans at present to develop Prison Service land adjacent to HMP Full Sutton. Development of this site remains an option for providing additional prison capacity as and when it may be needed.

Illegal Immigration

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal entrants to the UK have been detected for each of the past five years. [213183]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 1 February 2005]:* The following table shows published data on persons against whom illegal entry action was initiated for each of the past five years. Data was not of sufficient quality for publication in 2003, however it is estimated that 22,950 persons had illegal entry action initiated against them in this year. This figure is based on management information and does not constitute a national statistic. Data for 2004 will be published later this year. Illegal entry action is initiated against those people who are detected having entered or attempted to enter the country clandestinely or by means of deception, either verbal or documentary.

Persons against whom illegal entry action was initiated, 2000 to 2004[1]

	Total persons
2000	47,325
2001	69,875
2002	48,050
2003	—
2004[2]	—

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Not available

Official statistics on immigration matters are available from the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Annual data for 2004 will be available in summer 2005.

Overseas Students

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many appeals by international students who had their visa applications rejected were upheld by the Immigration Appellate Authority in each of the last five years; [218898]

(2) how many appeals were made to the Immigration Appellate Authority by international students who had their visa applications rejected in each of the last five years; [218899]

(3) if he will provide a breakdown by visa issuing posts of the number of appeals made by international students who had their visa applications rejected in each of the last five years. [218901]

Mr. Browne: Reliable statistical data in relation to international students who had their visa applications rejected and whose appeals the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) subsequently upheld are available only for the year 2003. Full year data for 2004 have not yet been collated. Data for years prior to 2003 are not available in the form requested.

In 2003,1,772 appeals by students who had been refused entry clearance were allowed.

Data on the number of appeals made by international students relate to appeals lodged with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate rather than with the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA). In 2003, 6,900 appeals were lodged by students who were refused entry clearance. The IAA heard 6,430 student entry clearance appeals. In addition 1,805 appeals were lodged by international students in the United Kingdom whose leave to remain application had been refused.

In relation to a breakdown by visa issuing post of the number of appeals made by international students (excluding student nurses) who had their visa applications rejected, UK Visas has provided the following data covering the full five-year period. This information was obtained from UK Visas' Central Reference System. It should be noted that, due to the complexity of UK Visas global business, including occasional inconsistencies in data entry across over 150 offices, 100 per cent. accuracy cannot be guaranteed.

Student appeals received 2000–04

Post	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Abu Dhabi	0	0	1	5	5
Abuja (BHC)	49	60	99	331	387
Accra (BHC)	120	384	893	1,317	1,065
Addis Ababa (BE)	2	2	8	15	9
Algiers	0	0	4	17	15
Almaty	0	1	1	3	19
Amman (BE)	3	3	5	4	10
Amsterdam	0	0	2	4	9
Antananarivo (BE)	0	0	0	1	0
Asmara	0	0	0	0	5
Athens (BE)	1	0	0	0	0
Bahrain	0	1	0	0	3
Baku	0	0	0	0	2
Bangkok (BE)	35	50	64	82	68
Banjul	0	5	66	70	57
Beijing (BE)	63	106	123	278	446
Beirut	0	2	1	6	10
Belgrade (BE)	2	1	8	4	15
Bogota	0	2	1	0	53
Bratislava (BE)	4	19	10	22	0
Bridgetown	0	1	0	1	0

Student appeals received 2000–04

Post	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Bucharest (BE)	11	10	11	15	10
Budapest (BE)	3	0	3	3	4
Buenos Aires	0	0	1	2	1
Cairo (BE)	5	7	18	23	13
Casablanca (BCG)	15	11	20	17	16
Chennai (BDHC)	23	51	68	36	54
Chicago	0	0	0	0	4
Chisnau	0	0	0	0	5
Colombo (BHC)	74	173	169	140	271
Copenhagen	0	0	0	8	4
Dakar	0	5	10	21	12
Damascus (BE)	2	2	1	1	5
Dar es Salaam (BHC)	57	65	103	87	85
Dhaka (BHC)	85	251	392	300	692
Dubai	0	0	2	22	14
Dublin	0	0	14	9	11
Dusseldorf (BE)	1	0	0	7	11
Ekaterinburg	0	0	0	3	6
Freetown (BHC)	2	26	29	46	103
Gabarone	0	0	3	12	13
Georgetown	0	0	3	12	7
Guangzhou (BC)	27	57	39	59	31
Hanoi (BE)	1	1	1	0	1
Harare	0	2	3	147	151
Havana	0	0	1	0	1
Hong Kong (BC)	3	3	6	7	28
Islamabad (BHC)	106	775	254	1,364	3,890
Istanbul (BCG)	9	34	87	58	31
Jakarta	0	0	0	7	16
Jedda (BCG)	1	0	5	4	4
Jerusalem	0	0	1	0	7
Kampala (BHC)	1	9	110	205	269
Karachi (BDHC)	72	147	30	0	188
Katmandu (BE)	33	119	112	104	126
Khartoum	0	4	8	6	9
Kiev	0	0	6	14	33
Kingston (BHC)	4	11	10	135	153
Kinshasa (BE)	8	2	10	14	27
Kolkata	0	1	0	13	16
Kuala Lumpur	0	1	3	7	30
Kuwait City (BE)	2	1	0	2	14
Lagos (BDHC)	125	188	272	551	1,438
La Paz	0	0	0	0	1
Lilongwe	0	0	1	0	4
Lima	0	2	1	0	0
Los Angeles	0	0	0	0	6
Luanda	0	0	0	0	2
Lusaka (BHC)	1	6	29	57	38
Manila (BE)	9	17	29	103	195
Maputo	0	0	0	1	1
Maseru	0	1	0	1	0
Mbabane	0	0	0	1	5
Minsk	0	0	3	6	2
Moscow (BE)	9	21	23	15	21
Mumbai (BHC)	24	41	175	273	472
Nairobi (BHC)	44	59	42	86	130
New Delhi (BHC)	14	72	100	286	328
New York (BCG)	1	0	0	1	42
Nicosia (BHC)	6	2	2	13	18
Oslo	0	0	0	1	0
Paris	0	1	1	2	9
Port Louis (BHC)	28	46	65	35	45
Port Moresby	0	0	0	0	1
Port of Spain (BHC)	1	4	3	6	5
Pretoria (BCG)	5	8	11	13	29
Quito	0	1	2	1	16
Rangoon	0	7	26	25	12
Riga	0	0	3	0	0
Riyadh	0	4	0	10	5
Rome (BE)	7	0	4	6	9
Sanaa	0	0	2	0	8
Santo Domingo	0	0	0	0	3
Sarajevo	0	0	0	1	0
Seoul	0	0	0	0	5
Shanghai (BC)	24	56	19	20	20
Singapore (BHC)	4	0	1	6	6
Skopje	0	0	12	8	17

Student appeals received 2000–04

Post	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Sofia (BE)	2	20	16	26	19
St. Petersburg	0	3	4	7	4
Stockholm	0	0	0	0	1
Tallin	0	0	1	1	10
Tashkent	0	0	2	10	15
Tbilisi	0	0	0	0	1
Tehran	0	14	64	72	204
Tirana (BE)	2	4	6	12	35
Tokyo (BE)	3	3	8	1	4
Tripoli (BE)	1	1	2	4	26
Tunis (BE)	3	2	8	10	39
Ulaanbaatar (BE)	0	0	2	7	5
Vienna (BE)	0	1	0	1	0
Wellington (BHC)	0	0	0	0	1
Windhoek (BHC)	0	0	0	0	1
Yaounde	0	4	31	80	164
Zagreb (BE)	0	6	5	3	3
Total	1,126	2,999	3,744	6,830	10,309

Source:
Central Reference System

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful appeals by international students who had their visa applications rejected there were in each of the last five years, broken down by educational institution. [218900]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of successful appeals broken down by educational establishment is not collated centrally.

Police

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outturn Band D council tax precepts for 2005–06 are for each police authority in England and Wales. [219862]

Ms Blears: Information on Band D council taxes for police authorities in 2005–06 is currently being collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government. Figures will be published on 23 March as part of the statistical release on council taxes for 2005–06.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the new Chief Constable of Essex police will be appointed. [220589]

Ms Blears: Essex police authority will hold interviews to select the new Chief Constable of Essex from 9–11 March 2005.

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average number of police officers per 1,000 population in England and Wales is in each police authority. [220395]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The latest data for police strength as at 30 September 2004 were published on 24 February in Home Office on-line report number 23/05. This is available from the Home Office website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/onlinepubs1.html.

Information on the number of police officers per 100,000 population as at 30 September 2004 is given in the following table.

Police force areas	Total strength per 100,000 population
Avon and Somerset	228
Bedfordshire	214
Cambridgeshire	199
Cheshire	221
Cleveland	287
Cumbria	255
Derbyshire	213
Devon and Cornwall	211
Dorset	211
Durham	289
Dyfed-Powys	238
Essex	192
Gloucestershire	228
Greater Manchester	324
Gwent	255
Hampshire	214
Hertfordshire	208
Humberside	257
Kent	228
Lancashire	253
Leicestershire	245
Lincolnshire	188
London, City of[1]	—
Merseyside	313
Metropolitan police	425
Norfolk	193
North Wales	242
North Yorkshire	205
Northamptonshire	202
Northumbria	293
Nottinghamshire	249
South Wales	273
South Yorkshire	265
Staffordshire	220
Suffolk	197
Surrey	182
Sussex	209
Thames Valley	201
Warwickshire	196
West Mercia	201
West Midlands	316
West Yorkshire	262
Wiltshire	197
Total	266

[1] Combined with City of London

Policies

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what policies in the areas of *(a)* crime reduction, *(b)* antisocial behaviour, *(c)* policing and *(d)* active communities have been put in place since 1997 by his Department (i) for all parts of the UK and (ii) in Scotland. [220337]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The Government has put in place policies in the areas of crime reduction, antisocial behaviour, policing and active communities that are yielding considerable benefits for all parts of the UK. For Scotland these are devolved matters for the Scottish Executive and for Northern Ireland are matters for the Northern Ireland Office.

In England and Wales between March 1997 and September 2004, the number of police officers increased by 12,977 from 127,158 to 140,135. The Government's introduction of community support officers (CSOs) in 2002 has put 4,599 CSOs on the streets to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour. Between 1997 and 2003–04, there has been a reduction in recorded domestic burglary crimes of 23 per cent. and in recorded vehicle crimes of 20 per cent.

Expenditure on policing supported by Government grant or spent centrally on services for the police in England and Wales has increased by over 53 per cent. (26 per cent. in real terms) between 1997–98 and 2005–06.

As crime prevention requires action across communities, every area in England and Wales has had a local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) since 1998 which brings together the police, health services, drugs agencies and council and community representatives to decide how to prevent and deter crime and antisocial behaviour.

The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) was a pioneering Government intervention programme which ran for three years from April 1999 in England and Wales and took an evidence-based approach to crime reduction. Grants of over £340 million were allocated to over 1,470 projects, including CCTV, under 20 initiatives that formed part of the programme.

Since 2001, successive initiatives have provided direct funding to each of the 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and Wales. These initiatives include Communities Against Drugs, the Safer Communities Initiative, the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas scheme and the Building Safer Communities Fund. Since 2001, a total of £301.3 million has been allocated under these initiatives. A further £20 million has been provided over the two years 2003–04 and 2004–05 to Home Office Regional Directors for CDRP capacity building.

The Government's Crime Reduction Website provides further information on the work being done to reduce crime across the country, including information about action and results in local areas. It is available at http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk

New legislation has given local agencies a raft of powers, from antisocial behaviour orders to local dispersal orders and crack house closure powers, to work with local people to tackle antisocial behaviour and nuisance. There are currently 50 TOGETHER antisocial behaviour action areas in England and Wales. Between April 1999 and September 2004 a total of 3,826 antisocial behaviour orders have been issued. Further information on tackling antisocial behaviour can be found on http://www.together.gov.uk/authority.asp

Tackling Drug Misuse is a priority of this Government and its policy is set out in the 10 year National Drug Strategy launched in 1998 and updated in December 2002. (A copy of the Updated Drug Strategy 2002 is held in the House Library.) Under this, the Government has invested substantially in measures to reduce the harms caused by illegal drugs, focussing on the four strands of:

reducing the supply of illegal drugs;

preventing young people from becoming problematic drug users;

providing effective treatment to all who need it; and

reducing drug-related crime.

Direct annual funding nationally to tackle drug misuse amounted to £1,244 million in 2003–04, rising to £1,344 million in 2004–05. Details of action taken to tackle drugs can be obtained from http://www.drugs.gov.uk/Links/DrugActionTeams

The Government is working to ensure that citizens, communities and the voluntary sector are more fully engaged in tackling social problems, and there is more equality of opportunity and respect for people of all races and religions. The Home Office has allocated £15 million in grants under the Connecting Communities race equality grant scheme over the three years (2003–06). Active community participation in England has increased by 1.5 million people between 2001 and 2003. Charities have been supported more effectively, and £125 million is being invested across the country through the futurebuilders fund in voluntary and community organisations that help provide valuable public services. Advice on ways to engage local people in helping their communities is available on the Active Citizenship Centre website http://www.active-citizen.org.uk

This year, 2005, is the year of the Volunteer which is being delivered by the Home Office in partnership with Community Service Volunteers and Volunteering England. This will include a whole range of events in local communities across the country that aim to celebrate the contribution which volunteers make to the quality of people's lives, and encourage more people to volunteer. We are particularly keen to encourage young people, black and minority ethnic groups, those with no qualifications and disabled people to get involved. More details can be found at www.yearofthevolunteer.org

Detailed information on the impact of Home Office policies across the full range of responsibilities is set out in the Home Office Annual Report and in the Strategic Plan for 2004–08, available on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk

Prisons

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the governors of each prison as at 1 November together with their length of service *(a)* as a prison officer and *(b)* as a governor. [199560]

Paul Goggins: A list of current governing governors of public sector Prison Service establishments together with information on the length of time they have served as governing governor at any establishment is contained in the following table. Comprehensive information on time spent in officer grades is not readily available and could be collected only at disproportionate cost.

Information on the career histories of directors of contracted (privately) managed establishments is not held centrally and could be collected only at disproportionate cost. The directors of contracted establishments are:

Establishment	*Director*
Altcourse	John McLaughlin
Ashfield	Vicky O'Dea
Bronzefield	Janine McDowell
Doncaster	Rod MacFarquar
Dovegate	Kevin Rogers
Forest Bank	Ivor Woods
Lowdham Grange	Peter Wright
Pare	Roy Woolford
Rye Hill	Stuart Mitson
Wolds	Dave McDonnell

Establishment	*Current governing Governor*	*Time served at any establishment as governing Governor*
Acklington	Mike Kirby	9 years 2 months
Albany	Mel Jones	2 years 7 months
Ashwell	Chris Di Paolo	0 years 8 months
Askham Grange	Dawn Elaine	3 years 2 months
Aylesbury	David Kennedy	4 years 0 months
Bedford	Guy Baulf	0 years 9 months
Belmarsh	Geoff Hughes	5 years 4 months
Birmingham	Mike Shann	6 years 6 months
Blakenhurst	Ferdie Parker	1 years 5 months
Blantyre House	Kieron Taylor	0 years 1 months
Blundeston	Teresa Clarke	1 years 7 months
Brinsford	Tom Watson	3 years 9 months
Bristol	Mick Bell	3 years 6 months
Brixton	John Pedmore	4 years 0 months
Brockhill	Barbara Treen	2 years 6 months
Buckley Hall	Sue Morrison	2 years 7 months
Bullingdon	Sue Saunders	2 years 6 months
Bullwood Hall	Mukhtar Poselay	0 years 1 months
Camp Hill	Bob Bennett	7 years 2 months
Canterbury	Helen Rinaldi	2 years 7 months
Cardiff	Paul Tidball	7 years 8 months
Castington	Matt Spencer	0 years 10 months
Channings Wood	Nick Evans	7 years 7 months
Chelmsford	Steve Rodford	1 years 3 months
Coldingley	Paul McDowell	0 years 10 months
Cookham Wood	Ed Tullett	0 years 11 months
Dartmoor	Claudia Sturt	1 years 4 months
Deerbolt	Alan Tallentire	1 years 11 months
Dorchester	Steve Holland	2 years 7 months
Dover	Val Whitecross	2 years 0 months
Downview	Peter Dawson	0 years 8 months
Drake Hall	John Huntingdon	1 years 3 months
Durham	Mike Newell	8 years 8 months
East Sutton Park	Robin Carter	5 years 9 months
Eastwood Park	Tim Beeston	5 years 6 months
Edmund's Hill	Norma King	0 years 1 months
Elmley	Chris Bartlett	4 years 6 months
Erlestoke	Clive Broom	1 years 1 months
Everthorpe	Amy Rice	1 years 7 months
Exeter	Ian Mulholland	2 years 9 months
Featherstone	Mike Bolton	4 years 6 months
Feltham	Andrew Cross	4 years 1 months
Ford	Fiona Radford	1 years 0 months
Foston Hall	Paddy Scriven	7 years 10 months
Frankland	Phil Copple	4 years 8 months
Full Sutton	Bob Mullen	6 years 2 months
Garth	Bob McColm	3 years 2 months
Gartree	Rannoch Daly	7 years 10 months
Glen Parva	Brian Edwards	2 years 9 months
Gloucester	David Chalmers	3 years 7 months
Grendon	Peter Bennett	4 years 2 months
Guys Marsh	Barry Greenberry	3 years 10 months
Haslar	Carole Draper	0 years 9 months
Haverigg	Sue McCullagh	1 years 8 months
Hewell Grange	Alison Gomme	5 years 7 months
Highdown	Sian West	5 years 0 months
Highpoint	Sue Doolan	4 years 4 months
Hindley	Jayne Blake	5 years 0 months
Holkeley Bay	Michael Wood	1 years 10 months
Holloway	Tony Hassall	3 years 0 months
Holme House	Mick Lees	7 years 8 months
Hull	Mark Read	4 years 4 months
Huntercombe	Elaine Jones	2 years 10 months
Kingston	John Robinson	4 years 7 months
Kirkham	Steve Lawrence	1 years 8 months
Kirklevington	Alan Richer	2 years 5 months
Lancaster Castle	Derek Harrison	1 years 1 months
Lancaster Farms	Terry Williams	1 years 5 months
Latchmere House	Terry Hinchliffe	6 years 4 months
Leeds	Ian Blakeman	1 years 10 months
Leicester	Steve Turner	1 years 2 months

Establishment	Current governing Governor	Time served at any establishment as governing Governor
Lewes	Eoin McLennan-Murray	1 years 1 months
Leyhill	Richard Booty	5 years 4 months
Lincoln	Lynne Saunders	0 years 7 months
Lindholme	Martin Ward	3 years 7 months
Littlehey	Julia Morgan	3 years 10 months
Liverpool	Cathy James	4 years 11 months
Long Lartin	Nick Leader	3 years 3 months
Low Newton	Dave Thompson	3 years 1 months
Maidstone	Jane Galbally	6 years 4 months
Manchester	Chris Sheffield	5 years 7 months
Moorland	Jacqui Tilley	1 years 11 months
Morton Hall	Damian Evans	0 years 5 months
New Hall	Sara Snell	3 years 10 months
North Sea Camp	K Beaumont Suspended	6 years 4 months
Northallerton	Bill Shaw	3 years 0 months
Norwich	Jerry Knight	6 years 0 months
Nottingham	Wendy Sinclair-Gieben	0 years 1 months
Onley	Alison Perry	0 years 7 months
Parkhurst	Steve Metcalf	4 years 2 months
Pentonville	Gareth Davies	10 years 1 months
Portland	Steve Twinn	1 years 9 months
Preston	Alan Brown	2 years 4 months
Ranby	Phil Wragg	2 years 4 months
Reading	Pauline Bryant	0 years 6 months
Risley	Paul Norbury	3 years 10 months
Rochester	Stephen O'Connell	0 years 2 months
Send	Brian Ritchie	1 years 10 months
Shepton Mallet	Bryan McAlley Suspended (Suzy Dymond-White temp gov.)	3 years 6 months
Shrewsbury	Vacant/advertised	—
Stafford	Louise Taylor	4 years 4 months
Standford Hill	John Wilson	1 years 0 months
Stocken	Moira Barlett	1 years 2 months
Stoke Heath	Peter Small	0 years 10 months
Styal	Steve Hall	0 years 9 months
Sudbury	Chris Davidson	6 years 2 months
Swaleside	Tony Robson	5 years 5 months
Swansea	Phil Taylor	1 years 9 months
Swinfen Hall	Peter Knapton	2 years 4 months
The Mount	Paul Wailen	8 years 0 months
The Verne	Mike Cook	5 years 5 months
Thorn Cross	Clive Chatterton	0 years 3 months
Usk/Prescoed	Phil Morgan	1 years 6 months
Wakefield	John Slater	4 years 4 months
Wandsworth	Jim Heavens	5 years 3 months
Warren Hill	Stuart Robinson	4 years 5 months
Wayland	James Shanley	2 years 2 months
Wealstun	Steve Tilley	1 years 9 months
Weare	Denise Calvert	5 years 6 months
Wellingborough	Jim Lewis	2 years 1 months
Werrington	Frank Flynn	1 years 10 months
Wetherby	Paul Foweather	0 years 9 months
Whatton	Viv Hart	5 years 11 months
Whitemoor	Martin Lomas	1 years 6 months
Winchester	Cathy Allison	3 years 2 months
Woodhill	Edd Willetts	4 years 7 months
Wormwood Scrubs	Luke Serjeant	4 years 1 months
Wymott	Alan Scott	5 years 6 months

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) by how much the Prison Service's budget has changed in 2004–05; and what the planned budget is for each of the next three years; [216747]

(2) what changes have been made to the operational budgets of prisons in 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [216748]

Paul Goggins: The original budget allocation to the Public Prison Service for 2004–05 was as follows:

Resource costs budget—£2,202.7 million

Capital budget—£205.9 million

Changes from the original allocations were made during the year. Additional funding from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) for immigration detainees held at Dover and Haslar, and End Year Flexibility for resource funding (£7 million) and capital funding (£65 million) increased the budget.

Persons aged 10 and under 18 proceeded against at magistrates' courts for certain alcohol related offences, by London borough 1990 to 2003[1]

Offence/London borough	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Drunk in a highway or other public place, whether a building or not, or on a licensed premises							
Inner London magistrates' courts[2]							
City of London Police							
Guildhall Justice Rooms	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Metropolitan Police							
Bow Street[3]	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge		2	—	—	—	—	—
Greenwich and Woolwich	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Highbury Corner[4]	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Horseferry Road	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Marylebone	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Western	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West London	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Inner London Juvenile Courts[5]	4	—	1	—	—	—	1
Outer London Boroughs							
Metropolitan Police							
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bexley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brent	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Bromley	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Croydon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Ealing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Persons aged 10 and under 18 proceeded against at magistrates' courts for certain alcohol related offences, by London borough 1990 to 2003[1]

Offence/London borough	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hillingdon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Kingston-upon-Thames	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
Merton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Redbridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sutton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Metropolitan Police	3	—	4	1	3	-	1
Total Greater London	11	2	8	1	3	-	2

Offence/London borough	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Drunk in a highway or other public place, whether a building or not, or on a licensed premises							
Inner London magistrates' courts[2]							
City of London Police							
Guildhall Justice Rooms	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Metropolitan Police							
Bow Street[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge	—	—	—	3	—	1	—
Greenwich and Woolwich	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Highbury Corner[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Horseferry Road	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marylebone	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Western	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West London	—	1	1	2	1	—	1
Inner London Juvenile Courts[5]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Outer London Boroughs							
Metropolitan Police							
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bexley	—	—	—	—	1	—	3
Brent	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bromley	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Croydon	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ealing	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
Hillingdon	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Hounslow	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Kingston-upon-Thames	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Merton	—	—	—	1	2	—	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Redbridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	1	1	1	1	1
Sutton	1	—	—	1	—	1	1
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Metropolitan Police	2	1	1	5	10	4	5
Total Greater London	2	2	2	10	11	5	6

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Information held centrally does not allow a breakdown of cases by borough in the Inner London Area.
[3] Includes Marlborough Street 1997–99.
[4] Includes Clerkenwell and Hampstead, 1997–98.
[5] Cases included with adult courts from 1998 (from 1999 for cases heard at the Crown Court).

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued in London[1] for offences relating to alcohol—2004 (provisional figures)

Offence	Statute	Number of notices issued
Offences committed by juveniles aged 16 and 17 years		
Drunk and disorderly	Criminal Justice Act 1967 Sec 91	22
Being drunk in a highway, other public place or licensed premises	Licensing Act 1872 Sec 12	2
Consumption of alcohol in designated public place	Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 Sec 12	—
Consumption of alcohol by under 18 in licensed premises[2]	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169E(1)	—
Offences involving the purchase for, sale or delivery to, persons aged under 18 years		
Sell alcohol to person under 18[2]	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169A	5
Purchase of alcohol in licensed premises for person under 18[2]	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169C(2)	—
Purchase of alcohol for consumption in bar of licensed premises for person under 18	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169C(3)	2
Allowing consumption of alcohol by under 18 in bar of licensed premises[2]	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169E(2)	—
Delivery of alcohol to person under 18 or allowing delivery[2]	Licensing Act 1964 Sec 169F	3

[1] City of London and Metropolitan Police Force areas.
[2] Offence added to PND scheme only from 1 November 2004.

This will result in a final budget of:

Resource costs budget—£2214.3 million

Capital budget—£288.9 million

The baseline budget for 2005–06 is:

Resource costs budget—£2406 million

Capital budget—£182 million

Budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–08 have not yet been finalised.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effect of family visits to prisoners on prisoners' prospects of *(a)* accommodation and *(b)* employment on release; and if he will make a statement. [220352]

Paul Goggins: The "Resettlement outcomes on release from prison in 2003" report was published on the Home Office website on 24 February 2005.

The findings indicate that good family ties, as measured by the fact of at least one family or partner visit during custody, were strongly associated with prisoners having positive expectations of accommodation and employment arranged prior to release.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the ratio of mental health professionals in the penal system to prisoners is. [220682]

Paul Goggins: It would not be practicable to attempt any such estimate. Prisoners with mental health problems will be treated by a wide range of mental health professionals from a variety of service providers. We have met and exceeded the commitment in the national health service plan that by 2004 300 additional staff would be employed to provide mental health services in prisons.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the average salaries of prison officers in *(a)* public and *(b)* private prisons were on the latest date for which figures are available; [217296]

(2) what comparison he has made of terms and conditions of staff in public and private prisons. [217298]

Paul Goggins: The latest figures available for the average salary of a prison officer employed in the England and Wales Prison Service are for January 2005. Excluding allowances this is £23,307 for a prison officer, £27,380 for a senior officer and £29,508 for a principal officer.

The Prison Service Pay Review Body provided a comparison of the terms and conditions of staff in public and private prisons as part of its September 2004 analysis of Prison Service pay. The results are as follows.

	Prison officer	Prison custody officer
Average starting pay (£)	16,896	[3]16,076
Average basic pay (£)	23,307	17,148
Pay range (£)	[2]16,896–25,788	[3]16,076
Average working week (hours)	39	41

[1] After training.
[2] Normal scale ends at £24,868. Staff can then receive long service awards taking them to £25,285 and £25,788 after a further four and six years respectively.
[3] Maximum of range not available.

A prison officer is an officer who works for the public sector prison service. A prison custody officer works for a contracted out prison.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison staff have taken sick leave for *(a)* two to four consecutive weeks, *(b)* one to two consecutive months, *(c)* two to four consecutive months and *(d)* more than four consecutive months in each year since 1997. [218247]

Paul Goggins: The information is provided in the following tables for each year since 1999–2000 for the public sector Prison Service. Reliable data on sickness absence is not held centrally for periods prior to 1999 and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Data is not available in respect of contracted out prisons. Since 1999, the Prison Service has improved significantly the recording of sickness absence data on corporate systems and is now satisfied that recording arrangements are robust. However, the following data for the earlier years may understate the actual position at the time.

(a) Staff with two to four consecutive weeks absence

	Cases	Percentage of total cases
1999–2000	3,599	6.4
2000–01	4,121	6.6
2001–02	4,722	7.8
2002–03	4,856	6.9
2003–04	5,044	7.5

(b) Staff with one to two consecutive months absence

	Cases	*Percentage of total cases*
1999–2000	2,150	3.8
2000–01	2,567	4.1
2001–02	3,100	5.1
2002–03	3,325	4.8
2003–04	3,235	4.8

(c) Staff with two to four consecutive months absence

	Cases	*Percentage of total cases*
1999–2000	1,340	2.4
2000–01	1,605	2.6
2001–02	1,879	3.1
2002–03	2,046	2.9
2003–04	2,172	3.2

(d) Staff with more than four consecutive months absence

	Cases	*Percentage of total cases*
1999–2000	975	1.7
2000–01	1,551	2.5
2001–02	1,979	3.3
2002–03	2,143	3.1
2003–04	1,959	2.9

Note:
Two to four weeks has been defined as 14–28 calendar days inclusive; One to two months as 29–60 calendar days inclusive; Two to four months as 61–120 days inclusive; more than four months as greater than 120 calendar days.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures the Government have introduced to combat drug use in prisons. [220921]

Paul Goggins: The prison elements of the National Offender Management Service Drug Strategy provides a comprehensive framework to reduce the amount of illegal drugs in prisons. Passive drug dogs are used to detect traces of drugs on visitors, and other dogs are used actively to search for drugs within prisons, as part of a general drug search strategy. Closed circuit television systems are installed in all visits areas to monitor behaviour, and fixed and low-level furniture is used in visits areas to make it difficult to pass drugs undetected. Sanctions are taken against visitors suspected of smuggling drugs, including visit bans and closed visits. Where there is adequate evidence they are prosecuted. Prisons and police share intelligence about drug routes into prisons.

Each month a random sample of the prisoners in each prison (5 per cent. or 10 per cent. depending on the size of the prison) is required to submit to a drug test, and a positive test result will lead to disciplinary proceedings. All establishments use and contribute to a drug supply reduction good practice guide and a monthly security bulletin, both of which share information on ways of protecting against drugs.

Prisons work with the Police Scientific Development Branch to strengthen physical and technical barriers, particularly in prisons, such as those in city centres, where public spaces are close to perimeter walls. Prisons have a Professional Standards Unit to help identify staff who may be involved in or at risk of corruption. It will provide relevant information to facilitate investigations.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the re-offending rates for *(a)* individuals who participated in rehabilitation programmes and *(b)* individuals who did not participate in rehabilitation programmes during their time in prison have been in each year since 1997. [220925]

Paul Goggins: Reconviction rates for adults and juveniles are published on an annual basis, to assist with the measurement of the PSA target on reducing reconvictions. Information on reconviction rates from rehabilitation programmes undertaken in prison are not recorded centrally, so it is not possible to calculate reconviction rates separately for these offenders.

Although reconviction rates for those who participated in rehabilitation programmes are not available on a yearly basis, evaluations of rehabilitation programmes for prisoners are and have been regularly undertaken. The results of those that have been completed can be found in Home Office Research Study 291, which reviews the evidence on the impact of corrections on re-offending.

The most recent national figures for reconviction rates are published as on line reports RDS OLR 08/05—Juvenile reconviction: results from the 2003 cohort (February 2005) and RDS OLR 59/04—Adult reconviction: results from the 2001 cohort (December 2004).

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what rehabilitation programmes are available in prisons. [220926]

Paul Goggins: In addition there are other activities in prison which support rehabilitation and address prisoners' resettlement needs, including learning and skills, prison work, pre-release programmes, housing advice and support services, Jobcentre Plus employment surgeries and job search training and support.

Rehabilitation programmes, accredited by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel, available in prisons include general offending behaviour programmes such as Enhanced Thinking Skills (ETS) and Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it (CALM), sex offender treatment programmes, a range of drug treatment programmes and therapeutic communities.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether prisons are subject to Crown immunity for trading standards; and if he will make a statement. [214998]

Paul Goggins: Trading standards covers an extremely wide area of law and involves statutes dealing with matters such as weights and measures, consumer credit and sale of goods. An answer dealing with Crown immunity under all these statutes would cause disproportionate costs to be incurred.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether US-based firms have been approached by *(a)* the Government and *(b)* its executive agency with regard to the contracting-out of (i) prison and (ii) probation services. [218258]

Paul Goggins: Three US-based firms were invited to a National Offender Management Service (NOMS) conference for private sector companies on 8 December 2004. It is open to them, and any other private sector companies that meet the operational specification, to bid for a contract in any future NOMS competitions.

Pub Watch/Shop Watch (Workington)

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the *(a)* pub watch and *(b)* shop watch scheme in Workington; and what measures he plans to take to strengthen each scheme. [220453]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Examples of partnership working, such as the pub and shop watch schemes in Workington, can contribute significantly to reducing levels of retail crime as well as combating alcohol-related violence and disorder.

The Government are working with the British Retail Consortium to increase the number and effectiveness of such partnerships, and has provided £899,000 to the Action against Business Crime (AABC) group to form a national association and set up 100 new business crime partnerships.

The North West regional manager for AABC has identified Workington as a strong scheme and a priority area for development. AABC are meeting with the Workington Town Centre Manager, alongside those from neighbouring towns, to encourage and assist the towns to achieve the Safer Business Award which will help identify Workington as a safer town centre and a successful, well run partnership.

Pub watches, like the one in Workington, can particularly help to keep troublemakers from pubs and clubs as well as providing early warning to bar staff, door staff and the police of instances of possible disorder. The Government welcome the contribution that pub watches can make to tackling alcohol-related violence and disorder.

Rail Warrants (Disciplinary Procedures)

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many members of *(a)* the police service and *(b)* the Prison Service were (i) disciplined and (ii) dismissed for misuse of rail warrants in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [208213]

Ms Blears: Information concerning the number of members of both the police service and Prison Service that have been disciplined and dismissed for misuse of rail warrants in each of the last five years is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Restorative Justice

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to introduce measures to increase levels of victim participation in restorative justice. [212321]

Paul Goggins: The Government aim to promote the further use of restorative justice (RJ) in the adult criminal justice system, particularly as a service to victims. We know from research evidence that over 75 per cent. of victims who choose to participate are glad to have done so. On 16 March, we will issue RJ implementation guidance for Local Criminal Justice Boards and their constituent agencies, encouraging them to develop provision of restorative justice at local level, particularly as a service to victims. The implementation guidance will also include advice to local agencies about publicity and communications about RJ, so that more victims are aware of what it is and what is available to them locally.

We believe that the best way to encourage victim participation is through high quality, victim-sensitive provision of RJ services, and appropriate locally based communication about what is available for them.

In the youth justice system, RJ has been available Since 1998. Youth offending teams reported that during 2003–04 over 16,000 victims were consulted or participated in restorative processes and over 90 per cent. expressed satisfaction. The Youth Justice Board has a target for youth offending teams that by 2005, 75 per cent. of victims of all youth crime will be offered the opportunity to participate in a restorative process and 75 per cent. of victims participating should be satisfied. The provisional figure for victim participation between April and December last year is 80.1 per cent.

Rough Sleepers

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provisions he has put in place to dissuade rough sleepers from sleeping on the street; and if he will make a statement. [220671]

Yvette Cooper: I have been asked to reply.

The Government are committed to tackling all forms of homelessness and part of our approach to this has been focussed on developing measures to prevent rough sleepers from hitting the streets in the first place and to provide targeted help for those who are out on the streets.

We have successfully reduced the number of rough sleepers by 70 per cent. since 1998 and we are continuing to sustain this reduction. All local authorities had to appoint a rough sleepers' co-ordinator and we continue to work closely with local authorities to monitor their progress on their homelessness strategies and to offer them advice and support to prevent people from becoming homeless.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has produced a range of good practice material guidance and advice notes for local authorities, housing associations and other agencies on effective ways to tackle homelessness.

We are making around £60 million available in 2005–06, rising to £74 million in 2007–08, to help local authorities and voluntary organisations take action on homelessness prevention. In addition, we are investing £90 million in capital works over the next four years to bring older hostels up to 21st century standards so that they provide better opportunities for homeless people

and prevent them from becoming homeless again. This will help sustain reductions in rough sleeping and go further in tackling single homelessness.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with the Home Office in the delivery of the Reducing Reoffending National Action Plan. A number of developments are under way to ensure that all prisoners receive a housing needs assessment through custody and into the community. In addition the Prison Service will be introducing a shadow Key Performance Target in April 2005 to measure the housing need assessment at induction. Data will also be collected showing where prisoners at risk of homelessness will be returning to, so that housing authorities and advice agencies can plan services and support.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is also working with the Home Office's Active Communities Unit and the voluntary sector to develop a new approach to capacity building and infrastructure support for the homelessness sector. The Change-Up programme will be providing additional funding of £650,000 to improve refuge provision for the victims of domestic violence and to strengthen the voluntary sector by improving leadership, information exchange and best practice, create regional and sub-regional support arrangements and develop practical support for smaller, harder to reach, frontline agencies.

Sexual Abuse

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the number of individuals under the age of 18 years who were sexually abused in each of the last five years. [218654]

Paul Goggins: In the recorded crime series there are four sexual offences where, by definition, the victim is a child. The available statistics for the last two years are given in the table. It is not possible to identify the age of the victim for other offences within the sexual offences group.

Recorded sexual offences against children in England and Wales

Number of offences

Offence	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
Unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 13	184	212
Unlawful sexual intercourse with a girl under 16	1,515	1,907
Gross indecency with a child	1,880	1,942
Abuse of position of trust	678	792

Special Constables

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make further funding available to chief constables to finance allowances under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002 to assist schemes aimed at the recruitment and retention of special constables; and if he will make a statement; [220551]

(2) what assessment he has made of local schemes introduced under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002 to assess the effect of payment on recruitment and retention of special constables; [220552]

(3) how many police authorities have applied to his Department for approval to introduce an allowance for special constables under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002; how many his Department has *(a)* approved and *(b)* refused; and what measures have been taken to monitor the scheme; [220553]

(4) if he will discuss with the Chancellor of the Exchequer exempting special constables from income tax being levied on allowances paid under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002; and if he will make a statement. [220554]

Ms Blears: All schemes approved under the Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002 are locally funded. It is for the police authority, following a recommendation by the chief constable, to decide whether an allowance scheme for specials offers value for money. To date, five forces—Cumbria, West Midlands, Humberside, Thames Valley and Durham—have put forward proposals for allowance schemes for specials. All the applications were approved. The schemes in West Midlands and Thames Valley operate in one basic command unit only. The Cumbria scheme has been discontinued at the request of the force in the light of evaluation results. The remaining schemes are subject to ongoing evaluation by forces.

There are no plans to exempt allowances paid to specials from current tax regulations.

Support and Rehabilitation (Women)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what gender-specific community programmes seeking to create local support and rehabilitation centres for women are supported by his Department; [213361]

(2) what community programmes his Department funds that provide support and rehabilitation centres for women. [212323]

Paul Goggins: The Women's Offending Reduction Programme, published on 11 March 2004, is focused on women's offending and aims to reduce the number of women in prison. The programme will improve community based services and ensure they are better tailored to meet women's needs.

The programme contains a commitment to develop a community based one-stop-shop approach to tackling the different factors which impact on women's offending. We are attracted to the idea of having local community supervision and support centres for women where they can access a whole range of interventions and services to meet their needs, including housing, child care, mental health, substance misuse, histories of abuse, employment and training. Following the announcement of funding in the 2004 Spending Review, we are considering how this will be used to develop radical new approaches for women offenders and provide community interventions and support specific to women's needs.

Tampere Agenda

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent discussions he has held to take forward the EU's Tampere Agenda. [220282]

Caroline Flint: The Home Secretary and other UK Ministers have had discussions with the current and future Presidencies of the ED, and Vice-President Frattini, to plan the delivery of the inherited JHA programme. The successor to the Tampere Programme, The Hague Programme, was agreed by Heads of State at the European Council in November 2005. The European Commission are in the process of producing an Action Plan to implement The Hague Programme, informed by discussions at the informal meeting of EU Justice and Home Affairs Ministers, in Luxembourg in January.

Under-age Driving

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are taken to communicate with the parents of a child who is convicted of driving a motor vehicle when under age. [219012]

Paul Goggins: When a young person is initially charged with an offence, issues relating to contacting the parents will be dealt with by the police. If the young person is summonsed to appear in court the parent(s) will be asked to attend.

If a young person is convicted of driving a motor vehicle while under age the Youth Offending Team (YOT) would attempt to contact the parents, as involvement with family is critical to any intervention. Youth Offending Teams include representatives from a wide range of services and aim for a comprehensive response following assessment. Parents with a child who has become involved with the youth justice system may be invited to attend a voluntary YOT parenting programme. If voluntary participation cannot be achieved the YOT may seek a parenting order which requires attendance.

Xenotransplantation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken to review Huntingdon Life Sciences' Certificate of Designation following his Chief Inspector's compliance review; and if he will make a statement. [200027]

Caroline Flint: In common with all establishments designated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, Huntingdon Life Sciences is subject to scrutiny by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate. The inspection schedule takes into account the size of the establishment, the nature of the work undertaken, and the management practices. Inspectors make frequent, usually unannounced, visits of inspection to Huntingdon Life Sciences, as they do to all other designated establishments, to monitor compliance with its certificate and licence conditions under the 1986 Act.

In addition aspects of compliance were formally reviewed by the then Chief Inspector in 1997 and 2001 following allegations made by animal protection organisations. As a result of the 1997 review, notice was given that the Certificate was to be revoked, and that a new application would be considered only if 16 pre-conditions were met to remedy the problems uncovered. A fresh application was subsequently received, with evidence the 16 pre-conditions had been met, and a new Certificate granted. The 2001 compliance review revealed no new management failings related to the Certificate of Designation.

Conditions of issue attached to all Certificates are periodically reviewed. This was last done as regards Huntingdon Life Sciences in October 2004.

Young Offenders

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders from London are located in prison establishments more than *(a)* 50 miles and *(b)* 100 miles from the city; and if he will make a statement. [220515]

Paul Goggins: As at 25 February 2004, the latest date for which information is available, the distance away from home that young offenders were held from London, was as set out in the following table.

Distance	*Number of young offenders*
Under 50 miles	
Total number of prisoners	1,120
50 to 100 miles	
Total number of prisoners	192
100 plus miles	
Total number of prisoners	299
Total	1,600

Note:
Where an individual prisoner's home address is not recorded the prisoner's committal, remand, convicting or sentencing court is used.

Youth Inclusion Projects

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Youth Inclusion Programmes in reducing anti-social behaviour; [219321]

(2) what plans the Government have to increase the number of youth inclusion projects. [219360]

Ms Blears: The overall aim of the Youth Inclusion Programme is to reduce crime in the 72 neighbourhoods in England and Wales in which the programme runs. Each scheme targets the 50 young people, aged 13 to 16, who are most at risk of criminality in the local area. Programme objectives include reducing arrest rates amongst the target group and helping them to engage in suitable full-time education, training or employment.

An independent evaluation of the Youth Inclusion Programme in 2003 showed that overall arrest rates were reduced by 64 per cent. We have not undertaken a separate assessment of the programme's impact on anti-social behaviour, but we do consider that this is likely to be one of the additional benefits.

The Home Office five-year strategic plan includes a commitment to increase the number of Youth Inclusion Programmes by 50 per cent. by 2008.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Arms Exports (Indonesia)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 627W on Arms Exports (Indonesia), what the estimated cost to the Government of rescheduling Indonesia's debts is. [217444]

Mr. Alexander: The rescheduling of Indonesia's debt has not resulted in a cost to the Exchequer; as it has not reduced the value of Indonesia's debt.

Biomass Power Plants

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many biomass power plants have been built in England under the Renewables Obligation Order 2002. [221188]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The number of new bio-energy power stations commissioned in England since 2002 and accredited by Ofgem to receive Renewable Obligation Certificates is four. They are:

Station	*Commissioned*
Peabody Trust, Surrey	1 May 2002
Thornton Power Station, Lancashire	1 June 2002
Weston Industrial Estate, Worcestershire	1 May 2002
Holsworthy Biogas, Devon	1 April 2002

This listing does not include those stations holding ROC's under the co-firing provisions of the Renewables Obligation, or those currently under construction.

China

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect on the UK defence industry of the proposed lifting of the EU embargo on sales of arms to China. [221253]

Mr. Hoon: I have been asked to reply.

In terms of the direct impact on UK defence industry, lifting the EU arms embargo should not lead to an increase in arms exports to China. There are however concerns about the possible indirect consequences for UK defence industry if action were taken in the US in response to a lifting of the embargo. We do not consider that such action—which would be damaging to both countries' interests—would be justified. We continue to work with the US to achieve a satisfactory conclusion. I am in regular contact with my ministerial colleagues on this issue.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government is taking to assist the People's Republic of China in tackling the trade in illegal cigarettes. [220293]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

UK and Chinese Customs cooperate in a wide range of areas to tackle the trade of illegal cigarettes. Recent examples include:

training Hong Kong and Chinese delegations to assist in identifying suspect containers for interception and examination;

sharing information about seizures of cigarettes of Chinese origin in Europe for further investigation;

posting officers to act as liaison between the two countries; and

assisting and supporting the Chinese authorities in a regional initiative to tackle the illegal cigarette trade.

Further to my right hon. Friend the Chancellor's visit to China on 21–23 February 2005, UK and China Customs are currently finalising an agreement to maximise this co-operation and the successful effort against illicit cigarette trafficking and manufacture.

Competitive Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the outcome was of the Competitiveness Council on 7 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [221258]

Mr. Sutcliffe: My noble Friend the Minister for Science and Innovation attended the Competitiveness Council on 7 March.

The Council held a discussion of the Lisbon mid-term review based on the Commission's Communication to the Spring European Council. The Commission called on member states to work together for growth and employment to contribute to the EU's longer term sustainable development, and for concrete action to implement economic reform. The UK said the Competitiveness Council should focus on delivering practical outcomes in the key areas of Better Regulation, Chemicals (REACH), Services and the 7th Framework Programme on Research and Development (FP7). The Council adopted its contribution to the Spring European Council, which included particular reference to encouraging growth and innovation, making Europe more attractive to investment, developing and deepening the Internal Market and ensuring an integrated approach to competitiveness.

The Council held an exchange of views on Better Regulation and the Simplification process, which are seen as key elements in the Lisbon agenda and increasing competitiveness. The Council noted the Commission's intention to improve impact assessments on the competitiveness implications of new legislative and policy measures. The Commission is to analyse a number of key sectors in 2005 to identify obstacles to growth and innovation. The UK welcomed the Commission's renewed commitment in this area and underlined the importance of the Better Regulation agenda.

The Council had an exchange of views on stimulating entrepreneurship, based on the Commission's 5th Annual Report on the Implementation of the European Charter for Small Enterprises. The Council recognised the role of the Charter in reinforcing SME policy and will continue to follow its progress, taking into account the Lisbon mid-term review.

The Council took note of information from the Commission on the current stage of negotiations concerning the future construction of an International

Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). The Council will return to this issue during its next meeting, on 18 April 2005.

The Council had an informal discussion of the proposed Services Directive over lunch.

The Council took note of an update from the Presidency on Working Group discussion of REACH (proposal for a Regulation concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals).

The Council took note of information from the Presidency and Commission on the European Parliament's second reading of the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive.

The Council took note of written information from the Italian delegation and interventions from the Commission and a number of member states on difficulties encountered in the textiles, clothing and footwear sectors.

The Council adopted without discussion its Common Position on Computer Implemented Inventions, confirming the political agreement reached last May. The UK voted in favour.

Correspondence

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Manchester, Withington, dated 22 November 2004, on behalf of a constituent Mr. Dave Bush, which was originally sent to the Lord Chancellor and forwarded to her Department. [220500]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* I responded to the letter from my right hon. Friend on 2 March. I have asked my office to send another copy of the letter to his office.

Dounreay Nuclear Power Station

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary State for Trade and Industry what steps have been taken by staff at the nuclear establishment at Dounreay to ensure that *(a)* the seabed of Sandside Bay and the surrounding area and *(b)* nearby beaches are clear of irradiated material. [218238]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Environmental monitoring and the regulation of radioactive discharges are devolved matters for the Scottish Executive.

However, UKAEA undertakes an extensive beach monitoring programme using sophisticated vehicular radiation detection systems. Since 1999, these systems have regularly monitored five local beaches: Sandside, Crosskirk, Brims, Scrabster and Thurso. These are situated between 3 km west (Sandside) and 13 km east (Thurso) of Dounreay. Reassurance surveys of Melvich beach, some 10 km west of Dounreay, have been carried out on two occasions and an extensive survey of Dunnet beach, approximately 23 km east of Dounreay, has now commenced. The foreshore at Dounreay is also monitored by the vehicular system.

UKAEA have advised the department that:

Radioactive particles have only been found on one public beach, Sandside (although on 2 March, the third day of a 60 day survey, a stone-like object emitting low levels of radioactivity was found at Dunnet Beach which has been taken to Dounreay for laboratory analysis). When a particle is detected it is immediately removed.

The monitoring detects radioactivity down to a level in the top 10cm of sand that is below that considered by independent experts to be of significant risk to human health.

The current monitoring has been demonstrated to be capable of being compliant with the regulatory requirements of SEPA.

All particles detected during monitoring are removed and returned to Dounreay for analysis. The results are reported to regulators.

UKAEA is currently investigating whether there are detection systems which are superior to those available at present for beach monitoring.

In the case of particles buried in the seabed off Dounreay, UKAEA have undertaken an extensive series of research programmes aimed at understanding the distribution, mobility and properties of particles in the marine environment.

Since 1997, divers have been mapping the number and distribution of particles in offshore sediments. As part of this work, the divers have detected and retrieved over 800 particles from the seabed off the coast at Dounreay.

UKAEA is concerned about the inherent occupational risks associated with extensive use of divers. Consequently, UKAEA seeks to limit the use of divers and has developed with their contractor a remotely-operated vehicle (ROV) capable of crawling the seabed and identifying the radiation emitted by particles present within the sediment. Last year, it mapped the locations of over 120 buried particles in survey areas totalling 30,000 sq. metres.

A further 2 or 3 year programme of mapping of the offshore particles will commence in summer 2005 using a remotely operated system. The information from this work will be used to assess the extent of the particle distribution offshore, to validate a computer model of particle dispersion and to assess the risks to any of the local beaches.

This information from offshore studies will be used, together with the information from beach monitoring, as inputs to the consultation process which will identify the Best Practicable Environmental Option for dealing with this legacy.

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will establish an inquiry into possible risks to human health from irradiated material found on Sandside Beach, Caithness and the conduct of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority in dealing with the material. [218239]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Public health is a devolved matter for the Scottish Executive.

However I am informed that in recent years, a number of independent expert organisations including the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE), the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee and the National Radiological Protection Board have investigated and advised the Government, UKAEA and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on the potential health risks from particles of radioactive material found on Sandside Beach. This advice has

considered both the likelihood of exposure to such a particle by inhalation, ingestion or skin contact and the resultant health risks should such an exposure occur. COMARE tells the DTI that the probability of a member of the public encountering a particle remains extremely small and the estimated radiation dose to an individual consequent upon ingestion of a typical particle from Sandside Bay is roughly equivalent to the average UK-annual background radiation dose (2 milliSieverts). SEPA has commissioned additional research to further refine this latter estimate.

Energy Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the outcome was of the Energy Council meeting held on 28 to 29 November; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [202522]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I refer to my previous answer to my hon. Friend.

I represented the UK at the EU Energy Council in Brussels on 29 November.The Council considered several matters of interest to the United Kingdom. Chief among these were the Energy Services Directive and the Security of Electricity Supply Directive.

A general approach on the Security of Electricity Supply Directive was agreed, though the Commission, which seeks a more interventionist regulator-led approach to promote actively new interconnector build and thereby competition, maintained a reserve on Article 7 on interconnector construction.

Council conclusions were agreed on the Commission's Communication on the share of Renewable Energy in the EU.

An orientation debate was held on the proposed Energy End Use Efficiency and Energy Services Directive. Member states expressed a strong preference for indicative not mandatory energy saving targets though views were mixed on whether a uniform target at EU level would be helpful; many delegations preferred individually set targets. There was general recognition that the public sector could play a leading role in promoting energy efficiency but the majority of member states opposed specific targets for the sector. On the question of the placing of obligations on suppliers there was a clear preference for a broader more flexible approach rather than a focus on one energy efficiency approach-energy services. There was broad agreement that a harmonised approach to measuring energy savings was needed, but there was a split on whether a top down or bottom up approach was best.

The UK noted our support for a uniform, but indicative, six-year target taking account of already captured efficiency gains; a more broadly defined obligation on energy suppliers to actively offer and promote energy efficiency; and agreement with the Presidency proposal for either a top down or a hybrid approach to measuring efficiency gains.

The Commission's preference for a mandatory target reflected what they saw as the poor record of achievement against indicative targets and they suggested that flexible mandatory targets might be the way forward. The Presidency concluded by proposing an annual debate on progress towards achieving indicative national targets, the first of which would fall to the UK Presidency, and looked forward to concluding the dossier in the Luxembourg Presidency.

The Commission reported progress on the negotiations of the Energy Community for South East Europe Treaty, which it hoped would be a model for other sectors. Signature was foreseen for 2005. Some member states had substantive comments on the language regime, others on the distinction between participating and observing member states. The next negotiation meeting on 13 December will be an opportunity to discuss outstanding matters.

The Commission reported on its communication on progress on the EU/Russia energy dialogue 2000–04, claiming it showed positive outcomes across a range of fields. More progress in Russia was needed on the reform process, energy efficiency and Kyoto implementation, promoting and protecting investment and positive developments in the gas and oil markets. The Commission undertook fully to involve member states.

The Presidency concluded by noting, in the context of the recent "Energy in Motion" conference aimed at improving cleaner road traffic, that transport accounted for a third of energy consumption. The conference conclusions would be discussed at the next Transport and Environment Councils and the Commission were urged to take account of them.

Luxembourg finished by saying they would take forward the Dutch Presidency approaches and singled out Energy TENS as a priority dossier.

Equality Bill

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether it is the intention that the provisions of the Equality Bill should change the legal status of certain types of religious discrimination. [221257]

Ms Hewitt: The Equality Bill, which was published on 3 March with its explanatory notes, will make unlawful (save for the exemptions specified in the Bill) discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in respect of the provision of goods, facilities and services, the management and disposal of premises, education, and public functions. The Bill does not affect the scope of the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, which already make unlawful discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in respect of employment and vocational training. The definition of "religion" and "belief" for the purposes of these Regulations has been reformulated, but this does not have any material impact on the effect of the Regulations.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the EC-India RTD Co-operation Steering Committee met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [215424]

Mr. Alexander: The first meeting of the EC-India S&T steering committee with India took place in Brussels on 3 March 2004 and the second will take place in Delhi on 29 April 2005. These meetings are convened by the Commission and Member States are not invited to participate—UK officials do not therefore attend.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for Implementation of the Action Programme to Promote Gender Equality met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217889]

Ms Hewitt: The EU Committee for Implementation of the Action Programme to Promote Gender Equality meets twice a year in Brussels. The meetings do not necessarily tie in with the presidencies and the last three meetings were held on 11 November 2003 (during the Italian presidency), 20 July 2004 and 15 October 2004 (both of which were in the Dutch presidency). There was no meeting during the Irish presidency. A DTI representative attended all three of these meetings.

Gender Pay Gap

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the gender pay gap for full-time workers in her Department was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004. [220662]

Ms Hewitt: The difference between male and female salaries for the DTI as at 1 April 2004 was 16 per cent.[1] The earliest period for which I can give an accurate comparable figure is April 2001 when it was 18 per cent.

The DTI has successfully taken measures to reduce the gender pay gap and continues to do so. In 2003 a new pay system was introduced as part of a 3 year proposal and includes transparent pay progression to a target rate for the job within a specified period of time. Moreover, there has been significant shortening of pay scales over the past two years and further action is planned this year.

Diversity implications are considered as a matter of importance, and continuous promotion of flexible working practices and family friendly policies encourage women to join the DTI and to stay. The Department has also introduced a course "Development for Women" which is specifically targeted at helping women develop their careers within DTI.

[1] median of full time equivalent salary for all staff working across the whole organisation

Generation IV Nuclear Reactors

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding she plans to allocate to the multilateral collaboration with France, Japan, Canada and the United States on research and development for Generation IV Nuclear Reactors; what mechanisms will apply to the administration of the funds; and whether the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority will have a role in this research. [221186]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: DTI expects to provide funding of up to £5 million per annum for UK participation in international research collaborations on advanced nuclear reactor systems. The mechanisms for administering these funds are under development. The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) does not have an interest in Generation IV research, except where that research relates to decommissioning plants in the future.

Housing

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to publish proposals for the introduction of independent redress schemes for estate agents which are wider in scope than those contained in part V of the Housing Act 2004. [221363]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I am aware of my right hon. Friend's Private Members' Bill that would enable estate agents redress schemes, established by the Housing Act, to consider consumer complaints not connected to Home Information Packs, and also to extend their coverage to Scotland and Northern Ireland. The Government supports the aims of the Bill and is monitoring its progress with interest. If there is insufficient time for the Bill to succeed, the Government will seek a suitable legislative vehicle to extend the scope of redress schemes.

Hydrogen Economy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent by her Department in each year since 1997 on research connected with the hydrogen economy. [207208]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The information is in the table and indicates money spent by EPSRC on research specific to the hydrogen economy.

Financial year	£
1997–98	30,347.73
1998–99	135,531.12
1999–2000	59,168.97
2000–01	82,975.77
2001–02	318,500.00
2002–03	516,559.87
2003–04	1,494,155.11
2004–05	1,430,000.01

Nuclear Industry IT System

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what safety procedures are in place in relation to the nuclear industry's IT system. [208248]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK's civil nuclear industry does not share a common information technology system: the major companies in the industry each have their own main data network. These data networks have all been accredited to UK Government security standards.

Nuclear Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is on the possible import of nuclear waste from Italy into the UK for disposal. [208352]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 13 January 2005]:* It is not Government policy to import nuclear waste into the United Kingdom. Recent press reports have incorrectly claimed that waste from Italy may be exported to either France or the UK. Instead, it is understood that there is the possibility that some spent fuel from Italy may be reprocessed overseas but this has not been confirmed and no tenders have been issued.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make it her policy to prevent the import for disposal of nuclear waste until a solution has been agreed upon to deal with the existing United Kingdom nuclear waste stockpile. [208353]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is not Government policy to import nuclear waste into the UK. Following my statement on 13 December 2004, the small amount of Intermediate Level Waste which will be retained in the UK as a result of substitution (which provides for the return of an additional amount of radiologically equivalent High Level Waste to BNFL's overseas reprocessing customers) has no material implication for the long-term management of nuclear waste in the UK.

Pregnancy Discrimination

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the results of the Equal Opportunities Commission's formal investigation into pregnancy discrimination were. [214590]

Ms Hewitt: The Equal Opportunities Commission is due to publish the final report and recommendations of its General Formal Investigation into pregnancy discrimination later this year. An Interim Report was published in September 2004 and can be obtained from the EOC website at

http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/policyandcampaigns/p_interimreport.pdf

The Government welcome the EOC's investigation and look forward to receiving the final report and recommendations.

Solar Power

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to ensure continuity of capital grant support for domestic and other small installations under stream 1 of the solar PV Major Demonstration Programme when current funding ends in August; and if she will make a statement. [221374]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI is monitoring the number of applications made under Stream 1 of the Major PV Demonstration Programme. When this programme ends in March 2006 the Department will continue its support for PV through a "low carbon buildings" programme. The low carbon buildings programme is currently under development and there will be formal consultation on this this year. The programme is expected to being operating in 2006–07.

Women's Employment

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to assist black and ethnic minority women's *(a)* entry to and *(b)* progression in the workplace. [220855]

Ms Hewitt: DTI is working with a cross-Whitehall group, led by the Department for Work and Pensions, to tackle the barriers to labour market participation faced by ethnic minorities. This work stems from the Strategy Unit Report "Ethnic minorities in the Labour Market" published in March 2003. DTIs specific contribution is around working with business to promote race equality and diversity in the workplace and promoting enterprise.

DTI also shares a Public Service Agreement "in the three years to 2006, taking account of the economic cycle, to increase the employment rate and significantly reduce the difference between the overall employment rate and the employment rate of ethnic minorities". This will clearly benefit women as well as men.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the number of black and ethnic minority women who believe that they are working below their potential, with particular reference to black and ethnic minority women who *(a)* are working in jobs where they have less of a role in staff management or supervision than they did in previous jobs and *(b)* made more use of higher qualifications or higher skills levels in previous jobs; and what estimate she has made of the economic cost of black and ethnic minority women working below their potential in the latest year for which figures are available. [220930]

Ms Hewitt: DTI is working with a cross-Whitehall group, led by the Department for Work and Pensions, to tackle the barriers to labour market participation faced by ethnic minorities. This work stems from the Strategy Unit Report "Ethnic minorities in the Labour Market" published in March 2003. DTIs specific contribution is around working with business to promote race equality and diversity in the workplace and promoting enterprise.

Through the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force we are committed to closing the employment gap for ethnic minorities. The employment gap is decreasing but remains substantial. Ethnic minorities are twice as

likely to be unemployed and one and a half times as likely to be economically inactive as the overall working age population. Economic activity varies considerably between ethnic minority groups and by gender. The Indian and Black Caribbean ethnic groups have the highest employment rates and the Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups have the lowest. For most ethnic groups, the employment rate for women is well below that for men.

The Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force Year 1 Progress Report was published in November 2004 and can be accessed at www.emetaskforce.gov.uk.

TREASURY

Alcohol-related Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men alcohol was found to be the primary cause of death in each year since 1997, broken down by age group. [221245]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men alcohol was found to be the primary cause of death in each year since 1997, broken down by age group. (221245)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2003. The attached table shows the number of deaths by sex and age group that were certified as due to alcohol abuse, dependence and poisoning, and diseases directly related to alcohol use from 1997 to 2003.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) definition of alcohol-related deaths only includes those causes regarded as being most directly due to alcohol consumption. Apart from deaths due to accidental poisoning with alcohol, this definition excludes external causes of death, such as road traffic deaths and other accidents, and alcohol-related suicides and homicides. Estimates of the annual total number of deaths in which alcohol has played a role can therefore vary widely depending on the criteria used. The definition used by ONS allows for consistent comparisons over time for those deaths where a clear association with alcohol consumption can generally be assumed.

Number of deaths from alcohol-related causes[1], for (a) women and (b) men by age group, England and Wales, 1997 to 2003[2]

Calendar year	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
(a) Women							
Under 15	4	4	1	1	0	0	0
15–44	283	307	381	373	351	397	412
45–64	822	911	938	973	1,066	1,044	1,122
65–84	682	687	661	684	677	695	691
85 and over	68	57	72	57	76	82	74
(b) Men							
Under 15	3	1	1	1	0	1	1
15–44	619	726	698	714	111	768	842
45–64	1,572	1,694	1,852	1,954	2,066	2,040	2,380
65–84	808	848	846	812	894	941	1,008
85 and over	38	46	55	45	63	65	50

[1] For the years 1997–2000 the cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9). The codes selected to define alcohol-related deaths are listed as follows:

291—Alcoholic psychoses

303—Alcohol dependence syndrome

305.0—Non-dependent abuse of alcohol

425.5—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy

571—Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis

E860—Accidental poisoning by alcohol

For the years 2001–2003 the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used. To maintain comparability with earlier years the following codes were selected:

F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol

142.6—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy

K70—Alcoholic liver disease

K73—Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified

K74—Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver

X45—Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol

The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in:

Baker A. and Rooney C. (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 17, pp 5–14.

[2] Data are for occurrences of death in each calendar year.

Censuses

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what action was taken by Ministers in his Department to establish that the Registrar General had statutory authority to state that personal information from the 1981 and 1991 decennial population censuses for England and Wales would be retained in his Department for 100 years before being released. [221179]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. John Taylor, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what action was taken by Ministers to establish that the Registrar General had statutory authority to state that personal information from the 1981 and 1991 decennial population censuses for England and Wales would be retained for 100 years before being released. (221179)

A Registrar General is empowered to conduct a census under the provisions of the Census Act 1920 as amended by the Census (Confidentiality) Act 1991. The protection of personal information is covered by Section 8(2), which makes provisions with respect to unlawful disclosure of information. Censuses from 1921 onwards have been taken under this Act and, as records which are retained in my custody, remain covered by these provisions. The necessary permission to retain these census records once they are over 30 years old has been granted by the Lord Chancellor under the provisions of Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958, and has continued to be granted at periodic intervals.

Particularly at the time of a census there is great public concern about confidentiality and the use to which personal census information is put, and it has been the practice to give strong declarations of strict confidentiality including on the front of the census form, to allay these concerns. At the time of the 1981 and the 1991 Censuses, there was legislation in force that closed Census records for a period of 100 years. This legislation was Instrument 12 dated 1966 made under the provision of Section 5(1) of the Public Records Act 1958. The declarations however, did not specifically make reference to this legislation.

In an attempt to simplify the confidentiality message on the front of the 1981 and the 1991 Census forms, the assurances, as worded, stated that the Registrar General had authority himself to retain the records for 100 years. This pledge asserts authority that the Registrar General does not have. As explained above the authority for the Registrar General to retain Census records rests with the Lord Chancellor. Notwithstanding this, the legal basis of access to, and confidentiality of, Census records was not affected. Assurances given on the 2001 Census form, however, more accurately referred to the relevant statutory authority as existed at the time.

Central Government Staffing

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects of central Government staffing levels on the level of taxation. [221476]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1949W, to the hon. Member for Southend, West (Mr. Amess).

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221119]

Mr. Timms: No such directions have been issued by Treasury Ministers since 1997. The Treasury, which has a wider policy responsibility for the financial accountability mechanisms under which such directions are issued, has not been notified of any directions by Ministers in Departments to their Accounting Officers beyond those already disclosed to Parliament in the following written answers:

The former Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Andrew Smith) on 23 October 2000, *Official Report*, columns 73–74W and 8 May 2002, *Official Report*, columns 253–54W; myself on 10 June 2002, *Official Report*, column 1037W; the Economic Secretary (John Healey) on 13 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 412W and 23 June 2003, *Official Report*, columns 618–19W; and the former Financial Secretary (Ruth Kelly) on 30 October 2003, *Official Report*, columns 319–320W and 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 841W.

The circumstances in which an Accounting Officer should seek a direction from a Minister before authorising expenditure are set out in paragraphs 15–18 of the Treasury document, "The Responsibilities of an Accounting Officer" (as updated in March 2004). This document is published as Annex 4.1 of the Treasury guidance, Government Accounting and is accessible at www.government-accounting.gov.uk.

Dothiepin Deaths

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths have occurred in each of the last 10 years in which death certificates cited Dothiepin as a possible cause. [221628]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Flynn, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many deaths have occurred in each of the last 10 years in which death certificates cited dothiepin as a possible cause. (221628)

Readily available figures relate to deaths where the underlying cause was drug poisoning. The most recently available information is for deaths in 2003. Figures are shown in the table below for the calendar years 1994 to 2003.

Number of deaths from drug-related poisoning[1], involving dothiepin[2], England and Wales, 1994 to 2003[3]

	Dothiepin
1994	262
1995	235
1996	279
1997	262
1998	244
1999	219
2000	201
2001	170
2002	159
2003	142

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9,

E850-E858, E950.0-E950.5, E962.0 and E980.0-E980.5 for 1993 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14from 2001 onwards.

[2] Drugs mentioned on the death certificate of a death where the underlying cause was drug poisoning.

[3] Data are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Source:

Tables of deaths related to drug poisoning on the National Statistics website at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=11695

Double Trust Schemes

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on his proposals for excluding tax on the associated gifts made in double trust schemes. [221189]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my ministerial statement of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 103–04WS, outlining the relief we propose to allow against double tax charges on such schemes.

Employment

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people on average were in employment in each parliamentary constituency *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available, ranked according to the change over the period. [221427]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Hugh Bayley, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in each Parliamentary Constituency in UK. (221427)

Since the information requested is so extensive, copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library. The information provided shows the estimates of the number of people in employment, in each Parliamentary Constituency of Great Britain in 1997 and 2004, ranked according to the greatest change in employment over the period. These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Similar information for Parliamentary Constituencies in Northern Ireland is not available.

European Union

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the *(a)* net and *(b)* gross contributions by the UK to the EU in each year since 1975, in pounds sterling at 2005 value; and if he will break down the contributions by (i) traditional own resources, (ii) VAT and (iii) GNI contributions. [221229]

Mr. Timms: A breakdown of contributions by category, including the UK abatement, in real prices, is published in the Government's Annual Reports on EC Finances, latest edition published in April 2004 (Cm 6134). We do not have this information in constant prices, or going back to 1975.

UK net contributions and gross contributions after abatement for the period 1975 to 2003 at 2003 prices, the latest information available, were:

£ million, constant 2003 prices

	Gross contribution after abatement	*Net contribution*
1975	3,561	-583
1976	4,076	1,470
1977	5,577	2,792
1978	8,846	5,394
1979	8,961	5,284
1980	7,967	3,370
1981	6,446	1,728
1982	7,329	2,408
1983	7,889	2,353
1984	9,084	2,227
1985	11,520	5,609
1986	8,063	1,652
1987	10,626	4,516
1988	8,332	3,202
1989	9,490	4,958
1990	9,204	4,891
1991	6,219	1,023
1992	8,761	3,661
1993	9,346	3,698
1994	8,842	3,578
1995	11,777	6,158
1996	9,705	3,391
1997	8,506	2,171
1998	11,174	5,896
1999	8,678	4,435
2000	9,769	4,856
2001	5,337	1,538
2002	6,687	3,310
2003	7,407	3,682

Source:

Current price figures for individual years published by HM Treasury converted to constant prices using latest HM Treasury GDP Deflators.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the UK's receipts from the EU for each year since 1975, in pounds sterling at 2005 value; and if he will break down the receipts by *(a)* Common Agricultural Policy, *(b)* structural measures and *(c)* internal policy spending. [221230]

Mr. Timms: A breakdown of receipts by category, in real prices, is published in the Government's Annual Reports on EC Finances, latest edition published in April 2004 (Cm 6134). We do not have this information in constant prices, or going back to 1975.

UK receipts from the EC Budget for the period 1975 to 2003 at 2003 prices, the latest information available, were:

£ million, constant 2003 prices

	Public sector receipts
1975	4,144
1976	2,606
1977	2,785
1978	3,452
1979	3,677
1980	4,597
1981	4,718
1982	4,920
1983	5,536
1984	6,857
1985	5,910
1986	6,411

£ million, constant 2003 prices

	Public sector receipts
1987	6,109
1988	5,130
1989	4,532
1990	4,314
1991	5,196
1992	5,100
1993	5,648
1994	5,264
1995	5,619
1996	6,314
1997	6,336
1998	5,278
1999	4,242
2000	4,913
2001	3,799
2002	3,376
2003	3,725

Source:

Current price figures for individual years published by HM Treasury converted to constant prices using latest HM Treasury GDP Deflators

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the operation of the UK budget rebate mechanism within the EU budget. [221231]

Mr. Timms: The European Commission Allocated Expenditure Report for 2003 (September 2004) indicates the UK's share of receipts by percentage GNI was the lowest of all member states. As a result of continued inefficiencies and inequalities on the expenditure side of the budget, and the resulting unfairness of the UK position the abatement remains fully justified and not up for negotiation.

The operation of the abatement is explained on page 26 of European Community Finances: Statement on the 2004 EC Budget (Cm 6134), a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

Medical Drug Deaths

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths have occurred in each of the last 10 years in which death certificates cited as a possible cause *(a)* co-proxamol, *(b)* paracetamol, *(c)* non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, *(d)* selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors, *(e)* codeine, *(d)* Cox 11 inhibitors and *(f)* cerivastatin. [221368]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Flynn, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many deaths have occurred in each of the last 10 years in which death certificates cited as a possible cause *(a)* co-proxamol, *(b)* paracetamol, *(c)* non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, *(d)* selective seratonin re-uptake inhibitors, *(e)* codeine, *(f)* Cox-2 inhibitors, and *(g)* cerivastatin. (221368)

Readily available figures relate to deaths where the underlying cause was drug poisoning. The most recently available information is for deaths in 2003. Figures are shown in the attached table for the calendar years 1994 to 2003.

Figures on deaths where an adverse reaction to a drug taken in therapeutic dosage was involved, are not included in the table below as these are not poisonings. Figures on these deaths are not readily available and are known to be under-reported until the adverse reaction is well known. Adverse reactions to drugs are reported to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency using the yellow card scheme.

Number of deaths from drug-related poisoning[1] involving selected drugs[2,3] England and Wales, 1994 to 2003[4]

	1994	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Paracetamol including compounds	543	616	566	669	610	559	551	545	463	466
Paracetamol and dextropropoxyphene compound formulation *(a)*	329	367	346	402	373	366	361	346	287	262
Paracetamol not from compound formulation *(b)*	194	220	188	235	214	155	155	175	126	159
NSAIDs *(c)*	58	56	6156	47	31	31	30	31	27	
Selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors *(d)*	5	23	18	23	28	38	55	60	49	81
Paracetamol and codeine compound formulation *(e)*	17	20	20	26	17	31	25	22	32	41
Codeine not from compound formulation *(e)*	16	13	20	26	24	26	27	32	30	33

[1] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9, E850-E858, E950.0-E950.5, E962.0 andE980.0-E980.5 for 1993 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14from 2001 onwards.
[2] Drugs mentioned on the death certificate of a death where the underlying cause was drug poisoning.
[3] There were no deaths due to an overdose involving Cox-2 inhibitors or cerivastatin in the 10-year period.
[4] Data are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Paper Currency

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average lifespan is of UK paper currency, broken down by denomination. [221384]

Mr. Timms: The life of a Bank of England banknote in normal circulation averages between 12 to 18 months for the £5; three to four years for the £10 and £20; and over five years for the £50.

Stakeholder Pensions

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what tax can be reclaimed by people aged *(a)* between 16 and 64, *(b)* between 65 and 74 and *(c)* over 75 years, when contributing to stakeholder pensions; and if he will make a statement. [221688]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax relief is given on contributions to approved stakeholder pension schemes up to the higher of £3,600 a year or a percentage of capped earnings (the earnings cap for 2004–05 being £102,000). Earnings above this amount cannot be pensioned through a tax approved stakeholder pension scheme. Tax relief is given at the basic rate of tax (currently 22 per cent.) on tax relievable contributions paid by the

scheme member. Where an individual is liable to tax at higher rate, additional relief of 18 per cent. may be obtained.

The maximum tax relievable contributions, expressed as a percentage of capped earnings, depends on an individual's age on the 6 April of the tax year concerned.

(a) For those under 36 it is 17.5 per cent.,

(b) From 36 to 45 it is 20 per cent.,

(c) From 46 to 50 it is 25 per cent.,

(d) From 51 to 55 it is 30 per cent.,

(e) From 56 to 60 it is 35 per cent., and

(f) From 61 to 74 it is 40 per cent.

No further contributions can be made once the member reaches the age of 75.

Stamp Duty

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1519W, on stamp duty, if he will estimate the revenue impact for the UK; for what reasons a reliable estimate cannot be made for countries and regions of the UK; and if he will make a statement. [221394]

Mr. Timms: The cost of raising the stamp duty threshold for residential properties to £100,000, £120,000 and £150,000 in each of the next five years is estimated for the UK in the following table:

Threshold	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*	*2008–09*	*2009–10*
£100,000	150	140	130	130	130
£120,000	270	260	240	260	230
£150,000	480	460	450	520	480

Projections are based on the number and value of residential and commercial transactions, derived from the Survey of Property Transactions in England and Wales, projected to the required year, in line with the pre-Budget 2004 forecast for price and volume trends. By comparing UK stamp duty receipts with England and Wales survey estimates in historic years it is possible to derive projections for the UK. However forecast trends for price and volume are not produced for countries and regions of the UK to enable production of reliable stamp duty projections at the sub UK level.

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to review the qualifying areas for stamp duty relief in disadvantaged areas in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [221008]

John Healey: We have no plans to change the qualifying areas for stamp duty land tax disadvantaged areas relief before the end of 2006.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) in how many cases where a TC846 has been returned requesting the Inland Revenue to reconsider its decision to recover tax credits had the earnings of one of the partners been omitted from the tax credit award in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* the current tax year; [221097]

(2) in how many cases where a tax credit case has been calculated and paid out manually has the claimant been overpaid as a result of the computer system automatically sending out any arrears due. [221098]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available in the format requested.

Unemployment (Wales)

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and what percentage of people were *(a)* long-term unemployed and *(b)* long-term youth unemployed in each constituency in Wales in each of the last 20 years. [219894]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Chris Ruane, dated 14 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about long-term unemployment. (219894)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. Tables 1 and 2 attached below, show, for those resident in each Parliamentary Constituency in Wales, the numbers and rates for long-term unemployment, and long-term youth unemployment. Long-term is classified as those unemployed for 12 months or more. The data are for the twelve-month periods ending from February 1999 to February 2004. Comparable information for earlier years is not available. As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas. For the years 1996 to 2004, Tables 3 and 4 show, respectively for all JSA claimants and those aged 18–24, the annual average numbers and percentages of claimants resident in each Parliamentary Constituency in Wales claiming for over 12 months. Comparable information for the years 1984 to 1995 is not available for Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales according to their present boundaries. Information for these years for the Constituencies, according to their boundaries as they were from 1984 to 1995, could be compiled, but only at disproportionate cost. The information needed to produce those estimates is accessible by the House of Commons Library via the Nomis system.

Since the information in Tables 1 to 4 is so extensive, copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Africa (Departmental Groups)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much has been allocated to support the work of cross-departmental groups working on Africa-related issues in each of the last five years; how many members of staff were supporting this work in each year; and if he will make a statement. [219415]

Mr. Rammell: There are three formal cross-departmental bodies working on Africa related issues: Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP), Sudan Unit (SU), and the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU). The creation of the PCRU was announced last September but it has not yet reached the point of doing

any specifically Africa related work. The following table shows the resources and staff allocated to support the work of these teams since their inception.

	ACPP		SU	
	£ million	Staff	£ million	Staff
2001–02	50	1		
2002–03	50	1	18	5
2003–04	50	0	23	10
2004–05	60	3	94	22

Arms Sales

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if she will make a statement on UK arms sales to *(a)* Somalia, *(b)* Iran, *(c)* Lebanon, *(d)* Zambia, *(e)* Uzbekistan, *(f)* Yemen and *(g)* Syria referred to in OJ C316 of volume 47 of 21 December 2004. [211373]

Mr. MacShane: Details of UK arms sales can be found in the Government's most recent Strategic Export Controls Annual Report, published on 7 June 2004. It covers all export licensing decisions and policy developments in 2003. Information covering the first three quarters of 2004 is published in the Strategic Export Controls Quarterly Reports. All reports and further information on our work in this area can be found on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at www.fco.gov.uk, including full details of sanction regimes, embargoes and restrictions on the export of strategic goods.

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what scope the UK Government have under the proposed constitutional treaty for the European Union to opt out of EU policies which have as their treaty base title IV of the TEC, with particular reference to scope to opt out of the ongoing development of European asylum and migration policy. [220276]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Title IV of the EC treaty covers measures on visas, asylum, immigration and other policies related to free movement of persons. The UK's policy on participation in these measures remains unchanged since 1999 when the treaty of Amsterdam, including our opt-in protocol, came into effect. The UK's rights in this area are not restricted by the proposed constitutional treaty for the European Union: protocol 19 to the treaty retains our right to opt in to, or stay out of, these measures. Where measures are in our interest, we will opt in. Where they do not benefit the UK, we do not participate. We have successfully used our opt-in for over five years, and we will continue to do so.

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he had with the government of Burma, regarding the detention and treatment of Dr. Than Nyein, an elected Member of Parliament. [221015]

Mr. Alexander: We have not made representations about this particular case.

I met the Burmese ambassador on 29 November and called for the release of all political prisoners in Burma. My statement on 30 November also called for their release. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

An EU statement, issued before the National Convention reconvened on 17 February, called for the release of all political prisoners. The EU raised these, and other concerns, during the EU/Association of South East Asian Nations Ministerial in Jakarta on 9–10 March.

In January, our ambassador in Rangoon wrote to the Burmese Foreign Minister to highlight the serious concerns expressed by members of both Houses on human rights abuses in Burma.

We hold the Burmese regime responsible for the health of all political prisoners in Burma.

China

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether he has made representations to the Chinese authorities on why people were detained on 7 March by the Chinese authorities; and if he will make a statement; [221317]

(2) what reports he has received on *(a)* the number and *(b)* the age of people detained by the Chinese authorities on 7 March in Tiananmen Square; and if he will make a statement. [221451]

Mr. Straw: We are aware of reports that up to 20 people, including some children, were detained after holding a protest on Tiananmen Square on 7 March during the annual session of the National People's Congress.

We regularly raise concerns about freedom of association with the Chinese authorities. We did so most recently during the last round of the UK/China human rights dialogue, held in Beijing on 22 November 2004.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he will reply to the letter dated 1 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Sohail Khalid Dar. [221913]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend will reply shortly.

Departmental Equipment

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many items of Civil Service property within his Department are unaccounted for, broken down by type. [205582]

Mr. Rammell: I apologise to the hon. Member for the delay in replying, and refer him to the reply I gave him on 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 815W.

Diego Garcia

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what inspections are made by British officials of the passengers on US ships and aircraft making use of Diego Garcia. [221342]

Mr. Rammell: All ships, aircraft and personnel entering or departing Diego Garcia (including its waters) are subject to inspection by British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) Imports and Exports Control officers and must present passports and immigration documentation to BIOT Immigration Officers.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British officials are in permanent residence in Diego Garcia; and what their responsibilities are. [221343]

Mr. Rammell: There are no British officials in permanent residence on Diego Garcia. There are 40 British military personnel stationed on the island, where they usually serve for a period of one year. Their responsibilities are as follows:

One Royal Navy Commander—Commissioners Representative, Magistrate, Principal Immigration Officer, Imports and Exports Control Officer, Coroner, Postmaster

One Royal Marine Major—Deputy Representative (and deputy to all the above) Public Prosecutor, Fisheries Officer

One Royal Marine Captain—military remit only

10 British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) Peace Officers—to enforce BIOT civilian law

14 Imports and Exports Control Officers/Immigration Officers

Two Administration staff

11 Security staff—military remit only

All 40 are military staff and have a military remit in addition to the civilian roles above.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he receives from British officials on the use made by US forces and officials of facilities on Diego Garcia. [221344]

Mr. Rammell: The UK and US hold annual talks to discuss issues relating to Diego Garcia. In addition, my officials are in regular contact with US officials in London, Washington and Diego Garcia.

European Constitution

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1380W, on the European Constitution, if he will bring forward proposals for a mechanism to give the Scottish Parliament and other devolved bodies a role under this protocol regarding measures that are *(a)* devolved and *(b)* wholly or largely relating to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland; if he will make it his policy to allow devolved bodies, singularly or collectively, to determine one of the UK votes in these circumstances; and what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the operation of the protocol. [221399]

Mr. MacShane: The Government have had discussions with the devolved administrations about the possible operation of Protocol 2 of the EU Constitutional Treaty should it be approved. Article 6 of that Protocol states that

"It will be for each national Parliament or each chamber of a national Parliament to consult, where appropriate, regional parliaments with legislative powers".

The nature and extent of that consultation is for national Parliaments to decide, although the Government believe it would be desirable for views of devolved legislatures to be taken into account. It is the Government's view that for the purposes of this Article the UK national Parliament constitutes the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Gibraltar

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the British military presence in Gibraltar. [221385]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 340W.

Grievance Procedures

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what procedures govern the investigation of grievances by senior civil servants within his Department; and if he will make a statement. [221031]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's grievance procedures apply to all staff and comply with best practice guidelines and the requirements of the Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004. Staff are encouraged to attempt to resolve a grievance informally. If this approach fails, there is a three-stage process for investigating the concern either through line management or Human Resources. We have placed a copy of our Grievance procedures in the Library of the House.

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date Her Majesty's High Commission, Islamabad, sent the papers on the application for settlement of Mrs. S., wife of Mr. I.U.R., of Aylesbury (ISB/750278) to the Independent Appeal Authority. [221714]

Mr. Mullin: The papers were sent from the visa section at our High Commission in Islamabad to the Appeals Processing Centre (APC) at the Home Office on 30 October 2004. The APC are responsible for sending the papers forward to the Immigration Appellate Authority.

Intelligence Gathering

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1712W, on intelligence gathering, on how many occasions in the last year his Department has used information obtained by the use of torture in another country. [218763]

Mr. Straw: I again refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Buckingham (Mr. Bercow) on 11 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 413W. I also

refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence gave him on 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1257W.

Iraq

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the individuals detained in Iraq by coalition forces because of alleged connection with weapons of mass destruction programmes; how long each has been detained; when they are expected to be released; and if he will make a statement. [215145]

Mr. Rammell: The Multi-National Force (MNF) has the power to intern individuals for imperative reasons of security in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1546 and the annexed exchange of letters between Prime Minister Allawi and the then US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Each case of detention is regularly reviewed by the detaining power and a decision taken on whether continued detention is necessary. While the reasons for these decisions are recorded, they have not been collated in a form that would enable us to answer this question on behalf of all multi-national forces. We would not, as a matter of policy, in any case release the names of those who had been detained so as to respect their privacy and to ensure there were no security repercussions for them.

We can, however, confirm that the United Kingdom is not detaining any individuals in Iraq on the basis of alleged connection with weapons of mass destruction programmes.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Iraqi Administration on holding new elections in *(a)* ChaldoAssyrian areas and *(b)* other parts of northern Iraq where problems with the delivery of ballot boxes may have occurred; and if he will make a statement. [220433]

Mr. Rammell: We are aware of the allegations of voting irregularities. A complaint was submitted to the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), the only body competent to investigate alleged irregularities in the 30 January elections. The IECI is in the process of investigating all official complaints they have received. Once their investigations are completed, the IECI will write to each complainant and publish a report detailing their findings and the action they intend to take.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1052W, if he will publish the letters from Dr. Rod Barton of the Iraq Survey Group to which reference is made. [221027]

Mr. MacShane: Dr. Barton's letters, to which he drew attention in a television documentary programme broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), were addressed to the Australian authorities. It is a matter for them to determine whether they should be published.

The transcript of the documentary programme, and some of the papers relating to Dr. Barton's allegations, are available on the ABC website at www.abc.net.au/4corners.

Lisbon Agenda

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effects of the Lisbon agenda to date. [220297]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to numerous Government publications on the Lisbon Agenda, including the Treasury's 2004 and 2005 Progress Reports, which are available in the Library of the House, the Commission's 2005 Spring Report (http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/) and former Dutch Prime Minister Wim Kok's High Level Group report on Lisbon progress also available in the Library of the House.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in the implementation of the Lisbon agenda; what the Government's priorities are in relation to the Lisbon agenda; and what the new arrangements are for the governance of the Lisbon strategy. [220341]

Mr. MacShane: The Government strongly support the Commission's focus on "jobs and growth", as the immediate Lisbon reform priorities and the best way to boost prosperity and living standards for all (Commission Spring Report, launched on 2 February, http://www.europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/). As the former Dutch Prime Minister, Wim Kok, noted in his Lisbon report to EU heads in November "Lisbon's direction is right and imperative, but much urgency is needed in its implementation". The Commission has identified urgent reforms and proposed a strengthened system of governance—National Growth and Employment Action Plans—to accelerate and increase political ownership of the reform process. These proposals will be discussed at the March European Council.

Middle East

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what payments the Government have made to *(a)* Turkey, *(b)* Syria, *(c)* Jordan, *(d)* Israel and *(e)* Egypt in each of the last three years; for what purposes; and if he will make a statement. [218891]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department has taken since 2001 to improve specialisation within his Department in the Middle East; and if he will make a statement. [218892]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has long had a cadre of staff with expertise in the Middle East region, both specialist analysts and diplomatic staff with regional expertise and regional language skills. Since 2001 the FCO has maintained this cadre, and continued to develop staff with these specialisations. The figures

for Arabic speaker positions in the Gulf region show a 10 per cent. increase between 1999 (40 positions) and 2004 (44 positions). As at November 2004 there were 49 trainees undergoing Arabic language training.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list how many country specialists for each of the Persian Gulf states there have been in his Department in each of the last 10 years. [218893]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* British diplomatic staff in each of the Gulf states are listed in the diplomatic service overseas reference list. Back-copies of this should be available through the Library of the House.

It is not possible to identify exactly the number of country specialists working in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London on states bordering the Persian Gulf over the past 10 years, but the total number of staff working in London on these states in the Arabian Peninsula and Iran Group (and its predecessor, the Middle East Department) and in the Research Analysts Department has normally been around 20.

Oil for Food Programme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department gave evidence to the Volcker investigation into the Iraq Oil for Food scandal. [220823]

Mr. Rammell: The Government fully support the work of the Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) led by Paul Volcker set up by the UN Secretary-General to investigate the administration and management of the Oil for Food Programme. The Government is co-operating fully with the IIC's investigations and to date nine former or serving Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials have given evidence. We have also released hundreds of FCO documents requested by the IIC and continue to review our records for further documents of relevance to their investigations.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what investigations his Department is undertaking into *(a)* the Iraq Oil for Food scandal and *(b)* illegal oil movements from that country prior to and following the invasion in 2003. [220825]

Mr. Rammell: The Government continue to study carefully the interim report published on 3 February by the Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) set up by the UN Secretary-General to investigate the administration and management of the Oil for Food Programme. We take very seriously all allegations of wrongdoing under the programme and are co-operating fully with the IIC's investigations. It would be inappropriate to comment on the allegations of corruption surrounding the Programme or oil smuggling outside of the Programme until the IIC has completed its investigations. We will pass on any information received concerning possible wrongdoing by UK entities to the relevant UK authorities for investigation.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether British companies were implicated in *(a)* the Iraq Oil for Food scandal and *(b)* illegal oil movements from Iraq prior to the invasion in 2003. [220927]

Mr. Rammell: The involvement of some 3,500 companies—including UK companies—in the Oil for Food Programme will be the subject of a future report of the Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) set up by the UN Secretary-General to investigate the administration and management of the programme. It would be inappropriate to speculate on the nature of UK companies' involvement in the programme until the IIC has completed its investigations. The Government take very seriously all allegations of corruption surrounding the Oil for Food Programme. Any information we receive concerning possible wrongdoing by UK entities will be passed to the relevant UK authorities for investigation.

Project Coast

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requests the Government have received from South Africa for information relating to Porton Down's involvement with scientists associated with the biological warfare programme of the former Apartheid Government and Project Coast, with particular reference to Dr. Wouter Basson; and if he will make a statement. [219402]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The present Government have no record of any such requests from the South African Government.

Rajasthan State

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indian Government concerning the attacks in February on Christian students in Kota, Rajasthan State, by activists from militant Hindu groups. [220910]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* We have not raised this specific incident with the Indian authorities, but we continue as a matter of course to raise our concerns with them about religious intolerance in India, including attacks against Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. We will continue to urge the Indian authorities to ensure the right to freedom of religion enshrined in its constitution is upheld, and that those responsible for attacks against people because of their religion are brought to justice. We will remind them that the UK Government condemn the persecution of individuals or groups because of their religion or beliefs. The UK Government believe that the democratic process in India is the best protection for a peaceful and secure country. We appreciate the remarks by Dr. Manmohan Singh in his first press conference as Prime Minister, when he said

> "We are the most tolerant civilisation and we cannot divide people on the basis of religion and race."

Sudan

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will press the UN Security Council to refer the situation in the Sudan,

including Darfur, to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in accordance with Article 13*(b)* of the Rome Statute. [220778]

Mr. Rammell: Our preference is for the situation in Darfur to be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC), as recommended by the International Commission of Inquiry. Since Sudan is not a State Party to the ICC Statute, and is unlikely to refer the situation to the Court, a decision by the Security Council will be required.

Turkey

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to encourage Turkey to remove trade barriers for ceramic goods; and if he will make a statement. [220542]

Mr. MacShane: The European Commission successfully lobbied the Turkish authorities last year to remove the requirement for a conformity assessment on imported ceramic tableware goods. The British Embassy in Ankara has also assisted a number of British companies who have experienced difficulties in exporting ceramic goods to Turkey. The Embassy continues to monitor any cases brought to its attention by British firms and will, if a problem cannot be resolved, ask the Commission to raise the issue with the Turkish authorities.

Ukraine

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what special restrictions are in place on the issue of visas to visitors from Ukraine. [221286]

Mr. Mullin: There are no special restrictions placed on the issue of visas to visitors from the Ukraine. All applications for entry to the UK as visitors are considered under the Immigration Rules.

The visa section aims to provide a same-day service for straightforward applications.

UN Human Rights Commission

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what UK representatives will attend the 2005 meeting of the UN Human Rights Commission; and what consultation he will undertake with non-governmental groups that have recognised UN status in advance of the meeting; [203130]

(2) who the UK representative will be at the forthcoming UN Human Rights Commission; and what statement will be presented by the UK Government. [210767]

Mr. Rammell: Officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Human Rights, Democracy and Governance Group in London, and from our missions in New York and Geneva, will form the UK delegation to the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) from 14 March-22 April. I plan to attend and address the High Level Segment in the first week—it is too early to give details of what the statement will cover.

In terms of NGO involvement, I am pleased to say that I am planning to take an NGO representative with me when I visit Geneva to address the High Level Segment. I hope this will further strengthen links between our work and that of the NGO community. I also host a regular pre-CHR NGO forum, which took place this year on 9 February, where NGOs can discuss priorities and policy on the range of resolutions with myself and the officials who will form our delegation at the Commission. We, and I believe the NGOs, find this an invaluable exercise in sharing views and informing our preparations for the Commission. Our mission in Geneva also has regular contacts with the NGO community there during the course of the Commission.

Uzbekistan

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Uzbekistan's human rights record. [220595]

Mr. Mullin: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Bill Rammell) gave to the hon. Member for Twickenham (Dr. Cable) on 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1582W.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will meet the hon. Member for Leicester, East to discuss the closure of the British consulate in Aden. [220098]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the Middle East, would be pleased to discuss this with my hon. Friend. I have asked that her office arrange a suitable date.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of reports of *(a)* government harassment of journalists in Zimbabwe and *(b)* the raiding of the offices of journalists Jan Raath and Brain Latham; [220217]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Zimbabwe about freedom of the press. [220218]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Fylde (Mr. Jack) on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 801. As regards the latest harassment of journalists, we see this as further evidence of a climate of intimidation that makes the prospect of a free election unlikely.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Application Forms

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how benefit application forms are made available; and what the cost is of each method. [217478]

Mr. Pond: Application forms are widely available for the benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions in a variety of formats.

The Pension Service is now primarily a telephone-based service and the main method for making applications for state pension and pension credit is by telephone. Staff complete application forms based on information provided by customers over the telephone and completed forms are then sent to customers to check, sign and return.

This method is also available for benefits administered by Jobcentre Plus and The Disability and Carers Service. This service is also available in Welsh and in a Braille/large print version. For other languages customers can use Language Line which enables applications to be taken via a telephone interpreting service, in up to 150 languages, to customers whose first language is not English.

Paper application forms, in either English or Welsh, can be issued on request. These forms are available to the public from the departmental outlets of Jobcentre Plus offices, Social Security offices, Contact Centres, Local Service outlets of The Pension Service and from organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, medical centres, MPs' surgeries, hospitals/hospices and social services.

Information on the cost of making application forms available by the various methods is not available separately.

Benefit Offices (Weymouth)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans have been made for the future operation of benefits offices in Weymouth, with particular reference to *(a)* opening hours to members of the public, *(b)* the level of staffing and *(c)* the number of social security customers who would be expected to be affected by any changes; and if he will make a statement. [221161]

Mr. Pond: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Stephen O'Brien, dated 14 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about what plans have been made for the future operation of benefits offices in Weymouth, with particular reference to *(a)* opening hours to members of the public, *(b)* the level of staffing and *(c)* the number of Social Security customers who would be expected to be affected by any change. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Following rollout of Jobcentre Plus in Dorset, Weymouth Jobcentre and Weymouth Social Security office were amalgamated into Weymouth Jobcentre Plus. This is now the only benefit office in Weymouth. The table below contains full details of the office opening hours, and there are no plans to change them.

Opening times for the Weymouth Jobcentre Plus office

Weymouth office	*Opening time*	*Closing time*
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday	9.00 am	5.00 pm
Wednesday	10.00 am	5.00 pm

The District Manager for Dorset and Somerset is currently awaiting a final calculation of resource allocations before deciding how the resources should be allocated across the district, but we do know that efficiency savings will mean a reduction of staffing levels in the Weymouth office.

Weymouth Jobcentre Plus currently deals with both frontline enquiries from benefit customers and benefit processing. Nationally there are plans in place to brigade benefit processing into a reduced number of sites. Although Weymouth Jobcentre Plus will not be processing benefit claims in the future, a final date for the transfer of this work and where it will be located, is yet to be decided.

Under Jobcentre Plus operations, claims to Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support or Incapacity Benefit usually start with a telephone call to the Contact Centre. Weymouth Jobcentre Plus has the facility for all visiting customers to use telephony linked direct to the Contact Centre in Poole. After obtaining initial details about the customer the Contact Centre arrange to call them back to complete a claim for benefit. They also arrange an appointment for the customer to attend their local Jobcentre Plus office to see both a Financial Assessor and a Personal Adviser. For Weymouth customers this is the Weymouth Jobcentre Plus office.

Although it is anticipated that benefit processing will be moved from Weymouth Jobcentre Plus, the movement of this work will not affect the processes currently in place.

I hope this is helpful.

Benefits

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial help is available to applicants for *(a)* income support, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* jobseeker's allowance between the date of application and the conclusion of a work-focused benefit interview. [212302]

Mr. Pond: A customer for any of these benefits may express a need for immediate financial help any time during the new-claim process. The action to take will depend upon what stage the request is made.

Where a benefit claim has been assessed and payment of benefit is due, the payment is issued immediately.

If the request is made at First Contact Stage, wherever possible, an urgent appointment (preferably the same day) is made with the Financial Assessor and Personal Adviser to complete the claim process and allow any payment due to be released.

If an immediate appointment cannot be booked or the benefit claim cannot be assessed, because for example information is outstanding, an interim

payment is considered. An interim payment is a payment on account of benefit and is considered when, from the information provided already, it appears the customer may be entitled to benefit but it is not possible to fully assess the claim immediately.

Where a benefit claim has been assessed, but it is established the first payment is not due immediately, then consideration can be given to a Social Fund Crisis Loan.

Dunley Jobcentre

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) when the decision was made to bring forward the announcement of the planned closure of Dunley Jobcentre; what interim arrangements are being put in place; and what contracts are being negotiated with Gloucestershire city council on access to IT facilities in the new library; [220652]

(2) what redeployment of staff is being undertaken regarding the planned closure of the Dunley Jobcentre; and whether the provision of a continuing staff presence in Dunley was considered. [220653]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. David Drew, dated 14 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions about the planned closure of Dursley Jobcentre. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

It may be helpful if I explain that on 22 October 2004 we wrote to our stakeholders to inform them that Dursley Jobcentre had been earmarked for closure, providing the reasons why and inviting views from stakeholders. As a result of the consultation exercise, the final decision concerning the closure of Dursley Jobcentre was made in February 2005 and the office will close on 31 March. The communication of this decision began on 4 March via a press release, then in writing to Jobcentre Plus customers and other stakeholders. At no time between October 2004 and February 2005 did we confirm the closure of Dursley Jobcentre and therefore our announcement was not brought forward.

Jobcentre Plus is currently in local negotiations with Gloucestershire County Council for provision of a Flexible Service Delivery (FSD) option in Dursley Library. This negotiation has not yet been concluded as the Local Authority are considering the terms of the formal written agreement proposed by Jobcentre Plus. The FSD option includes the provision of a free telephone link and the use of the Library Internet services. Interim arrangements have been made to provide a limited service to customers from the existing Jobcentre site on one day per week until the FSD option is in place and fully operational.

Jobcentre Plus has taken every appropriate step in redeploying staff affected by the closure of Dursley Jobcentre. There are currently two staff members who have yet to agree a permanent alternative. The provision of a continuing staff presence in Dursley was fully considered in light of stakeholder feedback.

It is important to remember that the shape of the network in future is in response to the changing business need. Increasingly we will be delivering our services through the premises of our partners and siting facilities such as touch-screen Jobpoints or free telephone access in local public buildings. The need for face-to-face facilities for jobsearch and other aspects of our business has been superseded in many instances by different business processes and the use of information technology. For example, over the last 12 months we have seen an increase of over 40 per cent. in the number of hits on our jobsearch web-site.

EU Councils

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the outcome was of the Employment and Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council on 3 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [220826]

Mr. Pond: I represented the UK at the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council in Brussels on 3 March 2005.

The main focus of business was preparation towards the Spring European Council. This took the form of a policy debate, based on a Presidency questionnaire and a Key Issues paper from the Employment and Social Protection Committees (EMCO and SPC), to finalise the ESPHCA Council's contribution to the Spring Council.

Commissioner Spidla summarised the Commission's position, to set growth and employment at the heart of the revision of the Lisbon strategy.

For the UK, I stressed that there was no conflict between the economic and social agendas. On the contrary, a focus on employment should be seen as an affirmation of Europe's commitment to its social goals, as without growth social policies might not be sustainable.

The Key Messages paper was adopted for transmission to the Spring European Council.

The Presidency presented an information note on Working Time outlining the current positions of the member states. There was no debate on this point.

The Council agreed a partial general approach on a decision establishing the PROGRESS social spending programme, which would replace five existing social programmes from 2007. For the UK I maintained a parliamentary scrutiny reserve. A Council declaration explained that the partial agreement covered all articles except Article 17, on the budget and internal allocations between different strands of activity. The agreement could be re-opened in the light of the EP's opinion or agreement of the Financial Perspectives.

The Presidency informed the Council that it intends to hold a Tripartite Social Summit on the eve of the European Council to discuss the mid term review of the Lisbon agenda.

The Council also agreed a general approach on a regulation making routine miscellaneous amendments to social security co-ordination regulation 1408/71.

The Council also heard presentations on the work programmes of the Employment Committee and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) and a study by the SPC on private pensions.

The Council adopted without debate conclusions on the Social Aspects of Globalisation.

Fuel Direct

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of customers included in the Fuel Direct payment scheme in the last 10 years; and what the cost of operating the Fuel Direct payment system has been in each of the last 10 years. [221331]

Mr. Pond: Information regarding the cost of running the Fuel Direct scheme is not available. Information regarding the number of customers included in the scheme is in the following table.

DWP customers on Fuel Direct scheme

Thousand

August	*Electricity*	*Gas*	*Total*
1995	57	172	229
1996	47	141	188
1997	43.3	126.4	169.7
1998	35.7	86.6	122.3
1999	29.2	56.8	86
2000	26.5	45.3	71.8
2001	25	37.1	62.1
2002	21.9	31.9	53.8
2003	21.6	29.7	51.3
2004	17.5	22.5	40

Note:
The figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and as such subject to a degree of sampling error.
Source:
Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance Quarterly Statistical Enquiries.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in West Suffolk constituency were in receipt of incapacity benefit in each year since 1997. [221321]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the following table.

All incapacity benefit and severe disability allowance claimants in the West Suffolk parliamentary constituency, at the quarter shown

As at 31 August:	*Number*
1997	1,900
1998	2,100
1999	2,000
2000	1,900
2001	2,100
2002	2,000
2003	2,400
2004	2,100

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. Figures include all incapacity benefit, severe disability allowance and credits-only cases.
Source:
Information Directorate, 5 per cent. sample.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216636]

Maria Eagle: The Department considers each request for information on an individual basis. Any decision not to release information relating to a project as a result of commercial confidentiality would be made on the basis of the specific request.

Pensioners

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on pensioners in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [219664]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Expenditure

Rounded to nearest £ million

	Jarrow Constituency	*South Tyneside*	*North East*	*Great Britain*
1997–98	70	132	2,149	41,414
1998–99	69	131	2,165	43,597
1999–2000	71	135	2,223	46,823
2000–01	76	142	2,347	49,403
2001–02	84	156	2,521	53,229
2002–03	89	163	2,635	55,963
2003–04	95	174	2,777	58,995

Notes:
1. The information in the table provides benefit expenditure for pensioners in Great Britain.
2. Benefit expenditure in Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Office and is not included in the above table.
3. Table consists of the expenditure on the main pensioner benefits: pension credit, winter fuel payments to all those 60 and over, retirement pension, disability living allowance and attendance allowance to people over state pension age, the over-80s payment.
4. Housing benefit and council tax benefit has been excluded from the table as the local authority level data cannot be broken down between pensioners and other recipients, and no information is available at constituency level.
5. Expenditure has been apportioned to pensioner groups using Quarterly Statistical Enquiry data for the relevant benefits, which is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Benefit expenditure forecast information is published on the Internet at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Social Security Fraud

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of social security fraud were dealt with by officers in benefit offices in Weymouth in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04. [221159]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following table.

Benefit fraud investigations carried out by benefit offices in Weymouth

	Number
2001–02	598
2002–03	735
2003–04	811

Source:
Fraud Information by Sector database

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many fraud officers he expects will be based in benefits offices in Weymouth in 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [221160]

Mr. Pond: There are currently five benefit fraud investigators based in benefit offices in Weymouth. Staffing levels for 2005–06 have not yet been decided.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the public service agreement target to reduce losses from fraud and error for people of working age in income support and jobseeker's allowance by 33 per cent. by 2004 was met. [220133]

Mr. Pond: Our tough action against fraud and error is paying off for the taxpayer. We have reduced fraud and error in income support and jobseeker's allowance by 37 per cent., exceeding the original target of 33 per cent. by March 2004.

This shows we are getting results in preventing, detecting and deterring fraud.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve children's communication, social and emotional development; [220135]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to ensure that 50 per cent. of children reach a good level of development at the end of Foundation Stage by 2008 will be met; [220136]

(3) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the take-up of formal child care by lower income families by 50 per cent. by 2008 will be met; [220139]

(4) what recent assessment he has made of whether the Public Service Agreement target to introduce a successful light-touch child care approval scheme by April will be met. [220140]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by the Minister for Children, Young People and Families (Margaret Hodge) on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1784W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the stock of Ofsted-registered child care by 10 per cent. by 2008 will be met. [220138]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by the Minister for Children, Young People and Families (Margaret Hodge) on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1785–86W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target of full employment in every region. [220142]

Jane Kennedy: Since 1997, employment nationally has risen by over two million and the number of people in work is up in every region. While every region has an employment rate above the EU average, describing the labour market at regional level can be misleading as there is much greater variation within, rather than between, regions.

Around 90 per cent. of all local authority districts in Great Britain have an employment rate above the EU average, and a key element of the Government's labour market policies is improving the performance of the relatively small number of areas within each region where this is not the case.

Since 1997 claimant unemployment has halved, long-term unemployment has fallen by more than three quarters and the number of lone parents on benefit has fallen by a fifth. In addition, the number of people on incapacity benefits has peaked after two decades of substantial growth. The improvements have been greatest in the areas where, in 1997, benefit receipt was highest.

While this has moved us closer to the aim of full employment in every region, the Department's five year strategy set out the Government's long-term aspiration to achieve an employment rate equivalent to 80 per cent. of the working age population. This will mean continuing to focus on those who can get back into work, including people on incapacity benefits, lone parents, older people and the long-term unemployed.

Women's Employment

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what discussions the Ethnic Minority Employment Taskforce has had with the Equal Opportunities Commission on ensuring that research for the taskforce identifies issues specific to women's employment; [220801]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Equal Opportunities Commission on commissioning research into the factors affecting ethnic minority women entering and re-entering the labour market. [220834]

Jane Kennedy: The Taskforce recognises that addressing gender issues will be essential to the success of the ethnic minority employment strategy. Officials from the Department for Work and Pensions have had a number of discussions with the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) on issues affecting the employment of ethnic minority women. The EOC have submitted a research proposal on factors affecting the progression of ethnic minority women entering and re-entering the labour market and officials are currently considering the proposal in the context of the ethnic minority employment strategy.

I am meeting with the Chief Executive of the EOC on 16 March to discuss these issues further.

Work-focused Interviews

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the target time is for the holding of a work-focused benefit interview following the initial claim by an individual for income support, incapacity benefit or job seeker's allowance; and what the average time between the initial call and the interview being conducted was at the job centres in *(a)* Blandford,

(b) Bridport, *(c)* Christchurch, *(d)* Poole and *(e)* Wareham in the most recent period for which figures are available. [212339]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 3 March 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Christopher Chope, dated 14 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about the target time for holding a Work Focused Interview (WFI) following an initial claim to Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or Jobseeker's Allowance, and the average time between the initial call and the interview being conducted at the Jobcentres in Blandford, Bridport, Christchurch, Poole, and Wareham. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Under Jobcentre Plus operations, a claim to Income Support, Incapacity Benefit or Jobseeker's Allowance usually starts with a telephone call to the Contact Centre. After obtaining initial details, Contact Centre staff call the customer back to obtain the necessary information to complete a claim to benefit. They also arrange an appointment for the customer to attend their local office to see both a Financial Assessor and a Personal Adviser.

At present Jobcentre Plus has separate targets for processing Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support and Incapacity Benefit. These are known as Actual Average Clearance Targets (AACT). The target for Jobseeker's Allowance is 12 days from the first contact with the Contact Centre and the processing of the claim. For Income Support the target is again 12 days however this commences from when a customer has provided all the necessary information to process the claim because Income Support claims are subject to the Evidence Requirement. Incapacity Benefit claims have a target of 22 days from the date of claim to the date of processing. The WFI stage is a component part of the process.

There is no current target for the holding of a WFI following the initial claim to benefit although it is our aim to conduct the interview within 5 days of initial contact. Unfortunately as there is no target the information you require on the performances of particular offices is not available.

As part of Jobcentre Plus' future performance measures, we are looking into the possibility of introducing an internal key performance indicator to measure the time between the customer's initial call and the WFI being conducted. This would be included in a suite of measures to manage the end to end process from when a customer makes contact with us to when they find work or are awarded benefit. A decision will be made on this later in the year.

I am sorry that I can't be more helpful.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Census Records

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Lord Chancellor has ever exercised a power or authority to apply Public Records Act Instrument No. 12 (1966) to decennial population census records for England and Wales that have been retained by the Registrar General and have not been deposited in the Public Record Office/National Archives. [221178]

Mr. Leslie: Instrument number 12 was signed by the Lord Chancellor in exercise of the power conferred on him under section 5(1) of the Public Records Act 1958. This section governed access to public records in the Public Record Office, now The National Archives, including decennial population records held there.

The Instrument did not cover those decennial census records held by the Registrar General, including those retained by him under section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958, and from which the disclosure of information is protected by the provisions of section 8(2) of the Census Act 1920.

Magistrates/County Courts

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* magistrates and *(b)* county courts there have been in each of the last 20 years. [221406]

Mr. Leslie: *(a)* The provision of magistrates courthouses and the collection of statistics relating to the numbers of courthouses is a matter for each of the 42 Magistrates Courts Committees (MCCs). From 1 April 2005 Her Majesty's Court Service (HMCS) will take responsibility for the administration of all courts below the House of Lords. HMCS will be an executive agency of the Department of Constitutional Affairs (DCA). Since 2000, the DCA have collected the information in the table on the number of places used as magistrates courthouses:

	Number of magistrates courts[1]
2000	442
2001	413
2002	394
2003	390
2004	387
2005	387

[1] This includes occasional places used as courtrooms (e.g. where a "town hall" is used).

(b) Data and information on the number of county courts in each of the last 20 years is not available. However, data since 1989 is provided as follows.

	Number of county courts
1989	292
1990	291
1991	291
1992	290
1993	283
1994	278
1995	262
1996	254
1997	241
1998	233
1999	227
2000	225
2001	221
2002	220
2003	218
2004	218
2005	218

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216632]

Mr. Leslie: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to specific element within a project as well as to an entire project. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department; [219910]

(2) which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* Executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219915]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) is responsible for two organisations which have regional offices. The Legal Services Commission, a non-departmental public body, was established under the Access to Justice Act 1999, replacing the Legal Aid Board. From January 2000, it adjusted its regional boundaries so that in the main they matched those of the Government offices for the regions[1] regional structure in England. However, in addition to the North West (Manchester) Regional Office, they have a Merseyside Regional Office.

The Court Service is an Executive agency of the DCA, which from the 1 April 2005 will become part of a new agency, Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS). Both the current and future agencies are made up of seven regions, which match Government regions with the following exceptions. For business reasons, HMCS combines the following into single regions:

the east of England and south east Government regions,

the north east and Yorkshire and the Humber Government regions;

the east and west Midlands;

Wales with Cheshire (which is in the north west region); and

Hampshire with the south west (which is in the south east region).

Youth Defendants

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the average time was from offence to completion for youth defendants in criminal cases coming before magistrates courts in each of the last three years. [221477]

Mr. Leslie: Average times for all youth defendants in all criminal cases, by stage of proceedings 2002 to 2004 are shown in the table as follows.

Average times for all youth defendants in all criminal cases, by stage of proceedings 2002 to 2004

Days

	Offence to charge or laying of information (Days)	*Charge or laying of information to first listing*	*First listing to completion*	*[1]Offence to completion*
2002	35	10	45	91
2003	36	11	46	92
2004	40	11	46	97

[1] The total in the Offence to completion column may not sum exactly the previous three columns, as each stage will have been rounded independently.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Emergency Evacuations

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on contingency plans for evacuating *(a)* Ascension Island, *(b)* St. Helena and *(c)* Tristan da Cunha in the event of an emergency. [220324]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

All three territories have disaster management plans. These include contingency plans for moving the populations to designated areas of safety, in an emergency. Depending on the severity of any emergency, the Governor, in consultation with the local legislature, and the UK Government, will consider whether an evacuation of the territory is appropriate.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Civil Servants

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many medical retirements there were in each *(a)* department, *(b)* agency, *(c)* non-departmental public body, *(d)* education and library board and *(e)* health and social services board in Northern Ireland in each of the last two financial years; and what proportion of all retirements that were medical retirements this represented in each case. [208580]

Mr. Pearson: The number of medical retirements and the proportion of all retirements that were medical retirements in each of the last two complete financial years i.e. 2002–03 and 2003–04 are outlined in the following tables, in respect of (i) the main Civil Service Pension Scheme, broken down by Department, Agency, non-departmental public body, (ii) the Health and Personal Social Services Pension Scheme (HPSS), broken down by health boards, and (iii) the Teachers Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland), broken down by education and library board, and (iv) all other non-departmental public bodies, has been placed in the Library.

Deaf People (Public Service Delivery)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what assessment he has made of the amount of training provided for civil servants in Northern Ireland to enable them to communicate with

the deaf and hard of hearing; and how many civil servants in Northern Ireland are *(a)* trained and *(b)* undertaking training in sign language; [218663]

(2) what funding has been made available to enable civil servants in Northern Ireland to learn *(a)* British Sign Language and *(b)* International Sign Language to (i) Level 1 and (ii) Level 2 in each of the last five years; and what measures he is taking to encourage civil servants to undertake such training. [218664]

Mr. Pearson: Assessment of the amount of the amount of training required is made at the business level, in most cases by front-line managers, who are best placed to identify the need.

A record of the total number of staff with signing skills is not currently maintained. However, training records over the past three years (from 1 April 2002 to date) show that nine civil servants have been trained in British Sign Language, eight at Level 1 and one at Level 2. A further eight are currently undertaking training in British Sign Language, seven at Level 1 and one at Level 2. This training has been provided at a cost of £1,539 for Level 1 and £473 for Level 2. In addition to sign language training, 774 staff have received training in deaf awareness/introduction to sign language/ communication with the deaf and hard of hearing/use of text phones.

Funds are made available to meet identified need in a particular business area. When a need is identified, staff are encouraged to put themselves forward for the appropriate training.

This response includes the Northern Ireland Departments and their agencies and the Northern Ireland Office.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether a communication audit has been conducted to assess the extent to which Government services are accessible to deaf people in Northern Ireland. [218850]

Angela Smith: A communication audit has not been conducted but several departments are working in partnership with representatives of the deaf community, to develop ideas for improving access to public services for sign language users.

Hyponatraemia-related Deaths

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether witnesses at the Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-related Deaths will be allowed to appear by video-link. [220658]

Angela Smith: This is a matter for John O'Hara QC, chairman of the inquiry. I understand, however, that the chairman intimated, in his opening remarks at the preliminary hearing held on 3 February 2005, that in certain circumstances he would consider the use of video-link evidence. A copy of the transcript of the hearing has been placed in the House Library.

Equality Commission

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how much was spent on legal assistance by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in each of the last four years, broken down by section 75 group; [217670]

(2) how many requests for assistance were received by the Equality Commission, broken down by section 75 group; [217671]

(3) how much was spent by the Equality Commission on legal assistance in each of the last four years; and whether there was *(a)* an overspend and *(b)* an under spend against budget in each of those years. [217723]

Mr. Spellar: I understand that the Chief Executive of the Equality Commission has written to the hon. Gentleman.

Letter from the Chief Executive of the Equality Commission (Evelyn Collins) to Mr. Eddie McGrady.

As your Parliamentary Questions fall within the operational remit of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, they have been forwarded to me for response.

Question 217670: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much was spent on legal assistance by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in each of the last four years, broken down by section 75 group.

I would being by clarifying that under the legislation the Commission is only empowered to assist cases in the areas of sex discrimination, racial discrimination, religious belief and political opinion, disability and sexual orientation. It was in December 2003 that sexual orientation was added as a ground on which to base a complaint of discrimination and, consequently, does not appear in the figures you request for the past four years, as there was no expenditure on legal assistance for that ground in December 2003-March 2004 period. Although the Commission has duties with regard to each of the nine Section 75 grounds, we are not presently empowered to assist cases on the grounds of age, and having or not having dependants.

Information on our legal work and the expenditure on legal assistance is contained in our Annual Report and Accounts. With regard to the specific information requested, I trust the following is helpful.

£

Remit	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Disability	8,233	88,333	414,419	187,171
Race	120,605	156,106	422,387	193,435
Religious belief/political opinion	166,780	170,261	916,357	239,464
Sex	348,867	631,861	829,588	524,967
Total	644,475	1,046,561	2,582,721	1,145,037

Question 217671: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many requests for assistance were received by the Equality Commission in each of section 75 group.

Information on requests for assistance is based on the date at which the request was considered by the Commission's Legal Funding Committee.

Remit	Number of applications per year 2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Disability	71	119	132	171
Race	214	140	89	83
Religious belief/political opinion	225	411	172	222
Sex	141	191	230	138
Sexual orientation	—	—	—	1
Total	651	861	623	615

Question 217723: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much was spent by the Equality Commission on legal assistance in each of the last four years; and whether there was *(a)* an overspend and *(b)* an under spend against budget in each of those years.

In each of the four years the spend on legal assistance was higher than originally planned; however, the Commission's total spending was within the budgets agreed with OFMDFM.

	Spend (£)
2000–01	597,879
2001–02	846,412
2002–03	2,120,340
2003–04	1,658,563

If I can provide any further information on this matter, or any other aspect of our equality work, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Medical Negligence

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost to the Northern Ireland economy of medical negligence in each of the last five years. [220619]

Angela Smith: Information in relation to the last five years is detailed in the following table:

Amounts paid in settlement of clinical negligence claims

	£000
1999–2000	4,859
2000–01	9,409
2001–02	7,415
2002–03	13,550
2003–04	15,194

The amount paid in any one year in respect of clinical negligence can vary considerably due to the uncertain timing of the settlement of cases.

The Department remains committed to taking appropriate action to address and reduce the incidence of medical negligence, and the subsequent number and amount of claims.

Pension Credit

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* female and *(b)* male pensioners in Northern Ireland are in receipt of pension credit. [221501]

Mr. Spellar: In my answer of 25 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 1071W, the figures provided were incorrect. The correct figures are as follows, there are 29.7 per cent. of female pensioners and 24 per cent. of male pensioners currently in receipt of pension credit.

Pensioners

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of *(a)* female and *(b)* male pensioners in Northern Ireland are in receipt of the full basic state pension. [221500]

Mr. Spellar: In my answer of 25 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 1071W, the figures provided were incorrect. The correct figures are as follows, there are 34 per cent. of female pensioners and 78.1 per cent. of male pensioners currently in receipt of the full basic state pension.

Project Funding

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money has been allocated by the Department of Finance and Personnel under Priority 4-Outward and Forward Looking Region; and what percentage of such monies relates to projects operating on *(a)* a Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland basis, *(b)* a Northern Ireland-Great Britain basis and *(c)* a Northern Ireland-rest of world basis. [210501]

Mr. Pearson: Priority 4 has two measures Measure 4.1 (Networking in Europe and beyond) and Measure 4.2 (Marketing the region for tourism).

Measure 4.1 is implemented by OFMDFM in Northern Ireland and SEUPB in the border region of Ireland. Information on project operational costs is not held in the format requested and the following estimates have been made by the implementing bodies based on knowledge of projects.

Measure	Implementing body	Total estimated allocation (£)	Percentage (a)	(b)	(c)
4.1	OFMDFM	6,435,897	20	10	70
	SEUPB	684,780	78	—	22

Measure 4.2 is implemented by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in Northern Ireland and the SEUPB in the border region of Ireland. The activities in this measure include international advertising, international promotion, support for market research and website design. A breakdown of the expenditure in the format requested is not possible. To date NITB have allocated £12,371,843 to such projects for the benefit of Northern Ireland only. Similarly £1,309,000 has been allocated by the SEUPB for border region projects only.

Retirement (Health Grounds)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland under what circumstances individuals

would be entitled to retire on health grounds following the implementation of proposed Government pension scheme changes in Northern Ireland. [220692]

Mr. Pearson: It is assumed that this question is referring to the proposed changes to the pension schemes for civil servants, staff employed in the NHS and for teachers.

Consultation on proposed changes to pensions, including those for ill health retirement, of the main civil service pension scheme in Great Britain and the NHS and teachers schemes for England and Wales are currently under way. As the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme for Northern Ireland, the Health and Personal Social Services Superannuation Scheme, and the Teachers Superannuation Scheme in Northern Ireland operate on a principle of parity with these schemes, the normal approach would be to introduce similar changes for Northern Ireland staff.

The proposals relating to ill-health retirement in the consultation document "Building a Sustainable Future—Proposals for Changes to Civil Service Pension Arrangements" are broadly similar to those presently available to members of the premium arrangement of the current civil service pension provisions with the recognition that higher benefits should be paid to those who are most incapacitated. The proposals relating to ill-health retirement for the teachers pension schemes are similar to those proposed under the civil service scheme.

The proposals are as follows:

Where the scheme's medical adviser agrees that a member's ill-health is such that they are no longer able to do their job and that this is likely to continue to pension age, the member should receive their pension immediately without any reduction for early payment.

If the scheme's medical adviser considers that the member is virtually unable to do any job, not just their present job, they should receive an increase to their pension, under a formula yet to be determined.

Civil service members who are covered by the current classic arrangements are subject to a slightly modified approach, compatible with an employee contributions rate of 1.5 per cent. rather than the premium contribution rate of 3.5 per cent. Regardless of the degree of incapacity a single level of ill-health pension will be payable.

The review partners of the NHS pension scheme consider that the pension scheme cannot deal with ill health in isolation and that it is important that any changes to the pension scheme are part of an integrated approach to managing ill-health absence. They have proposed that a separate partnership review of sickness and ill-health arrangements should be carried out, which will help the pension review determine this aspect of pension scheme design. The consultation document is seeking views on this approach to reviewing sickness and ill-health retirement arrangements.

Sewerage

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the Government's Reform of Water and Sewerage Services in Northern Ireland on *(a)* the elderly and *(b)* those who have elderly dependants, based on each of the broad policy options. [221340]

Mr. Spellar: The draft Integrated Impact Assessment published on 29 November set out Government's assessment of the impacts of its policy proposals and options. The draft equality impact assessment element of the IIA noted that the proposal to base domestic water and sewerage charges on property value would have a marginal negative differential impact on the elderly and on those who care for them. A number of measures to mitigate the negative equality impacts were identified, including the provision of discounts for certain low income households. The proposal also envisages that the impact of the low income protection measures should be kept under review to determine how effectively they are mitigating differential equality impacts.

No other impacts on the elderly or those who care for them were identified in the IIA.

Consultation on the draft Integrated Impact Assessment of the proposals for the reform of water and sewerage services in Northern Ireland closed on 4 March 2005. Work is under way to analyse and evaluate the comments received. A considered response will be issued in due course along with a final equality impact assessment.

Shellfish and Whitefish

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were employed in the *(a)* shellfish and *(b)* whitefish sectors of the fishing industry in Northern Ireland on the last date for which figures are available. [221336]

Mr. Pearson: Information in respect of the number of people employed in the processing and marketing, catching and other sectors of the Northern Ireland fishing industry is shown in the following table.

The data does not distinguish between employment in the shellfish and whitefish sectors and to provide this information would incur disproportionate cost.

	2000		2001		2002	
	Part-time	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Full-time*
Ardglass						
Catching	10	96	10	81	8	84
Processing and marketing	13	160	23	155	21	152
Others	6	37	4	47	4	35
Total	29	293	37	283	33	271
Kilkeel						
Catching	30	280	0	200	0	260
Processing and marketing	81	546	61	483	48	339
Others	13	74	6	68	5	66
Total	124	900	67	751	53	665

	2000		2001		2002	
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
Portavogie						
Catching	19	215	19	213	24	204
Processing and marketing	120	95	120	110	125	115
Others	16	36	16	40	19	43
Total	155	346	155	363	168	362
North Coast						
Catching	15	21	17	19	11	20
Processing and marketing	21	89	21	89	17	95
Others	7	25	8	25	12	56
Total	43	135	46	133	40	171
All ports						
Catching	74	612	46	513	43	568
Processing and marketing	235	890	225	837	211	701
Others	42	172	34	180	40	200
Total	351	1,674	305	1,530	294	1,469

	2003		2004	
	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
Ardglass				
Catching	10	91	5	89
Processing and marketing	5	129	0	134
Others	2	16	0	23
Total	17	236	5	246
Kilkeel				
Catching	0	190	[1]50	250
Processing and marketing	51	387	45	384
Others	3	61	4	55
Total	54	638	49	689
Portavogie				
Catching	24	156	24	176
Processing and marketing	96	127	68	174
Others	21	39	18	28
Total	141	322	110	378
North Coast				
Catching	6	21	5	20
Processing and marketing	7	77	7	70
Others	3	31	1	30
Total	16	129	13	120
All ports				
Catching	40	458	84	535
Processing and marketing	159	720	120	762
Others	29	147	23	136
Total	228	1,325	227	1,433

[1] includes 30 seasonal staff.

Note:

"Others" includes harbour jobs, boat building and chandlery supplies.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much and what value of *(a)* shellfish and *(b)* whitefish was exported from Northern Ireland to EU countries outside the UK in each of the last five years. [221335]

Mr. Pearson: Records are not kept in respect of Northern Ireland exports and to provide this information would incur disproportionate cost.

However, data is held for the UK as a whole, including Northern Ireland. Tables showing the UK exports of shellfish and whitefish species to EU countries over the last five years have been placed in the Library.

Social Deprivation

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the review of the boundaries of the Noble indices on social deprivation will be published. [221381]

Mr. Pearson: Following a consultation exercise last year, a blueprint document detailing the indicators and methods to be used in producing the new measures of deprivation has been published on the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency website. The final report from the Noble team, incorporating the actual measures of deprivation, is currently planned for publication in late May 2005.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to contribute effectively to the British-Irish Council; [219921]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to contribute effectively to the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference; [219922]

(3) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build and sustain confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of the police service; [219923]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build and sustain confidence in the police oversight and accountability arrangements in Northern Ireland; [219924]

(5) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase confidence in the police throughout all parts of the community by 3 per cent. by April 2008 will be met; [219925]

(6) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build and sustain confidence in the criminal justice system; [219926]

(7) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build a criminal justice system that is effective, efficient and responsive; [219927]

(8) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase confidence in the criminal justice system throughout all parts of the community by 3 per cent. by April 2008 will be met; [219928]

(9) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to uphold and maintain the rule of law; [219929]

(10) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build a legislative and strategic framework that takes account of the need to secure justice and the rights of the individual; [219930]

(11) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build a legislative and strategic framework that provides for a sufficient counter-terrorist capability; [219931]

(12) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to build a legislative and strategic framework that seeks to minimise the potential for, and causes and effects of, public order disturbances and community strife; [219932]

(13) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to lessen the impact of crime; [219933]

(14) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to develop policies to prevent or reduce the threat of crime; [219934]

(15) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to develop policies to provide support for the victims of crime; [219935]

(16) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce domestic burglary by 2 per cent. by April will be met; [219936]

(17) what recent assessment he has made of whether the Public Service Agreement target to reduce domestic burglary by 15 per cent. by April 2007 will be met; [219937]

(18) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce the theft of vehicles by 6 per cent. by April will be met; [219938]

(19) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce the theft of vehicles by 10 per cent. by April 2007 will be met; [219939]

(20) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce theft from vehicles by 6 per cent. by April will be met; [219940]

(21) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce theft from vehicles by 10 per cent. by April 2007 will be met; [219941]

(22) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce the rate of reconviction by 5 per cent. compared to the predicted rate by 2008 will be met; [219942]

(23) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to ensure that the supervisory and custodial sentences imposed on offenders by the courts are delivered appropriately to protect the people of Northern Ireland; [219943]

(24) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to ensure that the supervisory and custodial sentences imposed on offenders by the courts are delivered appropriately to reduce the risk of re-offending; [220028]

(25) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to ensure that the annual cost per prisoner place in Northern Ireland falls to £82,500 by 2007–08 will be met; [220029]

(26) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to ensure that the annual cost per prisoner place in Northern Ireland falls to £86,290 by 2005–06 will be met; [220030]

(27) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to ensure that the annual cost per prisoner place in Northern Ireland falls to £85,250 by 2006–07 will be met; [220031]

(28) recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase Catholic representation in the police service to 30 per cent. by December 2010 will be met; [220154]

(29) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase Catholic representation in the police service to 18.5 per cent. by March 2006 will be met; [220155]

(30) whether the public service agreement target to increase Catholic representation in the police service to 13.5 per cent. by March 2004 will be met; [220156]

(31) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to secure a lasting peace in Northern Ireland; [220157]

(32) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to encourage political development in Northern Ireland. [220158]

Mr. Paul Murphy: In common with the other Whitehall Departments, the Northern Ireland Office reports progress against the targets and objectives in the public service agreement (PSA) in its Departmental Report and Autumn Performance Report. In the 2004 Spending Review PSA, the NIO agreed seven main objectives and, within these, four key target areas which commit it to a specified level of performance or achievement. Since the SR2004 PSA commences in April 2005 no material is available to monitor progress against these targets. However the Department has provided extensive public information on progress against the PSA targets agreed as part of the SR2002 settlement. Because the targets are clearly measurable they are reported on in detail in the Departmental Report and Autumn Performance Report. Progress against objectives is reported on in more general terms.

The NIO's 2005 Departmental Report is in draft and will be published soon on a date to be set by HM Treasury. It will provide detail on the targets and give information on performance to the end of the SR2002 PSA period. It and the Autumn Performance Report are

available from the Stationery Office or on the NIOs website (http://www.nio.gov.uk). In addition, HM Treasury's performance website (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/performance/index/cfm) currently reports specifically on performance against the targets in the SR2002 PSA and will be updated regularly to report on SR2004 PSA targets.

Autumn Performance Report are available from the Stationery Office or on the NIOs website (http://www.nio.gov.uk). In addition, HM Treasury's performance website (http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/performance/index/cfm) currently reports specifically on performance against the targets in the SR2002 PSA and will be updated regularly to report on SR2004 PSA targets.

Water Charging

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what comparative studies have been carried out by his Department into the proposed water charging system for Northern Ireland and those operated in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [221504]

Mr. Spellar: In developing water and sewerage charging options for Northern Ireland, careful consideration was given to the existing regimes in Great Britain. As in the rest of the United Kingdom, the proposed self-financing arrangements will mean that customers' bills will, in general terms, reflect the costs which that customer imposes on the water and sewerage systems for a supply of clean water and the disposal of dirty water. Details of the approach taken to developing the proposed water and sewerage charging regime are set out in the Integrated Impact Assessment Policy Proposals Paper published on 29 November 2004 http://www.waterreformni.gov.uk/consult2004.asp

In England and Wales, unmeasured domestic charges, in general, consist of a standing charge and a charge based on the property's rateable value. It is proposed in Northern Ireland that charges will consist of a standing charge and a charge based on the property's capital value—which will be the basis for calculating domestic rates in NI from 1 April 2007. In Scotland unmeasured charges are based on the council tax band which, in turn, is based on the property's capital value.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Catering

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many departmental *(a)* canteens and *(b)* bars there are; and how much has been spent on the (i) running, (ii) staffing and (iii) supply costs of each in each year since 1997. [213630]

Mr. Miliband: There are currently three staff canteens and no bars on the Cabinet Office's central London estate. There are two canteens and two bars at the Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS) College residential training centre in Berkshire and one canteen at the non-residential training centre in London. The Emergency Planning College (EPC), who transferred to the Cabinet Office in June 2001, has a canteen and bar at its residential training centre in York. The Cabinet Office's sole Executive Agency, The Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA), has one canteen at its London Headquarters.

Since 2002, canteen facilities at the Cabinet Office's central London estate have been provided on a nil subsidy basis by the Cabinet Office's Total Facilities Management provider. Prior to 2002 there was only one staff canteen and no bars. Spending on specific running, staffing and supply costs in each year since 1997 and prior to 2002 cannot be readily retrieved and separately identified without incurring disproportionate costs.

Canteen and bar facilities at the CMPS Colleges and the EPC are provided as part of a PPP/PFI and Facilities Management contract, respectively. Specific spending on running, staffing and supply costs cannot be readily retrieved and separately identified without incurring disproportionate costs.

For 2002–03 and 2003–04, the GCDA incurred expenditure of £35,000 in each year for the running of its canteen. Spending on specific running, staffing and supply costs prior to 2002–03 cannot be readily retrieved without incurring disproportionate costs.

Intestacy

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many people in the Duchy died intestate in 2003–04. [220376]

Mr. Milburn: During the calendar year of 2003, there were 354 intestate cases reported to the Duchy of Lancaster. Similarly, in the year 2004, 291 cases were reported.

Job Relocation

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy on whether Government-funded agencies compete to attract jobs from less wealthy parts of the UK. [221564]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of the Cabinet Office have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219887]

Mr. Miliband: None of Cabinet Office's non-departmental public bodies or executive agencies have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to promote standards that ensure good governance, including adherence to the ministerial and civil service codes; [220219]

(2) whether the public service agreement target to achieve a 2.5 per cent. efficiency saving each year on administrative resources was met in 2004; [220220]

(3) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to achieve a 2.5 per cent. efficiency saving each year on administrative resources will be met in 2005; [220221]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to co-ordinate security, intelligence and civil contingencies matters to protect the UK against disruptive challenges; [220222]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve services by working with departments to embed the four principles of public service reform. [220223]

Mr. Miliband: The Cabinet Office's role is outlined in our public service agreement (PSA). Work in support of the Cabinet Office objectives and targets included in the PSA is accounted for in the departmental report, autumn performance report and the annual report and resource accounts, all of which are published annually.

The latest assessment of progress against the Cabinet Office's PSA targets was made in the 2004 autumn performance report (Cm 6414). The next assessment will be made in the 2005 departmental report, due to be published later this spring.

Copies of the publications referred to are available in the Library of the House.

Transport Subsidies

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to subsidy to *(a)* airports, *(b)* ports and *(c)* passenger ferries across the UK; what his objectives were; and what the outcome of his action was. [221409]

Mr. Milburn: None.

HEALTH

Ambulance Response Times

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average response time for ambulances attending 999 calls was in *(a)* Suffolk and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [221322]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally in the format requested. Data on response times for East Anglian Ambulance Service National Health Service trust and for all ambulance services in England is shown in the table.

Data is only available from the date trusts introduced call prioritisation. East Anglian Ambulance Service introduced call prioritisation in 2000–01. All ambulance services in England had introduced call prioritisation by 2001–02.

Further information can be found in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2003–04." A copy is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0411.htm

	East Anglian	*England*
Percentage of category A calls responded within eight minutes		
1997–98	n/a	n/a
1998–99	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	n/a	n/a
2000–01	53.0	n/a
2001–02	63.8	70.8
2002–03	75.2	74.6
2003–04	76.1	75.7
Percentage of category A calls responded within 14 to 19 minutes		
1997–98	n/a	n/a
1998–99	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	n/a	n/a
2000–01	95.7	n/a
2001–02	95.7	94.1
2002–03	96.9	94.6
2003–04	96.6	93.9
Percentage of category B/C calls responded within 14 to 19 minutes		
1997–98	n/a	n/a
1998–99	n/a	n/a
1999–2000	n/a	n/a
2000–01	95.3	—
2001–02	94.8	90.2
2002–03	94.4	89.6
2003–04	93.0	87.5
Percentage of urgent journeys with arrival time not more than 15 minutes late		
1997–98	83.1	88.0
1998–99	73.0	84.0
1999–2000	68.7	80.5
2000–01	75.4	78.8
2001–02	80.1	78.5
2002–03	85.9	78.0
2003–04	93.1	78.1

n/a = not available.

Avian Flu

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to deal with *(a)* disruption of the supply of essential medicines and *(b)* health care workers falling ill in an avian flu pandemic. [220285]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As part of their ongoing local planning, national health service trusts have put measures in place to deal with these issues. The United Kingdom influenza pandemic contingency plan sets out a framework for trusts to ensure their plans are suitable for an influenza pandemic.

Cleaning and Hygiene

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the total expenditure by NHS hospitals on cleaning in each year since 1997. [219410]

Mr. Hutton: Collection of information on the total amount that national health service organisations spend on cleaning began in 2000. The details for the financial years since then are shown in the following table.

£ million

	Total expenditure on cleaning services
2000–01	403
2001–02	418
2002–03	460
2003–04	493

Counter Fraud and Security Management Service

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many assaults on NHS staff have been reported to the Counter Fraud and Security Management Service under the national reporting system; and what proportion of these assaults have results in criminal prosecutions. [216140]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A national reporting system for physical assaults against national health service staff has been put in place and will be fully operational by summer 2005; after which the data collected will be evaluated and made available.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* investigations and *(b)* investigations specifically relating to timesheet fraud by bank and agency staff the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service and its predecessor, the NHS Counter Fraud Service, have conducted since September 1998; and how many of these investigations resulted in (i) unsuccessful criminal prosecutions, (ii) successful criminal prosecutions and (iii) civil and disciplinary cases. [216143]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The total number of investigations completed by the national health service counter fraud and security management service since September 1998 is 2,096.

The number of investigations specifically relating to timesheet fraud by bank and agency staff is 120. Fraud was found to be present in 43 cases and not present in 77 cases. A breakdown of sanctions applied in relation to timesheet fraud is listed as follows:

One case was found not guilty.

33 cases resulted in successful criminal prosecutions.

19 cases resulted in disciplinary sanctions.

Six cases resulted in a civil recovery.

The total figure is greater than 43, as criminal, civil and disciplinary sanctions were applied jointly in cases where that was appropriate.

Cross-border Tracking

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what cross-border tracking of *(a)* adults and *(b)* children with (i) mental health and (ii) general health problems takes place between health authorities in England and Wales. [220266]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* In general terms, the primary care trust or local health board in whose area a patient is registered with a general practitioner (GP) practice will have responsibility for commissioning his or her care, regardless of what particular health problems he or she might have. When a patient moves across the border between England and Wales, we would expect that person to register with a GP practice at their earliest convenience, which then determines the authority responsible for their care. Their records will then be transferred to the new practice.

Some adults who have been in contact with mental health services will be subject to the multi-agency public protection panel arrangements. The arrangements for the tracking of individuals considered a risk to the public are detailed in paragraphs 76 and 77 of Probation Circular 54/2004, "The MAPPA Guidance". This places the responsibility firmly on the responsible authorities (the relevant police and probation services) initiating the transfer to ensure that the receiving authorities have both the information and the time to put suitable arrangements into place. The arrangements for moves between Wales and England are the same as those between English regions. Health bodies have a duty to cooperate with police and probation services in making these arrangements function effectively.

Dementia

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether free prescriptions are available for people who suffer from dementia; and if he will make a statement. [221365]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no plans to extend the existing list of medical conditions that give exemption from prescription charges. The list has been reviewed on a number of occasions but no clear cut case for extending it has emerged. There is no consensus on what additional conditions might be included in any revised list of medical exemptions, or how distinctions could be drawn between one condition and another. Those dementia sufferers who are aged 60 or over are currently entitled to free prescriptions on the ground of age.

Dentistry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for Westbury of 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 887W, on NHS Business Services Directory, what assessment he has made of the effects of the delay in implementation of the NHS dental contract on the merger of the Dental Practice Board into the proposed NHS Business Services Authority; and what the aims of establishing the new arm's length body are; [218880]

(2) whether any of the £368 million additional funding promised for dentistry will be used to pay for the merger of the Dental Practice Board into the proposed NHS Business Services Authority. [219074]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 28 February and 1 March 2005]:* The £368 million additional investment, which we announced on 16 July 2004, is for the development of national health service dentistry. The funding of the Department's arms length bodies, including the dental practice board (DPB), is from a separate source. The Department is working closely with the DPB to assess the impact of the rescheduled timetable for implementation of the new contractual arrangements for dentists on its operations. Plans are in place for the DPB to transfer the staff to the new Business Services Authority who will be required to deal with the expected workload. The NHS Pensions

Agency, the Prescription Pricing Authority and the DPB will merge to create a new payment and transactions processing entity. The new body will be able to develop general business skills, drawing on the best practice of each of the constituent bodies.

Departmental Policies (Birmingham)

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Birmingham, Northfield constituency, the effects of changes to departmental policy since 1997 on Birmingham Northfield constituency. [221240]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Birmingham Northfield constituency.

For example:

At the end of December 2004, the number of people waiting more than nine months for In-patient treatment within the South Birmingham Primary Care Trust (PCT) has fallen to zero, from 165 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2004, the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for Out-patient treatment within South Birmingham PCT has fallen to two, from 620 in June 2002.

In June 2003, at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, 90.4 per Cent., of patients spent less than four hours in accident and emergency from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. Figures for September 2004 show an improvement to 96.7 per cent.

Between September 1997 and June 2004, the number of consultants at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust has increased from 204 to 290. Between September 1997 and September 2003, the number of nurses has increased from 1,635 to 2,199.

Between September 2001 and June 2004, the number of general medical practitioners within South Birmingham PCT has increased from 262 to 293.

Figures for December 2004 show that all patients within South Birmingham PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a general practitioner within two working days and a primary care professional within one working day.

South Birmingham PCT is a "Spearhead" PCT. The "Spearhead" group of local authorities and PCTs will be used to assess the achievement of the Government targets to address geographical inequalities in life expectancy, cancer, heart disease, stroke and related diseases in 2010.

Four linear accelerators are due be delivered to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in March 2005.

Diamorphine

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 549W, on diamorphine, how many general practitioners are licensed to prescribe diamorphine for the treatment of drug addiction; and how many were licensed to do so in 1997. [214925]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 549W. The policy operated by the Home Office, which issues the licences and my Department is generally to restrict the issue of licenses to consultant psychiatrists in charge of national health service addiction treatment clinics. From time to time, it has been deemed appropriate to extend licensing to general practitioners with demonstrable special skills in the field when they are acting under the supervision of a consultant.

I understand the information requested on precise numbers of such general practitioners licensed to prescribe diamorphine for the treatment of drug addiction is not readily available and could not be obtained without disproportionate cost.

East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey primary care trust spent on mental health services in each of the past three years. [219404]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Expenditure on the commissioning of mental illness services by the East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey primary care trust (PCT) is shown in the following table. The PCT was established on 1 April 2002; therefore figures are only available for two years.

£000

	Amount
2002–03	38,142
2003–04	25,126

Notes:

1. The mental illness expenditure reported is the expenditure of the PCTs on the commissioning of secondary mental illness services from national health service bodies. This does not include all the relevant expenditure which cannot be separately identified centrally.
2. The figures do not include commissioning of mental illness services from independent providers. This expenditure is included within the commissioning of social care and cannot be separately analysed between mental illness, learning disability and similar services. Over the two years, there has been a £28.5 million increase in independent sector commissioning.
3. The figures are not comparable between PCTs and between years. There are a number of factors which may distort the figures, including PCTs commissioning on behalf of others, the devolution of mental illness budgets by health authorities and the increase in provision by the independent sector.

Sources:

Audited summarisation schedules of the East Elmbridge and Mid Surrey PCT, 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Eating Disorders

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what treatment is available on the NHS for people with eating disorders. [221150]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the location and type of service provided for people with eating disorders is not collected nationally. General services for people with eating disorders are normally available locally in primary and/or secondary care as a component of mental health service provision. Primary care trusts (PCTs), working in partnership, may also commission tertiary specialised services for those with the most severe conditions where planning is needed for a population considerably larger than that of a single PCT.

Clinical guidelines, published in 2004 by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, are available on the range of effective treatments for people with eating disorders and the national specialised services definition set contains information on commissioning tertiary services. A group led by the national director for mental health is currently reviewing the national specialised services definition set with a view to publishing updated guidance later this year.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were receiving treatment for eating disorders on the latest date for which figures are available, broken down by sex. [221151]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the requested format. It is only available concerning those patients with eating disorders treated by a consultant medical practitioner. It is not available for those seen by other professionals.

In 2003–04, there were 1,690 finished consultant episodes in national health service hospitals in England for people with a primary diagnosis of eating disorders, of which eight per cent, were male[1]. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 diagnostic fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and illustrates the main reason for the admission.

Finished consultant episodes are a count of the number of HES records submitted on behalf of English NHS hospital providers that relate to episodes of in-patient care which ended during the HES year. These figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.

Note:

[1] Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data is ungrossed).

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the number of people in England who have eating disorders but who are not registered as receiving treatment. [221152]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not centrally available. However, we are aware that a considerable volume of independent research exists relating to the epidemiology of eating disorders, their prevalence, severity and the most effective treatments. We commissioned the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) to develop a guideline on the management of eating disorders and their guidance, published in 2004, which contains useful information on all aspects of these important conditions. This guidance is available on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk.

Fluoridation

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish the Government's response to the consultation on water fluoridation. [218692]

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to table statutory instruments which will permit strategic health authorities to hold a local ballot on fluoridation. [220888]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 1 March 2005]:* On 23 February, I laid before Parliament draft regulations on the consultations, which strategic health authorities would be required to undertake if they proposed to enter into, vary, maintain or terminate arrangements with a water undertaker to increase the fluoride content of the water supplied by the undertaker. The draft took account of the consultations the Department undertook in 2004.

Frenchay Hospital

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there are covenants relating to land owned by the national health service on the Frenchay Hospital site which restrict the use of that land; and if he will make a statement. [221404]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for North Bristol national health service trust. I am informed by the Trust that although there are a number of planning restrictions, such as listed buildings, there are no restrictive covenants on the registered title.

Healthcare Commission Inspections

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether independent providers of care paid for by the NHS will be inspected by the Healthcare Commission under the same regime as *(a)* NHS providers and *(b)* other private providers. [219689]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* national health service healthcare delivered by the NHS or on its behalf by independent providers is subject to the provisions of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003, including inspection by the Healthcare Commission.

Organisations providing independent healthcare continue to be subject to the provisions of the Care Standards Act 2000, which include registration and inspection by the Healthcare Commission, taking account of the National Minimum Standards for independent healthcare.

Healthy Eating

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the Advertising Standards Agency on implementing in food advertising the recommendations of the Health Select Committee Report on Obesity. [220797]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Secretary of State has not had any such discussions with the Advertising Standards Authority.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with fast food companies on the promotion of healthy eating. [220798]

Miss Melanie Johnson: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health, met with representatives of the British Hospitality Association, jointly with my

right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and representatives of the National Farmers Union, the British Retail Consortium, the Food and Drink Federation and the Advertising Association in early autumn 2004 to discuss their proposal to work with Government in developing healthy eating education campaigns.

Information for Patients

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether under his proposals for patient choice information will be available for patients on *(a)* cleanliness, *(b)* infection rates, *(c)* success of specific treatments, *(d)* individual consultants' performance and *(e)* patient satisfaction rates at (i) NHS hospitals and (ii) independent hospitals or treatment centres providing care paid for by the NHS. [219742]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The Department is enhancing the website www.nhs.uk to provide both patients and general practitioners with easily accessible, comparative information about providers on waiting times, accessibility and quality and performance. This information will be drawn from the Healthcare Commission's star ratings on clinical quality and patient experience. In addition, the British Medical "Journal's Best Treatments" series of elective surgery guides are available free of charge through NHS Direct Online.

Consultation with patients and clinicians has suggested that a wider range of data, and data relating to clinical effectiveness and outcomes may be helpful to inform choice. The Department is taking forward work in developing additional information sets in consultation with key stakeholders.

Information on Methicillin-resistant "Staphylococcus Aureus"(MRSA) bloodstream infections is currently available on the Department's website at:

www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/PublicationsStatisticsArticle/fs/en?CONTENTJD=4085951&chk=HBt2QD.

Mandatory national surveillance has been in place since April 2001 and information for the last three years is available for all acute trusts in England.

Comparable information on these indicators will be available for independent sector providers and is likely to draw on the existing arrangements for contract monitoring.

Kent Autistic Trust

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what additional financial support he plans to give to the Kent Autistic Trust from April. [221124]

Dr. Ladyman: There are no plans to provide financial support to the Kent Autistic Trust from April.

The Department is only able to provide financial support to voluntary organisations through the Section 64: General Scheme of Grants to Voluntary Organisations. No Section 64 application was received from the Kent Autistic Trust for the 2005–06 round.

Leicester Royal Infirmary (A and E Admissions)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many admissions to the Leicester Royal Infirmary Accident and Emergency Department were found to be related to alcohol consumption in each year since 1997. [221205]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the reply that I gave him on 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 977W.

Meat Hygiene

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what statistics are collected by the Meat Hygiene Service to monitor the number of carcasses presented for inspection with visible faecal contamination which require subsequent removal by trimming; [219006]

(2) what procedures are in place to ensure that the Meat Hygiene Service accurately records the number of carcasses presented for inspection at UK meat plants which are visibly faecally contaminated and subsequently need to be trimmed to remove that contamination; [219007]

(3) how many carcasses, in each year between 1995 and 2004 were *(a)* rejected in their entirety as unfit for human consumption at inspection by the Meat Hygiene Service and *(b)* rejected at inspection by the Meat Hygiene Service as requiring trimming to remove faecal contamination before being passed fit for human consumption. [219008]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am advised that the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS)—which only operates in Great Britain: separate arrangements apply in Northern Ireland—does not collate statistics relating to visible faecal contamination of meat. It does, however, require its staff, through instructions contained in the MHS operations manual, to record incidences whereby visible contamination of meat—which includes faecal contamination but also other substances such as rust, grease and hair—has led to its rejection. The records for 2001 to 2004 are shown in table 1. Statistics relating to previous years are not readily available.

Table 1

	Recorded incidences of visible contamination			
Category	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Bovines[1]	136,170	160,350	146,631	150,824
Sheep and goats	661,808	749,886	631,548	648,972
Pigs	411,741	400,007	313,222	322,455
Poultry	429,103	499,662	531,690	669,039
Other	6,143	6,493	2,876	2,255

[1] These figures do not include bovines processed under the over thirty months scheme, as these are not processed for human consumption.

Figures for the total number of carcases rejected in their entirety as being unfit for human consumption at inspection by the MHS in Great Britain in 2001 to 2004 are shown in table 2. Statistics relating to previous years are not available.

Table 2

	Year							
	2001		2002		2003		2004	
Category	*Total throughput*	*Rejected*	*Total throughput*	*Rejected*	*Total throughput*	*Rejected*	*Total throughput*	*Rejected*
Bovines[1]	1,770,777	1,426	1,879,052	4,034	1,883,789	1,726	1,941,207	2,292
Sheep and goats	12,313,453	10,180	14,661,441	23,921	14,640,154	19,552	14,931,184	18,166
Pigs	9,583,116	22,226	9,352,828	27,864	8,050,382	26,621	7,948,541	29,206
Poultry	795,392,486	637,440	781,596,517	2,323,987	786,947,608	1,657,446	788,975,131	2,092,945
Other	840,519	10,820	1,117,071	14,332	1,388,894	16,478	2,063,935	26,680

[1] These figures do not include bovines processed under the over thirty months scheme, as these are not processed for human consumption.

Mental Health

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what basis funding for mental health services is calculated; and what assessment is made of local needs when making that calculation. [221172]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department allocates revenue funding to primary care trusts on the basis of the relative needs of their populations.

It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use these funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been set for trusts regarding mental health provision. [221173]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national service framework (NSF) for mental health, published in 1999, sets out the national standards for mental health, what they aim to achieve, how they should be developed and delivered and how to measure performance in every part of the country. Following this, the NHS plan, published in 2000, set plans and targets for investment and reforms in the national health service in England. In addition, the priorities and planning framework, published in 2002, sets out detailed targets for the next three years—2003–06. Both these documents include targets for mental health service provision.

Copies of these publications are available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/fs/en.

Ministerial Stationery

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips in each year since 1997. [214944]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's accounting system does not provide the level of detail requested.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the impact upon multiple sclerosis therapy centres of the Health and Safety Commission's recent decision to raise the cost of annual inspections. [218246]

Dr. Ladyman: The Written Ministerial Statement that was made to the House on Tuesday 8 February, *Official Report*, columns 76–78WS, outlined the increases in registration and inspections fees that will be levied by the Healthcare Commission, from 1 April 2005, as regulator of the independent healthcare sector. It is firm Government policy that we should move to a position where the recurrent costs of providing regulation are fully recovered from all service providers, so that the future care needs of the country can be met. The fee increases for 2005–06 are part of this process.

Nevertheless, the Government are committed to tackling the issue of overall regulation costs, which will ultimately limit what service providers will pay in the future. We are also working with the Commission to ensure that its inspection services are provided as cost-effectively as possible.

NHS Estate

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish annual figures on the numbers of *(a)* primary care centres completed and *(b)* general practitioner premises modernised. [217581]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table. It shows the cumulative number of one-stop centres built and general practitioner premises replaced and modernised as at 31 December in each year since 2000–01.

The information was not collected centrally prior to that date.

	One-stop centres completed or under construction	*GP premises refurbishments/ replacements completed or under construction*
December 2001	68	916
December 2002	219	1,393
December 2003	268	1,950

North Bristol NHS Trust

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent staff are employed by North Bristol NHS Trust; and how many members of staff are employed in each role within the Trust. [221405]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS): Medical and dental staff by grade and non-medical staff by main staff group employed within North Bristol NHS Trust

As at 30 September 2003	*Number full-time equivalent*
Total staff	6,768
All medical and dental staff	649
Of which:	
Consultant	227
Associate specialist/staff grade	32
Registrar group	157
Senior house officer	184
House officer	44
Hospital practitioner/clinical assistant	5
Other staff	2
Total non-medical staff	6,119
Of which:	
Professionally qualified clinical staff	3,055
Qualified nurses	2,099
Qualified ST and T staff	957
Qualified allied health professionals	320
Other qualified ST and T staff	637
Support to clinical staff	1,593
Support to doctors and nurses	1,268
Support to ST and T total	325
NHS infrastructure support	1,470
Central functions	689
Hotel property and estate staff	573
Managers and senior managers	208

Notes:
ST and T—Scientific, therapeutic and technical.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census.

Nurse Retention

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of nurses who trained in England continued to work in the national health service for five years in the last period for which figures are available. [220486]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally for England.

Information for the other United Kingdom countries are matters for the devolved Administrations.

Obesity

Mr. Paul Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many surgical procedures to treat obesity were carried out on the NHS in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [216383]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were for *(a)* paediatric and *(b)* adolescent obesity treatment in (i) England and (ii) each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [216391]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Paddington Basin Health Campus

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his officials last met to discuss developments in the Paddington Health Campus project; and who was present at the meeting. [221516]

Mr. Hutton: Senior officers from the Department met with officials from St Mary's National Health Service Trust, Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust and North West London strategic health authority on 2 March. The attendees were:

Peter Coates—Deputy Director of finance—investment,

John Bacon—Group Director of health and social care services delivery and the Department's management board member,

Dr. Gareth Goodier—Chief Executive, North West London strategic health authority,

Julian Nettel—Chief Executive, St Mary's NHS Trust, and

Anthony Newman-Taylor—Acting Chief Executive Royal Brompton Harefield NHS Trust.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what investment in improved cardiothoracic facilities at Harefield Hospital he proposes to cover the unavailability of the planned new heart hospital at the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [221731]

Mr. Hutton: The outline business case for the Paddington Health Campus (PHC) submitted to the Department in December 2004 explains that the Royal Brompton and Harefield national health service trust does not support the continuation of specialist services at Harefield Hospital under any future development plans should the PHC project not proceed. In such circumstances, detailed consideration would need to be given to the re-provision of Harefield's cardiothoracic services elsewhere.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money in total *(a)* his Department and *(b)* relevant NHS trusts will be devoting to the Paddington Health Campus in each financial year from 2005–06 to 2007–08. [221733]

Mr. Hutton: Expenditure on the Paddington Health Campus in future years will be dependent upon approval of the outline business case (OBC) submitted in December 2004. An addendum to the OBC is currently being prepared by the Royal Brompton and Harefield and St. Mary's national health service trusts and will be submitted following agreement on a land deal. On the basis of the OBC being approved, annual project development costs for 2005–06 to 2007–08 are estimated to be in the region of £4-£5 million. In addition, there is likely to be significant expenditure associated with land acquisitions, disposals and town planning. Details of these costs will be included within the addendum to the OBC.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he deems that sufficient land is available to the NHS for the completion of the Paddington Basin Health Campus in its entirety. [221756]

Mr. Hutton: The land needed for the Paddington Health Campus is agreed and identified. Terms for its purchase, acceptable to the national health service have not yet been agreed.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216526]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to specific elements within a project as well as to an entire project. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Public Health (Control of Disease) Act

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to review the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984. [220577]

Miss Melanie Johnson: "Getting Ahead of the Curve", the infectious disease strategy published by the Chief Medical Officer in January 2002, made clear the intention of reviewing infectious disease law. No specific timetable for the review has been set as yet: we have always intended that it should be carried out at the point when it can make the most effective contribution to improving the control and prevention of infectious disease.

Our top priority, in terms of improving health protection, has been the legislation to establish the Health Protection Agency (HPA). It has existed since April 2003 as a special health authority in England and Wales and will be established from 1 April 2005 as a United Kingdom-wide public body under the Health Protection Agency Act 2004. As a result of the creation of the HPA, consultants in communicable disease control (who generally discharge the "local authority proper officer" function under the 1984 Act) are in England all now employed by the HPA. This is an improvement on the previous position; when such consultants were in effect single-handed practitioners, each based in a local national health service body, which could offer them relatively little specialist support.

In preparation for the planned review of the law, we asked the HPA last year to consider first how public health practitioners might make more effective use of the powers currently provided by the 1984 Act; and second, what difficulties practitioners find with the current powers and what changes might be desirable. We expect to receive the results of this work from the HPA in the first half of this year.

We are contributing to the development of new International Health Regulations (IHR) by the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO aims to adopt the new IHR at the World Health Assembly in May 2005. Many of the requirements of the current IHR are reflected in regulations made under infectious disease law in the UK, which will need to be revised once the new IHR are in place. In the meantime, the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 has provided new emergency powers which complement those provided through public health legislation.

We will take decisions on the timetable for the review of public health law in the light of the work being carried out by the HPA and of progress with agreeing and implementing the new IHR.

Regional Directors of Public Health

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the position of Regional Director of Public Health for each English region was established; what the total budget for their activities is; how many staff each office has; what their remit is; and if he will make a statement. [219075]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 1 March 2005]:* The position of Regional Directors of Public Health (RDsPH) was established in April 2002.

The remit of RDsPH is to improve the health of the population within their regions, through reducing inequalities in health, protecting the health of the public and improving the standards and quality of services affecting determinants of health.

Their responsibilities include work with other Government Departments, agencies, voluntary and business communities, nationally and regionally, to tackle the wider determinants of health. They ensure that health considerations are reflected in plans and programmes in areas such as housing, crime, education, transport and environmental planning and underpin economic and urban regeneration.

Staff in post and budgets for each region for 2004–05 is shown in the following table.

Regional public health group	*Staff in post*	*Budget (£ million)*
East of England	13	1.950
London	14	6.135
South East	16	4.076
North East	16	2.092
North West	17	5.273
West Midlands	16	4.333
East Midlands	16	3.380
Yorks and Humber	17	2.321
South West	16	4.414
Total	141	33.980

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* Executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219886]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The following two bodies for which the Department is responsible have regional offices covering the regional Government office areas:

The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, the offices of which were established in 2003.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the offices of which were established on 1 April 2004. In addition to the eight regional offices covering the regional Government office areas, the CSCI has an additional office for the south-east region.

Renal Services

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department is publishing for primary care trusts on the implementation of the renal national service framework. [212332]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for primary care trusts commissioning renal services to set priorities for local action based on the standards, quality requirements and markers of good practice set out in the national service framework for renal services. We are supporting local delivery through various programmes and national health service pilots, including redesigning the work force, re-engineering elective vascular access surgery, patient transport, care planning, end-of-life care and redesigning the built environment. We will share the results with the NHS as these programmes and pilots complete.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether kidney patients awaiting vascular access surgery will be able to exercise patient choice; and if he will make a statement. [212335]

Mr. Hutton: The national service framework for renal services makes clear we are determined that kidney patients should have timely and appropriate surgery for permanent vascular access. Latest data for 2003–04 show the average time waited for vascular access surgery was 41 days. However, where, exceptionally, patients wait longer than six months on the waiting list, primary care trusts are responsible for offering choice of an alternative provider in line with the Department's "Choice of Hospital" guidance.

By the end of 2005, all patients will be able to choose from at least four or five different providers at the point of general practitioner referral.

Social Services Staff

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements he has made for *(a)* issuing advice and *(b)* monitoring practice in joint health social service care teams in connection with a common approach to human resource issues, with particular reference to (i) pay and conditions, (ii) pension entitlements and (iii) and access to training. [219712]

Mr. Hutton: There are no central arrangements. It is the responsibility of the employers concerned to ensure that effective human resource management policies and practices are in place. Pay and conditions are negotiated locally for social services. The national training strategy grant and human resource development grant, paid by the Department to local authorities, is for use, at local discretion, to support human resource and training initiatives, with encouragement given to ensure that partners in the private and voluntary sector benefit.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which ministers were not present. [210541]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All meetings held by special advisers and all speeches given by special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the "Code of Conduct for Special Advisers".

Speech Therapy

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many speech therapists have been working in the NHS in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [221153]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

National health service hospital and community health services: qualified speech and language therapists employed in the NHS as at 30 September 1999 to 2003

Number

	Headcount	*Whole-time equivalents*
1999	5,185	3,939
2000	5,430	4,066
2001	5,685	4,207
2002	5,960	4,365
2003	6,243	4,707

Source:
Department of Health non-medical workforce census

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the most recent average waiting time for first referral for a patient to see a speech therapist is; and what changes have occurred to waiting times over the past five years. [221154]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Student Health Care

Dr. Desmond Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will estimate the cost of administering the processing of HC1 forms for students; [220821]

(2) if he will estimate the combined cost in a year of exempting all students from charges for prescription, dental care and eye tests. [220830]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2003–04, the administrative cost of processing national health service low income scheme HC1 application forms received from students is estimated to have been about £714,000.

It is estimated that it would cost about £85 million to exempt part-time and full-time students in higher education aged 19 and over from charges for prescriptions, dental care and eye tests. This total figure includes the £4.2 million estimated value of exemptions to those students who are currently exempt.

Students aged under 19 in full-time education are already entitled to free prescriptions, dental care, sight tests and optical vouchers.

Sudan 1

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what information the Government are providing to owners of smaller corner shops to help them identify the products that should be withdrawn from the shelves as a result of the Sudan I dye recall; [218355]

(2) what the reasons were for the delay between the notification to the Food Standards Agency of a potential problem with the Sudan 1 dye and the agency making a public announcement; [218356]

(3) what the total cost of the Sudan 1 dye recall is estimated to be. [218357]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Full information has been made available on the Food Standards Agency's website of foods known to be contaminated with Sudan 1, and this was provided to a number of stakeholder organisations, including the Association of Convenience Stores, to distribute to their members. In addition, the FSA has asked all local authorities to contact food businesses in their area to ensure the recall has been effective.

The FSA made a public announcement less than 24 hours after it received accurate and reliable information from the food industry on products contaminated with Sudan 1 dye.

The FSA has not undertaken an assessment of the cost of the Sudan 1 recall.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220940]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not disposed of any surplus stocks on the eBay auction website.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of whether the Public Service Agreement target to reduce the under-18 conception rate by 50 per cent. by 2010 will be met. [219238]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families (Margaret Hodge) on Tuesday 8 March, *Official Report*, column 1785W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether the Public Service Agreement target to improve value for money in the NHS and personal social services by at least 2 per cent. per annum was met in 2004; [219243]

(2) whether the Public Service Agreement target to improve both cost efficiency and service effectiveness in the NHS and personal social services by 1 per cent. per annum was met in 2004. [219244]

Mr. Hutton: Progress against value for money targets will be reported in the Department's annual report.

Trust Mergers

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list mergers of *(a)* NHS acute trusts and *(b)* primary care trusts which have (i) been proposed and (ii) taken place; [221168]

(2) what safeguards are in place to maintain the objectivity of merged acute trusts and primary care trusts when commissioning care from other acute trusts; [221169]

(3) what assessment he has made of the benefits of merging acute and primary care trusts. [221170]

Mr. Hutton: No acute trusts and primary care trusts have merged and the Department is unaware of any formal proposals to merge. Given this situation, the Department has not introduced safeguards to maintain objectivity and there has also been no formal assessment made of the benefits of merging acute and primary care trusts.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are to merge *(a)* acute hospital trusts and *(b)* primary care trusts in Hampshire. [221171]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is not aware of any plans to merge acute trusts or primary care trusts in Hampshire.

Variant CJD

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1697W, on variant CJD, what monitoring is being undertaken by the Medical Research Council of the effectiveness of pentosan polysulphate in the treatment of variant CJD; and for what reasons pentosan polysulphate has not been included in the Prian-1 trial. [218014]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In September 2001, the Department asked the Medical Research Council (MRC) to design a clinical trial to evaluate the effectiveness of quinacrine as a potential treatment for variant Creutzfeld Jacob disease (vCJD). Pentosan polysulphate was not included in the trial protocol because expert advice from the Committee on Safety of Medicines and the CJD therapy advisory group in 2002 and again in 2003, did not support its use as a possible treatment for CJD on grounds of safety and efficacy. Both these expert committees will continue to review new data on pentosan polysulphate.

At the request of the Department in December 2003, the MRC agreed to offer patients receiving pentosan polysulphate treatment the opportunity to participate in standardised clinical monitoring. It is for the MRC to decide, in consultation with the families concerned and their clinicians, what would be the most appropriate information to collect, and how it should be collected.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Housing

Martin Linton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes have been built in *(a)* London, *(b)* Wandsworth and *(c)* Battersea through the (i) Housing Corporation and (ii) Government-funded schemes since 2000. [218527]

Keith Hill: The total annual number of affordable homes provided since 2000–01 through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme

(ADP) and Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) for London and Wandsworth are shown in the following table.

Number

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
London				
ADP	5395	6289	5501	7073
LASHG	1450	1255	1061	755
Wandsworth				
ADP	94	130	116	108
LASHG	11	0	4	0

Source:
Housing Corporation. Figures include units provided for sale or rent. Also ADP homebuy from 2001–02. Figures exclude the Starter Homes Initiative.

LASHG was abolished from 1 April 2003. Figures for 2003–04 are those completed through transitional LASHG arrangements for debt free and with debt authorities.

All figures include acquisitions and refurbishments as well as new build. Figures are not available for Battersea.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received in relation to changes in council tax banding. [219857]

Mr. Raynsford: Records held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister do not differentiate representations which relate to council tax banding from those which relate to other council tax matters. A precise figure could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the forecast for council tax receipts in each London borough are for 2004–05. [220175]

Mr. Raynsford: The available information is tabled as follows. These are the amounts of council tax budgeted to be received by London boroughs (including the City) for 2004–05, including amounts collected on behalf of the Greater London Authority, and amounts funded from council tax benefit.

These figures do not include forecasts for the amounts to be received during 2004–05 relating to years before 2004–05, nor for prepayments of 2005–06 council taxes.

£ million

	2004–05 Council tax requirement for billing authority	*2004–05 Billing authority's share of Greater London Authority council tax requirement*	*Total*
Barking and Dagenham	44.351	12.321	56.672
Barnet	131.272	32.578	163.850
Bexley	78.693	20.112	98.805
Brent	83.363	22.358	105.721
Bromley	104.061	31.425	135.486
Camden	86.810	21.842	108.652
City of London	3.436	0.275	3.711
Croydon	113.940	29.754	143.694
Ealing	106.685	27.092	133.777
Enfield	101.443	25.725	127.168
Greenwich	67.562	18.127	85.689
Hackney	60.960	15.014	75.974
Hammersmith and Fulham	68.613	18.603	87.216
Haringey	82.964	19.668	102.632
Harrow	86.487	20.188	106.675
Havering	90.261	20.891	111.152
Hillingdon	91.949	22.781	114.730
Hounslow	83.790	19.808	103.598
Islington	66.678	18.577	85.255
Kensington and Chelsea	67.769	22.947	90.716
Kingston upon Thames	64.832	14.659	79.491
Lambeth	77.916	23.239	101.155
Lewisham	76.764	20.585	97.349
Merton	69.343	17.286	86.629
Newham	57.077	16.845	73.922
Redbridge	79.072	21.184	100.256
Richmond upon Thames	93.306	20.513	113.819
Southwark	73.025	21.253	94.278
Sutton	66.188	17.014	83.202
Tower Hamlets	54.347	17.107	71.454
Waltham Forest	73.158	17.596	90.754
Wandsworth	40.322	27.058	67.380
Westminster	44.195	29.315	73.510

Note:
Figures shown include amounts funded from council tax benefit.
Source:
BR1 returns to ODPM

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will remove or reduce the requirement on residential boat owners to pay the full amount of council tax. [221560]

Mr. Raynsford: No. A mooring occupied by a boat which is somebody's sole or main residence is deemed to be a "dwelling" for council tax purposes and will therefore attract a council tax liability in the same way as other domestic types of property. The amount of council tax payable in respect of a mooring occupied by a boat will depend primarily on the valuation band to which the dwelling is assigned. The normal exemptions and discounts, for example for single occupancy, apply and council tax benefit is available for people on low incomes.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has held with the Scottish Executive on council tax revaluation in Scotland. [220908]

Mr. Raynsford: Discussions about council tax revaluation between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Scottish Executive have taken place from time-to-time as part of our liaison about local government finance issues of mutual interest.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has had with the National Assembly for Wales Government on council tax revaluation in Wales. [220909]

Mr. Raynsford: Discussions about council tax revaluation between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government have taken place from time-to-time as part of our liaison about local government finance issues of mutual interest.

Departmental Policies

Geraint Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Croydon Central, the effects of the Department's policies and actions on Croydon Central constituency since 1997. [220382]

Yvette Cooper: Along with other Government Departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to improving the lives of people across the whole of the UK. For example, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is determined that everyone should have the opportunity to have a decent home, and since 1997 we have reduced the number of non-decent homes nationally by 1 million.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister provides grant funding that benefits the Croydon Central constituency through a number of programmes.

For example over the period 2001–06 Croydon has been allocated £2.5 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources to help the local authority, in collaboration with the Local Strategic Partnership, improve services in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the area.

More broadly, since 1997 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been able to increase the total amount of Government grant given to local authorities by £22.6 billion. This is a 33 per cent. increase in real terms. Croydon has received an average annual increase in formula grant since 1997 of 4.4 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 Census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neihbourhood.statistics.gov.uk./

Jon Trickett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Hemsworth constituency, the effects of changes to departmental policy since 1997 on Hemsworth constituency. [220858]

Yvette Cooper: Along with other Government Departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to improving the lives of people across the whole of the UK. For example, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is determined that everyone should have the opportunity to have a decent home, and since 1997 we have reduced the number of non-decent homes nationally by one million.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister provides grant funding that benefits the Hemsworth constituency through a number of programmes.

For example, over the period 2001–06 Wakefield has been allocated £18.9 million Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources to help the local authority, in collaboration with the Local Strategic Partnership, improve services in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the area.

More broadly, since 1997 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been able to increase the total amount of government grant given to local authorities by £22.6 billion. This is a 33 per cent. increase in real terms. Wakefield metropolitan district council has received an average annual increase in formula grant since 1997 of 5.1 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 Census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mr. Meale: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if his Department will bring forward proposals to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of disabled facilities grant application systems; [220709]

(2) how many applications were made for disabled facilities grants in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by region; and how many of those applications were successful, broken down by region; [220710]

(3) whether mortgage payments are taken into account when assessment is made of disabled facilities grant applications; [220711]

(4) what plans the Government has to increase the maximum level of disabled facilities grant; [220712]

(5) what the average time taken was for consideration of applications made for disabled facilities grants in each region in the last period for which figures are available; [220713]

(6) what assessment his Department has made of the abolition of the means testing of disabled facilities grant applications in Northern Ireland. [220714]

Yvette Cooper: The Government announced a review of the operation of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme on 5 January 2004. This review is now under way. Its terms of reference are to review the operation and outcomes of the Disabled Facilities Grant Programme and to make proposals to improve its efficiency and fairness. A number of financial and policy issues affecting the programme, including the operation of the means test and the maximum grant limit will be evaluated. Officials are due to report back to Ministers in May this year and any proposals for change will then be published for consultation.

The DFG means test takes account of an applicant's income and capital over £6,000, but not of any financial outgoings such as mortgage payments. Instead total income is compared with a range of expenditure allowances and premiums which are up-rated periodically to keep them in line with increases in the cost of living. This is standard practice for many state benefits where a means test is applied.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect information on how many disabled people have applied for DFG, or the number of people waiting for DFG. We have not undertaken a formal assessment of the abolition of the DFG means test for families with a disabled child in Northern Ireland, but the effects of this change will be considered as part of the DFG Review.

Engagements

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the official visits made to Merseyside by Ministers in his Department between 1 January 2004 and 28 February, broken down by *(a)* date, *(b)* location and *(c)* the Ministers concerned. [221194]

Yvette Cooper: The information is as follows:

Date	*Minister*	*Location*
20 January 2004	Yvette Cooper	Kensington and Albert Dock
29 January 2004	Phil Hope	Central Liverpool and Sefton
2 February 2004	Keith Hill	Newheartlands
2 March 2004	Lord Rooker	Sefton and Knowsley
5 May 2004	Nick Raynsford	Central Liverpool
12 May 2004	Keith Hill	Central Liverpool
21 May 2004	John Prescott	Central Liverpool
15 June 2004	Nick Raynsford	St. Helens
8 September 2004	Keith Hill	St. Helens
17 November 2004	Nick Raynsford	Central Liverpool
8 December 2004	Keith Hill	Central Liverpool and Sefton
27 January 2005	Keith Hill	Liverpool
27 January 2005	John Prescott	Albert Dock
28 January 2005	John Prescott	Central Liverpool
28 February 2005	John Prescott	St. Helens

English Partnerships

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what reports his Department has received of English Partnerships acquiring land that might otherwise have been available for schemes that include a proportion of social rented housing. [220995]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not aware of any acquisitions of land by English Partnerships which have prevented an already identified proportion of social rented housing being built on the site in question.

A core part of English Partnerships work is to help deliver an increased level of affordable housing, and it will often work in partnership with the Housing Corporation, Registered Social Landlords, local authorities and private sector developers to increase the overall percentages of affordable housing on sites that English Partnerships has acquired under its programmes.

FOI Requests

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is in respect of the publication *(a)* on the departmental website and *(b)* by placing copies in the Library of (i) all or (ii) a selection of the information disclosed in response to Freedom of Information requests since January. [215222]

Yvette Cooper: Guidance on Publication Schemes, issued by the Department for Constitutional Affairs in July 2002, recommended that where information is disclosed to an individual in response to a request under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, Departments and NDPBs should consider whether the information disclosed is of general interest and include released information in the Publication Scheme where appropriate

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims to publish all responses to FOI requests where we judge there is a general public interest, as opposed to esoteric matters, or matters of interest only to the requester. Preparations are in hand to ensure that new information selected for publication will be identified in the FOI section of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website, and this will be listed by date of release.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no specific intention to publish material by placing copies in the library of the House, over and above material that we would normally publish in this way or, where appropriate, in answer to parliamentary questions.

Gypsies/Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 3 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1083W, on Gypsies/Travellers, what the outturn expenditure by central Government on *(a)* authorised Traveller sites and *(b)* illegal Traveller encampments by the (i) Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions and (ii) Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions was in each year. [220186]

Yvette Cooper: The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 repealed the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's power to pay grant to local authorities to establish gypsy caravan sites, together with their duty to provide such sites. The then government committed to pay Grant funding for all valid applications received by November 1994. Under this regime the following payments were made:

Financial year	*Grant paid (£ million)*
1997–98	3.8
1998–99	0.9
1999–2000	0.6

Since the creation of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2002 it has provided the following funding to local authorities to enable them to renew and refurbish the existing network of local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites through its Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant:

Financial year	*Grant paid (£)*
2002–03	2,843,847
2003–04	6,084,059
2004–05	[1]7,739,726

[1] Allocated

£8 million is available for the 2005–06 financial year.

There was no outturn expenditure on illegal traveller encampments for this period. The costs associated with unauthorised camping are borne by individual local authorities or private landowners, rather than by central Government.

A lack of sites Gypsies and Travellers has contributed to the problem of unauthorised developments and encampments. The Government are committed to increasing site provision in appropriate locations.

High Hedges

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the reasons are for the change in time scale

for implementing the provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 on high hedges; and if he will make a statement. [220773]

Phil Hope: Last summer's public consultation on implementing the high hedges provisions in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 identified a number of issues which have necessitated further work. These issues were the whole question of fees which a complainant must pay to the local authority for investigating their case and a streamlined appeals process which will place less of a burden on local authorities and the Planning Inspectorate. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently revising the Regulations and guidance for local authorities in the light of the consultation responses, with a view to laying Regulations before Parliament shortly.

Homelessness

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many families have claimed to be homeless in *(a)* London and *(b)* England in each year since 1997; [212372]

(2) how many people were homeless in *(a)* London and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [212373]

Yvette Cooper: Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly and is in respect of households, rather than people. The number of decisions on applications for housing from households eligible under homelessness legislation for authorities in England and London, since 1997, is in the following tabled. Also shown is the number of these households who were accepted as unintentionally homeless and in priority need and how many of these households contained children/pregnant women.

Decisions[1] by local authorities on applications for housing under homelessness legislation and the number of acceptances[2], England and London, 1997–98 to 2003–04

Number

	England			*London*		
		Of which acceptances[2]			*Of which acceptances[2]*	
	Decisions[1]	*Total*	*With children/ pregnant women*	*Decisions[1]*	*Total*	*With children/ pregnant women*
1997–98	243,730	102,430	70,370	55,170	24,300	16,830
1998–99	244,830	104,260	72,040	56,990	26,580	18,760
1999–2000	243,240	105,580	72,930	61,060	27,950	20,080
2000–01	249,580	114,670	77,600	61,060	29,710	21,510
2001–02	256,050	117,810	78,370	62,210	30,470	21,180
2002–03	281,720	130,070	81,560	62,140	31,320	21,140
2003–04	300,840	137,000	84,310	69,040	31,530	20,410

[1] Eligible for assistance.
[2] Households eligible under homelessness legislation and found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category.
Source:
ODPM PIE homelessness returns (quarterly)

Housing

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 336W, if he will list each location of the surplus public sector land that has been identified for affordable housing, broken down by *(a)* brownfield and *(b)* greenfield sites. [219905]

Keith Hill: Following the publication of the Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003) effective arrangements have been established to identify land that becomes surplus to the public sector and to consider whether it has a continuing use within the public sector.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister through English Partnerships has set up the Register of surplus public sector land. The Register lists landholdings held by central Government and its agencies that are surplus to requirements. Any Department wishing to dispose of surplus land is required to place that land on the Register for a period of 40 working days before the land is marketed. The Register currently consists of over 800 parcels of land totalling almost 4000 hectares. The majority of the sites are brownfield and include previously developed land and buildings that are vacant or derelict and have the potential for redevelopment. The Register is currently being developed to allow on-line access by early April 2005 to central Government users. Brownfield and greenfield land will be easily identifiable. English Partnerships will publish a quarterly return of surplus sites on the Register.

English Partnerships has also established an agreement with Defence Estates to work closely together on the future use of surplus defence land. This will allow Defence Estates to deliver its disposal programme and for English Partnerships to help deliver the objectives set out in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan. English Partnerships acquired the former RAF staff college site from Defence Estates in February 2004. Housing proposals for this site are currently being taken forward.

In April 2004 my right hon. the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health announced that a portfolio of about 100 surplus NHS sites would be transferred to help deliver the objectives of the communities plan. We expect the first sites in this portfolio to be transferred to English Partnerships shortly. English Partnerships has also acquired a portfolio of surplus brownfield sites across London to provide 2000 affordable homes for sale out of a total development of about 4000 units. Development will start in 2005–06 and the homes will be delivered over the next five years.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and English Partnerships have now also published information on individual sites reported by local authorities for the National Land Use Database(NLUD) of Previously-Developed Land. The information is on the NLUD website www.nlud.org.uk.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister anticipates that a significant number of vacant surplus sites will be used for housing development to tackle the problem of housing shortages and the demand for affordable homes. This will be determined through local planning policies and strategies in the normal way.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will estimate the cost to public funds of restoring Right-to-Buy *(a)* discounts and *(b)* eligibility requirements to 1997 levels. [219875]

Keith Hill: I regret that it is not possible to provide such an estimate, which would depend on assumptions about the number of tenants who would have exercised their Right to Buy if the changes to maximum Right to Buy discounts in February 1999 and March 2003 had not been made. This means that the overall effect of the changes on tenants' perceptions and behaviour, and hence on the overall level of sales, the amount of discount for which they would have qualified, and the amount of capital receipts that would have generated cannot be assessed with any accuracy.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library the papers and representations that have been submitted to the Lyons Review into the balance of funding. [219859]

Mr. Raynsford: The Lyons Inquiry into local government funding is independent of the Government. I understand that Sir Michael Lyons intends to make available the evidence that underpins his conclusions and recommendations once the report is published.

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much financial assistance his Department has provided to the City of Liverpool in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [221192]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established following the Machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The following table sets out the amounts of formula grant and other grants and payments made to the City of Liverpool by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since 2002–03. For earlier years, the table shows the amounts paid by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's predecessor Departments from programmes which are now administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

All figures (£ million)

	Formula grant[1]	*Other grants and payments*
1997–98	366.189	48.432
1998–99	391.248	52.146
1999–2000	411.313	48.103
2000–01	426.739	58.102
2001–02	446.374	53.447
2002–03	448.008	81.152
2003–04	493.998	135.683
2004–05 (forecast)	517.006	126.134

[1] These figures may not be comparable year-on-year due to changes in the funding and function of local authorities.

Opinion Polling

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what contracts his Department has agreed with organisations for opinion polling and related research since June 2001. [219958]

Yvette Cooper: Full details of our research, since the creation of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2002, is available on the Research Management Database on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: http://www.rmd.odpm.gov.uk/programmes.asp

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not carry out 'Opinion Polling' in the sense of asking people about their political opinion.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) for what purposes NOP research was continued during the North East referendum campaign period; and whether the research findings accumulated before the official campaign period were made available to *(a)* the Yes campaign and *(b)* to Ministers; [220294]

(2) what advice he received from the Cabinet Office on spending public money on NOP World research in connection with the Your Say information campaign between June 2003 and September 2004; [220295]

(3) pursuant to his answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 344W, on regional referendums, what the total cost to his Department was of the research conducted by NOP World; and what other expenditure was incurred by his Department on other research conducted by NOP during this period; [220298]

(4) whether the Electoral Commission was informed that the Government was using NOP World to conduct monthly tracking research in connection with the Your Say information campaign in the period up to and during the campaign on the North East referendum. [220287]

Mr. Raynsford: As was made clear in the answer given to the hon. Member on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 344W, the NOP World research was designed to measure the effect of the information campaign in raising awareness of the referendums. The research lasted the duration of the information campaign, which ended on 10 September 2004—28 days before the earliest date that postal ballot papers could be dispatched.

The research was conducted in accordance with the requirements of guidance on the work of the Government Communication Network, produced by the Cabinet Office. No other advice was sought from, or given by, the Cabinet Office.

As part of their role in the information campaign, Ministers in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister were aware of the results of the NOP World research. The results of the NOP World research were not made available by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to any campaign organisation, but were made available in the Library of the House on 21 February 2005.

The Electoral Commission were aware that research was undertaken on the effect of the information campaign in raising awareness of the referendums.

The cost of the research undertaken by NOP World research totalled £76,100

Other research conducted by NOP Research Group Ltd. for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since June 2003 is:

1. "Key public sector workers: exploring recruitment and retention issues and their housing preferences" (for the Analytical Services Research Programme).

2. "Survey of Small Businesses and Rate Relief" (for the ODPM Local and Regional Government Research Programme).

Park Ownership

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to promote non-council ownership of parks. [219492]

Phil Hope: Government are committed to improving all parks and green spaces regardless of ownership by promoting greater involvement at the local level in their long term management and maintenance. We are doing this through our Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities programme and Local Government Strategy. As part of the latter, we have recently published a discussion document entitled 'Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter', which discusses a range of ideas for neighbourhood engagement, including possible community management and ownership of local assets, such as local parks.

Parliamentary Boundaries

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 582W, whether it is the Government's intention to implement changes to parliamentary boundaries before the end of March. [220190]

Mr. Raynsford: Any changes to parliamentary boundaries in Wales arising from the Boundary Commission's Report presented to my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister on 31 January, would come into effect at the first proclamation summoning a new parliament issued after the Order implementing the changes comes into force.

Planning

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how draft Planning Policy Statement 10 amends the planning process in relation to development on greenfield or green belt sites. [219860]

Keith Hill: The consultation draft of Planning Policy Statement 10 (PPS10) "Planning for Sustainable Waste Management" sets out a search sequence to be adopted by waste planning authorities in preparing development plan documents that gives priority to the re-use of previously-developed land before greenfield sites.

There is no change to green belt policy which is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 "Green Belts". This advises that the carrying out of operations and the making of material changes of use which do not maintain the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt would not be appropriate development. In such cases applicants would have to demonstrate that there were very special circumstances that clearly outweighed the harm that the development would cause to the Green Belt. Draft PPS10 expects regional planning bodies and planning authorities to prepare and deliver planning strategies that protect green belts but recognise the particular locational needs of some types of waste management and that the wider environmental and economic benefits of sustainable waste management are material considerations that should be given significant weight in determining whether proposals should be given planning permission.

Planning Zones

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many areas have operated simplified planning zones since their inception; and what the dates are of the operation of each such zone; [219855]

(2) if he will list each simplified planning zone in operation in England; and if he will make a statement. [219946]

Keith Hill: The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (sections 82–87), amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 (section 28), provides for the creation of simplified planning zones (SPZs). Since the powers were taken, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is aware of six SPZs that have been created, two of which remain in existence today. They are tabled as follows:

SPZ	*Local authority*	*Dates of operation*
Sir Francis Ley Industrial Park	Derby city council	From August 1988 to August 1998
Willowbrook	Corby borough council	From September 1988 to September 1998
Victoria Park	Gedling borough council	From November 1991 to November 2001
Slough Trading Estate	Slough borough council	From January 1995 to January 2005. On 12 November 2004 Slough borough council agreed to a new up-dated version of the SPZ to run for a further 10 years
Kings Norton	Birmingham city council	From November 1998 to November 2008
Knowsley Industrial Park	Knowsley metropolitan borough	Information not available

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (section 45) amends the 1990 Act to provide for the creation by local planning authorities of SPZs, where need has been identified in a regional spatial strategy.

Public Bodies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have are the responsibility of his Department. [220193]

Yvette Cooper: The following regional bodies, institutions, taskforces, panels, offices or organisations are the responsibility of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Regional Housing Boards

Nine Government Offices in the regions

Eight Regional Assemblies outside London are answerable to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for specific functions that they undertake on its behalf.

Rateable Values (Yorkshire)

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* the average percentage change in rateable value is from the 2000 rating lists in Selby and York and *(b)* the average percentage change in liability will be as a result of revaluation before reliefs are applied in Selby and York following the revaluation of business rates from April 2005. [221505]

Mr. Raynsford: The information is as follows:

(a)

Selby—29.07 per cent. decrease in gross rateable value

York—22.2 per cent. increase in gross rateable value

Full data on the impact of revaluation on rateable values by billing authority are available on the Valuation Office Agency's website. These also show a breakdown by category within the billing authority.

See http://www.voa.gov.uk/business_rates/DraftListStats/baindex.html

(b)

The percentage change in liability is more difficult to estimate:

Selby—34.3 per cent. reduction in average liability

York—14.7 per cent. increase in average liability

These figures represent the average change before reliefs and are strongly influenced by the changes in value of some high value hereditaments. These need to be seen in that context.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish *(a)* the written communications to the Prime Minister concerning (i) the decision to hold three referendums in the North of England on elected regional assemblies, (ii) the decision to hold these referendums by all-postal ballot and (iii) the decision to postpone two of the three referendums, *(b)* the responses to those communications and *(c)* the minutes of meetings of (A) Ministers and (B) officials pursuant to those communications. [220556]

Mr. Raynsford: No. The Government's decisions on these matters, and the reasons for them, were announced or debated in Parliament on the following dates:

(i) 16 June 2003, *Official Report*, columns 22–23,

(ii) 22 October 2003, *Official Report*, column 629 and 8 (laying of SI in Parliament), 19 and 21 July 2004 (debating of the orders),

(iii) 22 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 501–04 and *Official Report*, the Other Place, columns 344–51 and 13 September 2004, *Official Report*, columns 987–89.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219876]

Yvette Cooper: The Housing Corporation, a non-departmental public body within the remit of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, reorganised its structure to be congruent with the structure of the Government Offices in the regions in October 2004.

Solar Photovoltaics

Ian Lucas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will amend building regulations to encourage use of photovoltaic cells. [221594]

Phil Hope: The Building Regulations requirements are functional rather than prescriptive to enable compliance in practical and cost-effective ways and to leave open the possibilities for innovation. It would therefore be inconsistent to prescribe particular technologies such as solar electricity. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is reviewing the energy efficiency requirements however and amendment proposals were published for consultation last July. The proposals include setting minimum overall building performance standards at levels much higher than at present and providing new technical guidance on low and zero carbon systems to further encourage take-up of these systems.

Sports Facilities

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister under what circumstances sports facilities may be included in section 106 agreements. [221352]

Keith Hill: The provision of sport or recreation facilities is a legitimate use of planning obligations (s106 agreements), where they meet the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's policy tests (set out in DoE circular 1/97 and the revised draft circular published in November 2004) of being necessary; relevant to planning; directly related to the proposed development; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and reasonable in all other respects. Planning Policy Guidance note 17 also gives further guidance on the appropriate use of planning obligations to secure sport or recreation facilities alongside new developments.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Gill: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many mobile phone masts have been erected *(a)* within school grounds and *(b)* within 100 m of school grounds in Leicester in each year since 1997. [221204]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold the information requested centrally, and could provide it only at disproportionate cost.

Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many full-time equivalent staff in his Department deal with issues relating to Travellers. [219861]

Yvette Cooper: The equivalent of five and a half full-time staff deal with housing and planning policy as it relates to Gypsies and Travellers, along with the equivalent of two full-time staff in the area of planning casework. Part of one member of staffs time in the Social Exclusion Unit is spent dealing with Gypsy and Traveller issues as part of the Unit's project on improving service delivery for disadvantaged people who move frequently. These officials are part of the housing and planning directorates in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister which employ 155 and 227 staff respectively.

A Gypsy and Traveller Unit is being established by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to take policy forward, and to provide support and guidance to local authorities. This Unit will bring together existing resources as well as providing additional resources. The exact staffing of the Unit has not yet been determined.

Your Say Information Campaign

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the advice or guidance his Department received from the Cabinet Secretary or from his office concerning the proposed content of the Your Say information campaign *(a)* before and *(b)* after the final content was agreed by the Cabinet Secretary. [220596]

Mr. Raynsford: Information relating to internal discussion and advice is not for publication. However, I can confirm that the advice received by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister from the Cabinet Secretary was acted on and incorporated into the Your Say information campaign material.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 15 March 2005

TRANSPORT

Crossrail

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the building work on the Crossrail scheme to start. [221657]

Mr. Darling: Main construction of Crossrail could not start until the necessary powers are in place.

London Underground (Assaults)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers on the London Underground have been assaulted in the last 12 months. [221454]

Mr. McNulty: The total number of assaults recorded by the British Transport Police for their London Underground Area for the period from 1 March 2004 to 28 February 2005 was 2,022. A breakdown of the offence categories is provided in the table:

Offence	*Number*
Grievous bodily harm	12
Wounding	5
Actual bodily harm	782
Racially aggravated malicious wounding or grievous bodily harm	3
Racially aggravated actual bodily harm	45
Racially aggravated common assault	87
Common assault	1,088
Total	2,022

Operation Stack

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what guidance the Department has issued on Operation Stack in Kent. [221589]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency, on behalf of the Department, provides information and advice to motorists about Operation Stack, using road signs, leaflets and on their website.

Kent Police has the sole authority for implementing Operation Stack but work closely with the Highways Agency to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which his Department is responsible for. [220261]

Charlotte Atkins: Information on taskforces attached to central Government Departments and in existence between May 1997 and October 2000 was made available in three reports published in January, July and December 2000 on "Task Forces, Ad Hoc Advisory Groups and Reviews". For the years 2001–02 and 2003–03, this information has been included in the publications "Public Bodies 2002" and "Public Bodies 2003" respectively. Copies of these reports are available in the Library of the House. For 2003–04, this information can be found on the Cabinet Office's Public Bodies database.

The GLA Act 1999 established Transport for London (TfL) under the direction of the Mayor of London to implement policies that promote and encourage safe, integrated, efficient, and economic transport facilities and services to, from and within London. TfL was established on 3 July 2000. The British Transport Police Authority was established on 1 June 2004 and is modelled on Home Office local police authorities.

Snow Ploughs

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* snow ploughs and *(b)* gritting vehicles were deployed on the (i) M1, *(b)* M18 and *(c)* M62 on 21 February. [221722]

Mr. Jamieson: On 21 February, the Highways Agency deployed in the Yorkshire and Humberside Region:

Six gritters, all fitted with snow ploughs, on the M1;

Five gritters, all fitted with snow ploughs, on the M18; and

Nine gritters, all fitted with snow ploughs, on the M62

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the Public Service Agreement target to secure improvements to the accessibility, punctuality and reliability for local public transport will be met by 2010; [219089]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of whether the Public Service Agreement target to increase the use of local public transport by 12 per cent. from 2000 levels will be met by 2010. [219090]

Charlotte Atkins: Increases in bus patronage in England since 2000–01 have been consistent with achieving the PSA target to increase the use of local public transport (bus and light rail) by 12 per cent. from 2000 levels by 2010. Bus and light rail patronage in England increased by 6.3 per cent. between the baseline year of 2000–01 and 2003–04, the latest period for which data are available, covering the first three years of the 10-year target period.

The version of the target specified for SR2002 also included the requirement to secure improvements to the accessibility, punctuality and reliability of local public transport.

The percentage of the GB local bus fleet that is wheelchair accessible has increased from 22 per cent. in 2000–01 to 39 per cent. in 2003–04.

There is no national target for improvements in accessibility. However, local authorities will need to include at least one local accessibility target in their second round Local Transport Plans and the Department will monitor progress against these targets. The Department has developed a range of core indicators, which will be used to build up a national picture of accessibility. Local targets may be based on these core indicators, or on other factors relevant in the local area.

The reliability of bus services in England (percentage of scheduled mileage run, excluding loses outside operators' control) has increased from 98.2 per cent. in 2000–01 to 98.5 per cent. in 2003–04.

A pilot national survey of bus punctuality in England was carried out in March 2004. The first main survey is planned for March/April 2005. We are not yet in a position to assess whether punctuality is improving. Local authorities will need to include a bus punctuality indicator in their second round Local Transport Plans and monitor progress in their areas. Local authorities and bus operators are encouraged to work together in Punctuality Improvement Partnerships to overcome problems which lead to poor punctuality.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Public Service Agreement target to achieve annual efficiency savings across the Department of 2.5 per cent. was met in 2004. [219097]

Charlotte Atkins: As outlined in the Department's 2004 Autumn Performance Report, the Department achieved efficiencies of £11.1 million in 2003–04 against a target of £8.9 million.

Transport (Women Workers)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate his Department has made of how many women work in the UK transport sector. [221288]

Charlotte Atkins: Estimates are available, based on Office for National Statistics surveys of employers, about the number of employee jobs in the transport sector in Great Britain.

The table shows the number of employee jobs in the transport sector in Great Britain that are held by women. The statistics are for March 2004, the latest available period, and are classified according to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1992.

Number of employee jobs[1] in transport sector held by women; Great Britain, March 2004

SIC92 code[2]	*Industry sector*	*Thousand*
60.1	Transport via railways	9
60.2 and 60.3	Other land transport; transport via pipelines	88
61	Water transport	3
62	Air transport	46
63	Supporting and auxiliary transport activities; activities of travel agencies	146
60–63	Total transport industries	292

[1] Estimates exclude the self-employed
[2] Estimates are classified according to the Standard Industrial Classification 1992
Source:
Employment surveys, Office for National Statistics (ONS)

In March 2004, 29 per cent. of employee jobs in the transport sector were occupied by women, compared with 17 per cent. in March 1995.

Road Safety

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what educational material is provided by his Department to local education authorities to teach children about road safety. [221453]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport provides a range of educational materials for local education authorities and schools to teach children of all ages about road safety.

Web-based resources include:

On the safe side—local responsibility on road safety education in schools: good practice and teaching ideas for primary schools, secondary schools and local authorities. http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/divisionhomepage/032504.hcsp

Road safety lesson plans in a range of curriculum subjects for pupils from key stage 1 to AS/A2 level. http://www.databases.dft.gov.uk/lessonplans/

A database of road safety educational resources, launched in March 2005 http://www.databases.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety

Hard-copy teaching materials available from DfTs Free Literature Service include:

Making Choices—moving on to secondary school: teacher's manual, parent's booklet and child's magazine

Out of school care activity pack—for after school clubs

A rural road safety teaching resource for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, prepared with RoSPA, will be launched this spring.

The Driving Standards Agency runs the Arrive Alive education programme, aimed at pre-drivers and newly-qualified drivers aged 16–19. The presentation is delivered free of charge to a range of organisations including schools and colleges, armed forces, youth football teams and Young Offenders' Units.

Road safety education and training is often delivered through local authority road safety officers. They can also deliver training schemes such as DfT's Kerbcraft roadside child pedestrian training scheme, the Crossroads pc-based pedestrian training scheme and cycle training.

Trunk Roads

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the criteria by which trunk roads are designated as routes of strategic national importance. [222004]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency announced on 1 December 2004 that the strategic road network would in future be considered as consisting of two categories—roads which are key trade routes of predominantly national and international importance and routes of predominantly regional rather than national importance.

The document 'Devolved Decision Making: a consultation on regional funding allocations' issued by

HM Treasury on 2 December 2004 proposed that the criteria for determining routes of national importance should be as follows:

- To have average daily traffic flows, along the length of the route, of more than 60,000 vehicles
- To link at least two of the top 20 English cities by population; or link one of the top 20 cities with an airport/seaport or Wales/Scotland
- To carry heavy goods vehicle traffic equal to or in excess of 15 per cent. as a percentage of all traffic, as an average along the length of the route
- To be represented on the European Union's trans-European transport network.

A route would have to satisfy all of these criteria.

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer of 25 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 839W, on trunk roads (Bristol), which of the major trunk roads listed are core trunk roads of strategic national importance. [222051]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government's consultation paper—"Devolving Decision Making: A Consultation on Regional Funding Allocations"—set out proposals to establish regional transport funding allocations.

The consultation paper explained that the proposed regional transport funding allocations would initially bring together capital funding projected for major schemes (generally costing over £5 million each) under the Local Transport Plan (LTP) system and for major Highways Agency schemes, except for those on routes of strategic national significance where decisions will continue to be taken nationally.

The M4, and the M5 north of Bristol, are categorised as routes of strategic national importance in the consultation paper.

The consultation paper proposes that the other roads listed in the previous Answer should be regarded as routes of regional significance, for the purposes of future regional decision-making. The proposals for regional funding allocations will give regions a far stronger base on which to plan, and will enable them to contribute to decisions that better reflect regional priorities.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

1 Parliament Street

34. **Paul Flynn:** To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many times in the last year fire alarms have operated in 1 Parliament street; on how many of those occasions the fire brigade attended; and what percentage involved fires causing serious damage. [221540]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: In the year since 1 April 2004, the fire alarm has sounded 22 times in 1 Parliament street. The fire brigade attended 11 of these incidents. None of the 22 incidents involved fires causing serious damage, thanks to the timely intervention of staff. Every effort is being made to reduce the number and frequency of false alarms, which is above what is regarded as an acceptable level.

Parliamentary Cleaners

35. **David Taylor:** To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what role the Commission has in setting the pay and conditions of people employed to clean the parliamentary estate. [221541]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The House of Commons Commission is responsible for the pay and conditions of the 58 cleaning staff who are directly employed by the Refreshment Department, the Department of the Serjeant at Arms and the Library. They are not directly responsible for the pay and conditions of a further 121 cleaners who are employed by contractors.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Citizenship Syllabus

36. **Ms Coffey:** To ask the Leader of the House what representations he has made to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on giving more emphasis to Parliament in the school citizenship syllabus. [221542]

Mr. Woolas: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1369W.

Programming of Bills

37. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will propose to the Select Committee on Modernisation of the House of Commons that it examines the arrangements for programming of legislation. [221543]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend has no plans to do so.

Westminster Hall

38. **Mr. Kidney:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will propose to the Select Committee on Modernisation of the House of Commons that it examine the merits of a cross-cutting question time in Westminster Hall on an EU theme. [221544]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend's memorandum to the Modernisation Committee last year suggested that an option would be to use the facility for cross-cutting questions sessions in Westminster Hall for questions on European matters, perhaps on a regular and established basis. I understand that the Committee hopes to report its conclusions shortly.

Prevention of Terrorism Bill

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Leader of the House how many times he has met *(a)* the Law Lords and *(b)* Lord Lloyd of Berwick, as former Chairman of the Security Commission, to discuss the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Bill. [221357]

Mr. Hain: I have not met with *(a)* the Law Lords or *(b)* Lord Lloyd of Berwick to discuss the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Bill.

SCOTLAND

Small Businesses

6. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he next expects to meet representatives of small business organisations in Scotland to discuss central Government support schemes in Scotland. [221056]

Mrs. McGuire: I frequently meet representatives from small business organisations in Scotland and I am next scheduled to do so on 12 April.

Infantry Regiments

7. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the Secretary of State for Defence to discuss the future of Scotland's infantry regiments. [221057]

8. **Mr. Randall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the Secretary of State for Defence to discuss the future of Scotland's infantry regiments. [221058]

Mr. Darling: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence and I have had recent discussions on a range of issues.

14. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the Secretary of State for Defence to discuss the future of Scotland's infantry regiments. [221065]

Mr. Darling: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier today to the hon. Member for South-West Bedfordshire (Andrew Selous).

Abdelbaset al-Megrahi

11. **Mr. Dalyell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the transfer of Abdelbaset al-Megrahi from Barlinnie to Greenock prison. [221061]

Mr. Darling: I have not had any discussions with the Scottish Executive on the transfer of Mr Al Megrahi and have nothing to add to the reply on this matter which my hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, gave on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1885W.

Unemployment

12. **Mr. MacDonald:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the unemployment rate in the highlands and islands since 1997. [221062]

Mrs. McGuire: The claimant count unemployment rate for the Highlands and Islands fell from 6.2 per cent. in 1997 to 2.9 per cent. in 2004, below the Scottish average of 3.5 per cent., and there are around 6,400 fewer people in the area claiming unemployment-related benefits compared to 1997. This demonstrates the success of the Government's strategy of making work pay in every region through initiatives such as new deal, the national minimum wage and working tax credits.

Economic Competitiveness

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on measures to boost Scottish economic competitiveness. [221059]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with the Scottish Executive on a range of issues. The current strength of the Scottish economy has been made possible by the macroeconomic stability delivered by this Government and our commitment to work with the Executive to develop economic competitiveness by promoting productivity and building a more enterprising, innovative and highly skilled economy.

Means Testing

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Department for Work and Pensions on the impact of means testing on pensioners in Scotland. [221063]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend has had discussions on a range of issues with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, but not on this topic. Our aim is to ensure security and independence in retirement for everyone while targeting greatest resources on those most in need.

Minimum Wage

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer about the impact on the economy in Scotland of the announced increase in the level of the national minimum wage; and if he will make a statement. [221060]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friends, the Secretary of State and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced the forthcoming increases in the national minimum wage in Scotland on 25 February.

The adult rate of the minimum wage will increase from £4.85 to £5.05 in October, benefiting 140,000 workers in Scotland. A further 6 per cent. increase to £5.35 is planned for October 2006.

Anyone who thinks they are not being paid the minimum wage should call the helpline on 0845 6000 678 or in Scotland 0845 600 1768, or use the interactive website http://www.tiger.gov.uk.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Freedom of Information

25. **Mr. Greenway:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs who is responsible for deciding whether information requested from local government under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 qualifies for an exemption under the Act. [221529]

Mr. Leslie: Each individual public authority—and each local authority—is responsible for ensuring that they fulfil their obligations under the Freedom of

Information Act. Local councils will make their own arrangements for deciding whether exemptions apply to information requested.

External Consultants

27. **Miss Kirkbride:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much his Department spent on external consultants in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [221531]

Mr. Lammy: My Department's expenditure with consultants in the years requested was as follows:

	£
1996–97	1,088,464
2003–04	9,016,488

The level of expenditure with external consultants reflects the wide-ranging and fast paced programme of change within my Department. This programme has contributed significantly to modernised and more efficient public services. Delivering such a programme has necessitated the use of external expertise to supplement internal resources.

Human Rights Act

28. **John Robertson:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the Human Rights Act 1998 on UK law. [221533]

Mr. Lammy: The impact has been very much as predicted by the Government when the Act was debated here and in another place during its legislative stages. New laws are compliant, old laws are tested and everyone's rights are protected.

Legal Aid

29. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost of providing legal aid for immigration and asylum cases was in the latest year for which figures are available. [221534]

Mr. Lammy: Actual expenditure in 2003–04 was £203 million. Estimated expenditure for 2004–05 is £170 million and £117 million for 2005–06 in cash terms. A number of important measures were introduced in April 2004 and we expect these measures to reduce expenditure. Funding is being concentrated only on those cases which need it, improving cost control and driving up the quality of services provided by the Legal Services Commission's asylum and immigration suppliers.

30. **Mr. Blunt:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of the population had access to civil legal aid in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [221536]

Mr. Lammy: Although we do not have precise data, the results of a number of different surveys indicate that the proportion eligible has remained at approximately 50 per cent. since 1997.

Law Centres

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what support his Department has provided for the maintenance of the network of law centres in England in 2004–05. [221535]

Mr. Lammy: In 2004–05, the DCA has provided funding and contracts to 52 Law Centres in England to a value of £9,0959,968.

This was done through the Legal Services Commission's Community Legal Services Budget.

Lord Chancellor

Mr. Swire: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions he has had with the Lord Chancellor about changing his title. [221524]

Mr. Leslie: Throughout the consideration of the Constitutional Reform Bill in Parliament, I have, of course, had numerous conversations with my noble and learned Friend Lord Falconer about the formal title of Lord Chancellor. The Government decided to preserve the title Lord Chancellor while proceeding with all other substantive reforms to the Office, which we intend will become Ministerial in nature given the proposal to end the judicial functions of that post.

Prevention of Terrorism Bill

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many times the Lord Chancellor met *(a)* the Law Lords and *(b)* Lord Lloyd of Berwick as former Chairman of the Security Commission to discuss the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Bill. [221356]

Mr. Leslie: The Lord Chancellor has meetings and discussions with a wide range of organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings which would inhibit the free and frank exchange of views.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Homes Standards (Barnet)

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress Barnet council is making on the decent homes standards initiative. [221265]

Keith Hill: In July 2003 Barnet council was awarded a place on the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) programme. In December 2004 the council's ALMO, Barnet Homes, secured a 2-star (good) rating from the housing inspectorate, qualifying for access to £19.1 million of ALMO funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06 to improve council homes that currently fail the decent homes standard. Subject to decisions on funding for future years, the council forecasts that all its social housing stock will meet this standard by 2010.

Housing

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the number of *(a)* council,

(b) housing association and *(c)* private development dwellings that will be completed in each London borough in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06. [221422]

Keith Hill: Local authorities, in their Housing Strategy Statistical Appendices returns to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, estimate there will be the following additional local authority dwellings in six authorities in 2004–05 and 2005–06. These estimates do not distinguish between new build dwellings and acquisitions.

	Proposed additional local authority dwellings completions/acquisitions	
Local authority	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Croydon	7	5
Enfield	3	—
Hillingdon	16	5
Southwark	178	26
Waltham Forest	—	16
Wandsworth	75	15

The Housing Corporation estimates that the following housing association dwellings will be completed in each London borough in 2004–05. These estimates are only for dwellings where subsidy is being provided through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme. The information for 2005–06 will not be available until the start of the financial year.

Housing Corporation new build completions 2004–05

Local authority	*Number of dwellings*
City of London	—
Barking and Dagenham	130
Barnet	113
Bexley	46
Brent	230
Bromley	79
Camden	215
Croydon	201
Ealing	339
Enfield	318
Greenwich	311
Hackney	277
Hammersmith and Fulham	246
Haringey	223
Harrow	100
Havering	103
Hillingdon	104
Hounslow	130
Islington	201
Kensington and Chelsea	26
Kingston upon Thames	174
Lambeth	267
Lewisham	457
Merton	116
Newham	359
Redbridge	154
Richmond upon Thames	207
Southwark	468
Sutton	295
Tower Hamlets	68
Waltham Forest	137
Wandsworth	322
Westminster	187
Total	6,603

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect estimates of completions for new private sector dwellings.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the cost of the infrastructure required to support the level of housing development for south Hampshire set out in the South East England Regional Assembly's document, the South East Plan. [221752]

Mr. Raynsford: It is the responsibility of the South East England Regional Assembly to prepare the draft of the new South East Plan, before submitting it to Government for testing and final approval. Work is under way and includes consideration of the infrastructure in the region. For example, the Assembly commissioned a series of sub regional studies, including one for south Hampshire, which also looked at strategic infrastructure requirements for different growth options, and the delivery mechanisms needed to make sure new housing is provided in the most sustainable way possible. The results of these studies were fed in to the first draft of the South East Plan that is currently available for public consultation. We expect the Regional Assembly to submit their draft plan to Government later this year.

Plug-in Air Fresheners

Mr. Randall: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research his Department has undertaken in relation to the fire safety risks of plug-in air fresheners. [221969]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has undertaken no research in relation to the fire safety risks of air fresheners.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 28 February; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [219501]

Margaret Beckett: I represented the United Kingdom at the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Brussels on 28 February 2005.

The Council reached political agreement to send decommissioned EU fishing vessels to areas affected by the tsunami. Once possible vessels had been identified, an assessment of their suitability for the relevant communities would be made. Exports would only take place in accordance with requests from the third countries concerned.

The Council adopted by qualified majority a proposal concerning wood used in packaging material entering the Union. I supported this proposal, which will delay until March 2006 a requirement under new EU plant health rules that such wood should have been de-barked, while the scientific evidence for this requirement is reviewed in consultation with third countries.

The Council discussed the Rural Development proposal, focusing on its contribution to Lisbon agenda goals for growth and development, the scope of the competitiveness objective, possible simplification and support for Natura 2000 sites. I stressed that rural development measures should deliver public benefits. On competitiveness, I argued that support should be targeted on those businesses that found it difficult to raise capital through the normal channels. On simplification, I suggested that it would be appropriate to reduce the number of measures and adopt a more flexible approach to cross cutting projects. And I supported the Commission's work on biodiversity and Natura 2000 while suggesting that there could be a focus on water and climate change issues. No specific conclusions were drawn but the presidency indicated that it would be producing a revised draft of the proposal in the course of the week.

The Council discussed the CAP financing proposal. We stressed the importance of securing equitable treatment of those member states outside the euro zone, supported the case for effective application of the budgetary discipline provisions and reiterated the need for further modulation, whether voluntary or compulsory, to meet land management commitments.

A number of points were raised under any other business. The Commission reported on: the case of a French goat in which BSE had been diagnosed; and on continuing contacts with the Russian authorities over their veterinary and plant health import requirements. The presidency accepted a Dutch request to discuss at a future Council the threat posed by Avian Influenza. Germany urged the Council to seek involvement in action on food and health, sought an update on the WTO Dispute Panel considering the EU approval system for GM crops and products, and suggested a greater use of country of origin requirements in food labelling. The Commission rejected a Spanish proposal that the sugar trade concession offered to certain developing countries under the Everything But Arms commitment should be amended. The Commission also undertook to examine a Spanish request as to whether a regionalised approach to decoupling of tobacco aid could be permitted under the CAP reforms agreed last April. Olive oil producing countries pressed for the EU to resume its contributions to international promotional campaigns. Italy requested a change in the method for calculating part of the aid granted to nut producers. Several landlocked countries pressed for action to help dispose of the exceptionally heavy cereals harvest of 2004.

Animal Welfare

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many meetings *(a)* she, *(b)* her Ministers and *(c)* her officials have had in the past 12 months with representatives of (i) the International Fund for Animal Welfare, (i) the League Against Cruel Sports and (iii) the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. [201352]

Margaret Beckett: Ministers and officials meet representatives of these bodies from time to time in the normal course of business.

Ministerial Engagements

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the ministerial engagements *(a)* out of London and *(b)* in London that she has cancelled since 1 January 2004. [209220]

Margaret Beckett: None.

Ministerial Stationery

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips in each year since 1997. [214942]

Margaret Beckett: Defra was established in 2001, and a breakdown of expenditure on ministerial business cards, headed paper and compliment slips for each financial year since then is as follows:

£ (plus VAT)

	Ministerial letterheads	*Ministerial compliment slips*	*Ministerial business cards*
2001–02	5,090	0	0
2002–03	7,800.70	0	0
2003–04	0	100	135
2004–to date	0	0	0

School Meals

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will meet the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to discuss ways of using more locally grown produce for school meals. [221691]

Alun Michael: The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is already involved with Defra in implementing the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI) that includes, as a key objective, a requirement to increase the opportunities for small local farmers and growers to compete to supply public bodies with food.

A representative from DfES sits on the cross-public sector Food Procurement Implementation Group tasked with promoting the PSFPI within schools and other public bodies. DfES' Director of School Resources was also a panel member in a plenary discussion at the National Food Suppliers Conference on 7 March 2005, which attracted some 200 farmers, growers and suppliers from across England to learn about the PSFPI and the opportunities for supplying the public sector.

More information about the conference and the PSFPI is given on Defra's website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/sustain/procurement/awareness.htm.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether departmental special advisers have attended meetings

with external *(a)* bodies and *(b)* individuals, in their official capacity and without Ministers, since May 1997. [203444]

Margaret Beckett: Special advisers hold meetings with a wide range of external representatives in their official capacity. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what role is fulfilled by the third special adviser in her Department. [210487]

Margaret Beckett: Special advisers in this department are appointed under the terms and conditions set out in Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which Ministers were not present. [210535]

Margaret Beckett: Special advisers hold meetings with a wide range of external representatives in their official capacity. All such meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the speeches her special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210556]

Margaret Beckett: All speeches given by special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Working Time Regulations

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many officials working in ministerial private offices in the Department have worked more than a 48 hour week at any time in the last 12 months for which figures are available; how many of those had signed a waiver under working time regulations; and what percentage these figures represented of the total in each case. [204144]

Margaret Beckett: Most members of Defra ministerial private offices have worked more than a 48 hour week at some time over the past 12 months.

The working time regulations provide workers with the protection of a limit of an average of 48 hours a week working time. This is not an absolute cap of 48 hours in any one week. This average is normally calculated over a 17 week reference period, although this can be longer in certain situations (26 weeks) and can be extended by agreement (up to 52 weeks). Workers may choose to work more than 48 hours per week over this reference period by signing an opt-out agreement, but employers cannot force a worker to sign an op-out, and workers cannot be subjected to detriment for refusing to sign an opt-out.

No members of private offices have signed an 'opt-'out' agreement.

TREASURY

Bribes

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many requests for guidance on the Income and Corporation Tax Act 1988 section 577A, concerning tax deductibility on bribes and special commissions, have been received by *(a)* the Inland Revenue and *(b)* the Inland Revenue's Head Office since April 2004. [221698]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue does not keep central records of requests for general or specific guidance on section 577A of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. However the Head Office team most likely to receive requests for guidance have since April 2004 received some dozen requests from Inland Revenue officers and others.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many reports of *(a)* evidence of overseas bribery and *(b)* suspicions of overseas bribery have been passed to the Inland Revenue's Special Compliance Office since April 2004; [221702]

(2) how many reports of suspected bribery have been passed by the Inland Revenue to law enforcement agencies under the gateway provided by section 19 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. [221703]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

Business Rates

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the change to business tax receipts in 2005–06 arising from the business rates revaluation in England. [221864]

Dawn Primarolo: Initial estimates were announced by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Local and Regional Government in the written ministerial statement on the distributable amount of national non-domestic rates for 2005–06 on 2 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 47WS. The net rate yield from local lists after reliefs was forecast to increase by 9.6 per cent., from £15,853 million for 2004–05 to £17,368 million for 2005–06.

Company Taxation

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how much tax the Inland Revenue's Oil Taxation Office has collected on *(a)* signature bonuses, *(b)* consultancy fees and *(c)* special commissions on overseas business by UK companies since April 2004; [221699]

(2) how much tax the Inland Revenue's Large Business Office has collected on *(a)* consultancy fees, *(b)* special commissions and *(c)* entertainment expenses for overseas business by UK companies since April 2004. [221700]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many penalties the Inland Revenue has issued for claims on expenditure that are disallowed under section 577A of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 since April 2004; and what the total value of these penalties is. [221701]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Paymaster General will reply to the letter dated 1 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Carl Walker. [221910]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Dividend Tax Credit System

Gregory Barker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of the effect on pension funds of the abolition of the dividend tax credit system; [221510]

(2) whether he plans to review the effect on pension funds of the abolition of the dividend tax credit system. [221511]

Mr. Timms: The Government's 1997 package of corporation tax reforms included measures to boost corporate investment by removing tax distortions. The withdrawal of payable tax credits on dividends was just one part of these measures. Pension funds and others will share in the long-term benefits from these changes to corporation tax.

The overall effects of these changes on pension funds will depend on a variety of factors including the type of scheme paying the pension, the take-up of private pensions, the level of future pension contributions, pension schemes' asset allocation and investment policies and investment returns generally.

It is not possible to isolate the effect of the July 1997 Budget measures generally from the effect of other factors.

Income Tax (Scotland)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue impact for Scotland of *(a)* raising and *(b)* lowering the basic rate of income tax by one pence. [221372]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to table 1.6 'Direct effect of illustrative tax changes' on the Inland Revenue website:

www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/tax_expenditures/table1-6.pdf.

London Marathon

Sarah Teather: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to impose VAT on sponsorship payments from those entering runners in the London Marathon; and if he will make a statement. [222119]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no plans to change the VAT rules on sponsorship payments and no charity need find themselves paying VAT on the funds raised by sponsored runners. Charities can also claim an extra 28p for every £1 of sponsorship raised under the Gift Aid scheme.

Nursing Bursaries

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will exempt the student bursary for nurses and midwives from tax; and if he will make a statement; [222139]

(2) if he will estimate the cost of exempting the student bursary for nurses and midwives from tax. [222141]

Dawn Primarolo: Students nurses and midwives who receive support through the NHS Bursary Scheme are exempt from tax and from national insurance deductions on the bursary, which is treated as a student grant and not classed as salary or wage.

Private Equity Industry

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the size of the private equity industry and *(b)* its contribution to the UK economy; [222088]

(2) what estimate he has made of *(a)* the number of employees and *(b)* the proportion of the private sector workforce employed in (i) the private equity industry and (ii) companies financed by the private equity industry. [222089]

John Healey: Alongside the 2003 pre-Budget report the Government published 'Bridging the Finance Gap: next steps in improving access to growth capital for small businesses'. This set out the Government's assessment of the importance of private equity to the economy, the Government's desire to see a deep and liquid venture capital market in the UK, and the reforms that the Government are bringing forward to improve access to finance for smaller businesses affected by the equity gap.

Stamp Duty

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the revenue raised *(a)* in total and *(b)* within each stamp duty band in (i) Scotland and (ii) the UK. [221395]

Mr. Timms: Estimates of stamp duty revenues raised in the UK in each stamp duty band are given at:

http://www.inlandrevenne.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/table15_3_october04.pdf

Estimates of revenue raised from transactions in Scotland are only available for 2003–04 and are given in the following table:

Estimated revenue from stamp duty land tax in Scotland in 2003–04

Stamp duty band	*(£ million)*
£250,000 or less	100
£250,001–£500,000	50
Over £500,000	250
Total	410

Source:
Land Valuation Unit of the University of Paisley (which receives data from Registers of Scotland Executive Agency)

Tax Credits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of past advice on tax credits that he has received from the Social Security Advisory Committee. [221766]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Inland Revenue and the Social Security Advisory Committee, dated 21 July 2004, a copy of which is available in the Library.

Tax Revenues

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total revenue impact has been of changes in *(a)* duty on whisky, *(b)* duty on road fuels, *(c)* national insurance contributions and *(d)* the rates and bands for income tax since May 1997. [221373]

Dawn Primarolo: The impact on Exchequer revenues of Budget decisions concerning direct and indirect taxes since May 1997 have been published at every Budget in chapter A of the Financial Statement and Budget Report. Copies of previous year Financial Statement and Budget Reports can be found in the House Library.

Taxation/Social Security

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the latest figure is for the level of net taxes and social security contributions as a proportion of gross domestic product; and if he will make a statement. [221586]

Dawn Primarolo: Table B15 in the 2004 pre-Budget report provides the latest figures for the level of net taxes and social security contributions as a proportion of GDP. Updated figures will be published in the Budget tomorrow.

Tobacco Taxes

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 4 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1187W, on tobacco taxes, when he will place the figures for duty receipts on the website. [221323]

Dawn Primarolo: Duty receipts are published once a month in the HM Customs and Excise Tobacco Bulletin', which can be found on the UK trade info website at: www.uktradeinfo.com

A further list of publication dates can be found at: http://www.uktradeinfo.com/index.cfm ?task = statdates

The next available publication date for the Tobacco Bulletin is 24 March 2005.

VAT (Hospices)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with the Prime Minister in relation to making hospices exempt from the payment of VAT. [221633]

John Healey: The Chancellor and the Prime Minister meet regularly to discuss a wide range of issues. It has been the practice of successive Administrations for many years not to make public confidential communications between Ministers. Doing so would harm the candour and frankness of internal discussions.

WALES

European Constitution

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs concerning publication of the Welsh translation of the Constitutional Treaty for the European Union. [220342]

Mr. Touhig: I am pleased to say that my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs will be producing a Welsh translation of the Constitutional Treaty. This will be published on the FCO and the Wales Office websites.

I hope that the translation will help increase awareness of the contents of the Treaty and what it will mean for the people of Wales. My right hon. Friend has also produced a Welsh language version of the Guide to the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the e-Bay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220943]

Mr. Touhig: The Wales Office has never sold surplus stock on the e-Bay auction website.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220961]

Mr. Touhig: There have been no sales of surplus assets by the Wales Office since 2000–01.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC Regional Broadcasting Councils

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans the Government have to create regional broadcasting councils for the BBC; whether they are to be based on the Government Offices for the Regions regional structure; and if she will make a statement. [221762]

Estelle Morris: Under the terms of its Royal Charter the BBC currently has a Regional Advisory Council for each of its 11 English regions. These regions do not coincide with the Government's regional office structure.

The Government's Charter Review Green Paper discusses possible ways of improving the BBC's responsiveness to licence fee payers, including building on the Corporation's existing regional and national Councils.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter dated 3 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Colin Brierley. [221911]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State replied to the right hon. Gentlemen on 10 March.

Musical Instruments

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment her Department has made of the benefit to children of learning to play musical instruments of *(a)* existing and *(b)* planned programmes funded by her Department designed to encourage children to begin or continue playing; and if she will make a statement. [222057]

Estelle Morris: Youth Music, a national charity set up in 1999 with £10 million per year of National Lottery money provided through Arts Council England, has granted over 1,500 awards nationally and reached over 880,000 participants. All projects funded through Youth Music are evaluated.

Youth Music has also funded seven Wider Opportunities pilots, in which schools have developed programmes to explore ways of delivering instrumental tuition to groups of young people. 'Creating Chances for Making Music', an evaluation of these pilots (and of a further six funded by DfES), has been sent to every primary school and LEA in England.

Ofsted produced an evaluation report of 12 Wider Opportunities pilot areas. Findings were sent to all schools and LEAs in the form of a report and DVD entitled 'Tuning In'.

Television Licensing Authority

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what the cost of running the Television Licensing Authority was in each of the last three years; and if she will make a statement; [221592]

(2) whether the running costs of the Television Licensing Authority are deducted from the total revenue derived from the television licence; and if she will make a statement. [221593]

Estelle Morris: The BBC is the television licensing authority. The Corporation contracts out the collection work to a number of agents and meets these costs directly. The collection costs for each of the last three years, as published in the BBC's annual reports and accounts, were:

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	95.4
2002–03	146.4
2003–04	150.8

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bangladesh

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what programmes the Government are considering planning to assist in Bangladesh; and if he will make a statement. [218496]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme aid to Bangladesh in 2005–06 will be £125 million.

Our programme priorities will be: Primary Education, Healthcare, Water and Sanitation, Livelihoods of the Poorest, Private Sector Development and Economic Infrastructure, Governance, and Disaster Preparedness and Climate Change.

Examples of funding under our programme include:

£25 million annually through the Government of Bangladesh's health programme to accelerate progress of the health Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by strengthened infrastructure and management and by supporting essential health services such as HIV prevention and control, TB, polio eradication and MMR.

£100 million for the Government's Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP)-II for a period of six years from 2004, with a particular focus on girls education.

£50 million for an eight-year livelihoods programme to benefit 6.5 million poorest and most vulnerable people living on chars (sand islands) in the river areas in northern Bangladesh.

£54 million over five years for the Government's State-owned Enterprise Reform Programme jointly funded by the World Bank to help reduce the Government's fiscal deficit and help free up resources for poverty reduction programmes.

£36 million to support road maintenance to allow better access for the poor to markets.

£25 million together with Royal Netherlands embassy for financial management reform in the Ministry of Finance.

$13 million (£8 million) together with the United Nations Development Programme to the Government of Bangladesh programme to improve the performance and professionalism of the police force.

Iraq

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the total cost of aid to Iraq has been since March 2003, broken down by main area of expenditure. [221423]

Hilary Benn: Since March 2003, DFID has disbursed £254 million for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to Iraq. This is broken down as follows:

	£ million
UN Agencies in response to their 2003 Emergency Appeals	84
Red Cross and Red Crescent movement	18
Reconstruction in Southern Iraq	35
Government, Justice, Media and Civil Society	9
DFID secondments and consultants to the Coalition Provisional Authority	24
International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI)	70
Other multilateral contributions	9
Support for NGO projects	5

A further £86 million has been committed to projects which are in the process of implementation.

DFID also provides 19 per cent. of European Community (EC) funding for Iraq (this is currently £38 million for 2003 and 2004).

Reconstruction support to Iraq has also been provided by other Government Departments: The FCO—£38 million for secondments to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA); MOD—£20 million for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs); and the joint DFID/FCO/MOD Global Conflict Prevention Pool—£19 million.

Malaria

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what funding was allocated by his Department and its agencies for the control of malaria in each year between 1999–2000 and 2004–05, broken down by *(a)* country, *(b)* global region and *(c)* recipient organisation; and what such funding has been allocated for each financial year to 2009–10. [220663]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: UK support to malaria control is provided through funding to: bilateral programmes at country level; global partnerships and programmes; multilateral agencies; and research agencies.

Funding at country and regional level

At country-level DFID supports malaria control through bilateral programmes. Some of these are malaria specific, but increasingly DFID funds the broader health sector plans of developing country governments through sector wide programming and poverty reduction budget support. Such sectoral programmes will build capacity in health systems to improve the way health services diagnose and treat all main causes of illness. It is therefore not always possible to identify the proportion spent on malaria. From 1998–99 to date UK support at country level to specific malaria programmes was about £58 million. In addition we have provided approximately £49 million for projects targeted on malaria and other diseases or which may have an impact on malaria control. This funding is part of over £1.5 billion committed by the UK to strengthening developing country health systems since 1997.

Funding to organisations at international level

DFID has contributed about £153 million from 1998–99 to date to international programmes which target malaria and other diseases. In addition we also provide funding to multilateral organisations such as the World Bank and the European Commission which also support malaria control and health services.

DFID has committed funding to a number of global health partnerships, multilaterals, research agencies, and public-private partnerships. These current and future commitments are set out in table A as follows. These figures are not broken down by year.

Table A

From	*Organisation*	*Amount (£ million)*
2003–06	Medicines for Malaria Venture	3
2005–08	Wellcome Trust—Medicines for Malaria Venture	5
2003–06	GlaxoSmithKline/World Health Organisation and Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (lapdap)	0.5
1999–2005	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine—Knowledge Programme	2.7
1999–2005	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine—Knowledge Programme	2.9
1998–2004	Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine—Malaria Consortium	3.7
2005–11	Research Programme Consortia on Communicable Disease	[1]10
2001–08	Global Fund for AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria (approx. 31 per cent. allocated to malaria)	259
1998–2005	Roll Back Malaria Partnership	48.5

[1] Up to.

Relief Initiatives (HIPC)

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking to encourage greater gender equality in heavily indebted poor countries. [221007]

Hilary Benn: In order to qualify for debt relief under the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative, all HIPCs are required to develop a poverty reduction strategy paper. DFID works to ensure that gender issues are included in the analysis of poverty and that women are fully involved in stakeholder consultations on poverty reduction strategies. DFID has recently renewed its commitment to assisting partner governments to strengthen their capacity to analyse gender issues in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.

Rwanda

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid the UK provided to Rwanda *(a)* bilaterally and *(b)* multilaterally in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [221434]

Hilary Benn: The United Kingdom (UK) has provided bilateral aid to Rwanda since the UK financial year 1996–97 as follows:

	Total (£000)
1996–97	9,704
1997–98	61,98
1998–99	[1]19,242
1999–2000	14,295
2000–01	32,708
2001–02	27,027
2002–03	32,345
2003–04	26,934
Total	204,603

[1] Includes £5.6 million from the Multilateral Debt Trust Fund for Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that was paid to Government of Rwanda but charged to DRC framework.

Source:

Statistics on International Development—2004 Edition

The UK is also a principal contributor to the major multilaterals working in Rwanda. The UK contribution to multilateral work in Rwanda for the years 1997 to 2002 is set out as follows:

	European Commission	United Nations	World Bank	Other	Total (£000)
1997	4,000	-1,400	2,100	100	4,800
1998	2,400	700	3,900	1,200	8,100
1999	3,200	900	0	900	4,900
2000	7,300	1,000	1,400	100	9,800
2001	5,300	700	5,100	1,100	12,200
2002	3,400	800	0	500	4,700
Total	25,600	2,700	12,500	3,900	44,700

Source:

Imputed Multilateral Shares of UK Aid (Development Assistance Committee)

The relevant figures for 2003 and 2004 are not yet available.

Asian Tsunami

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much public funds the Government have pledged to tsunami relief and reconstruction; and if he will make a statement; [221226]

(2) what the Government's policy is on the proportion of Government support to the level of public donations to the tsunami appeal. [221227]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The public has responded with remarkable generosity to this disaster and I commend the individuals, groups, organisations and communities who have contributed to this overwhelming response. We estimate that the Government will be contributing approximately £50 million through tax relief on public donations made through the Gift Aid Scheme.

The Department for International Development (DFID) has committed £75 million for the immediate relief and recovery needs following the tsunami (over £61 million of which has already been programmed).

We have also agreed debt relief for Sri Lanka through the Multilateral Debt relief initiative, which will amount to approximately £45 million. Together with other G7 donors we have also agreed to defer debt payments during 2005 for tsunami affected countries which request it.

We expect to contribute more money over time for longer-term reconstruction. However, our response will be guided by the findings of needs assessments of the affected countries currently being finalised, and the level of resources which are already available to the affected countries, rather than by linking the Government's contribution to that of the British public. We are continuing to work hard with partner governments and the international community to ensure that support reaches those most affected by the disaster.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Childcare Vouchers

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what requirement there is on public sector organisations to offer childcare vouchers to their staff; and if she will make a statement. [218190]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

There is no obligation on any employer to offer childcare vouchers. That includes employers in the public sector. However, the Government actively encourages all employers to support employees with their childcare needs, particularly through the introduction from April 2005 of tax and National Insurance Contributions (NICs) exemptions for up to £50 of childcare costs per week.

Children in Care

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were taken into care as a result of a parent being sent to prison in the last year for which figures are available. [221198]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The information is not collected centrally.

Cross-border Tracking

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what cross-border tracking of children on the at risk register takes place between the relevant authorities in England and Wales. [220325]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* A central child protection register is maintained for each area covered by a social services department in England and Wales. The register lists all the children in the area (including those who have been placed there by another local authority or agency) who are considered to be at continuing risk of significant harm.

When a child on the register moves to another local authority area the authority where the child has been living must notify the receiving local authority of the child's move. The receiving local authority should convene a child protection conference within 15 working days of being notified of the move.

The Information Sharing Indexes currently under development aim to help children moving area by enabling better communication between professionals in different areas so that services in their new area can identify which services the children were receiving in their old area. We are working with the Welsh Assembly to establish data standards to support information transfer between English and Welsh Authorities.

Departmental Policies

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her policy is on access by hon. Members to the chief executives of public bodies for which her Department is responsible to discuss the effects in individual constituencies of policy decisions made on a national basis; and if she will make a statement. [222104]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Hon. Members can approach the chief executives of public bodies as they wish, about any issues that are of concern to them and that are relevant to the public body.

Disability Discrimination Bill

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Government have to monitor the compliance of schools with the duty to promote equal opportunities under the Disability Discrimination Bill. [217657]

Margaret Hodge: Our plans for monitoring how schools promote equality of opportunity for disabled people will be implemented in the following ways: our current arrangements for monitoring the quality of provision generally will include inspecting against the duty to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. Second we will ensure inspections carried out by Office for Standards in Education will inspect this aspect. Third the rights of disabled people will be reflected in the arrangements we are developing as part of the New Relationship with Schools, including school self-evaluation, and finally our powers to support and challenge schools will enable us to monitor complains with the new duty.

Education Funding (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total expenditure on the Sure Start scheme has been in Tamworth in each year since the scheme has been in operation. [221938]

Margaret Hodge: Sure Start Tamworth is a round 4 Sure Start local programme which received approval in November 2001. It has a capital allocation of £1 million. Its revenue allocations were: £115,000 in 2001–02, £404,000 in 2002–03, £599,000 in 2003–04 and £613,975 in 2004–05. We have just written to the programme announcing its future revenue allocations of £629,324 in 2005–06 and the same amount in 2006–07.

The programme has 619 children aged 4 and under in its catchment area, which covers the wards of Glascote and Belgrave. This area represents the highest level of multiple deprivation within Tamworth. Glascote ward falls wholly within the 20 per cent. band of deprived wards in England and ranks as the fifth most deprived ward in Staffordshire according to the 2000 index of local deprivation.

The programme has used its capital for two builds, the Exley Centre based in Belgrave which has focused on the refurbishment of a Community Centre providing a much needed central point for families in that area. This centre has recently received Ofsted approval to deliver 16 full day-care places. The Glascote Centre based in Glascote Heath is a new build currently registered for 24 full day-care places and providing a base for family support, training, health provision and Jobcentre plus links.

The programme has made strong links with health and employs a midwife and a public health promotion co-ordinator within the programme. This had led to some unique service developments—the programme run a very successful food co-operative and provide families with 'healthy meal bags' which can be purchased for minimal costs but provide a family with all of the ingredients for a healthy, nutritious meal. The success of this project has led to the development of the 'Glascote Soup Kitchen' involving families in the preparation and consumption of nutritious meals, also providing an opportunity for parents to drop in and access not only healthy eating advice, but discuss wider issues with Family Support Workers and Health Advisors.

The Programme has also developed a very successful training and volunteer programme—with parents currently engaged at all levels—from basic first aid through to a familiarisation course with Staffordshire University. There are also clear links with Jobcentre plus, with on-going training for Sure Start staff on in-work benefit calculations and back to work support and guided visits (supported by the Child Care Partnership Manager) to the local Jobcentre plus office for parents wishing to return to work.

National Children's Bureau

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department provided to the National Children's Bureau in 2004–05. [221222]

Margaret Hodge: The Department has allocated a total of £978,000 in funding to the National Children's Bureau in 2004–05.

Section 52 Budget Statements

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the expenditure from section 52 budget statements of each local education authority in each of the last three years, broken down by *(a)* total education revenue expenditure, *(b)* total schools budget and *(c)* individual schools budget; and what percentage of the expenditure under section 52 budget statements this represented in each case. [221220]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is contained within a table which has been placed in the Library.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how funding of special educational needs provision is made available through the Learning and Skills Council. [221214]

Margaret Hodge: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) allocates funds to local education authorities (LEAs) in England to help support them meet their duty to arrange suitable provision for young people aged 16–19 with statements of special educational needs (SEN). The LSC notify LEAs of their post-16 SEN allocations in December for the following financial year.

Vetting

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the countries referred to in her Department's recent letter (reference 881/6026)

to schools where *(a)* it is not possible to carry out a meaningful Criminal Records Bureau check on foreign nationals and *(b)* a certificate of good conduct may be obtained for applicants applying for posts working with children. [221442]

Margaret Hodge: My Department's letter of 9 February 2005 advised independent schools of the need to carry out checks on foreign nationals in line with the guidance given in DfES publication 0278/2002.

This guidance about pre-appointment checks on teachers and other workers in schools was issued to all employers in the education service in May 2002 and advises that, if a person who they intend to appoint to work in a school has never lived in the UK, no purpose will be served by asking them to apply for a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure when they come to this country.

The Bureau's Overseas Information Service provides advice to employers on the availability of criminal record information from overseas. The service currently covers 16 countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Canada, Jamaica, South Africa, Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Italy (excluding Vatican City) and Finland). The CRB is in discussions with the 10 accession countries to the European Union and aims to provide information through the Overseas Information Service about the criminal record information available from these countries within the near future.

Where criminal record information is not available, we recommend that employers take extra care in taking up references and carrying out other checks on a person's background.

Youth Green Paper

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects the Green Paper on Young People to be published; whether there are issues which are expected to cause further delays in publication; and if she will make a statement on the reasons for the delays that have occurred so far. [220869]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The Youth Green Paper will set out a comprehensive offer for young people covering three main areas: things to do and places to go; targeted support for young people at risk; and universal information and support for young people and their parents. It will be published shortly.

DEFENCE

Clothing Contracts

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 598–99W, on clothing contracts, what the terms of the contract are which prevent him from specifically commenting on sub-contractor details. [221024]

Mr. Ingram: It is assumed my hon. Friend refers specifically to the cut and sew contract awarded by the Ministry of Defence.

Defence Contract Condition (DefCon) 531, which is applied to the cut and sew contract, states that information cannot be disclosed without the consent of the Prime Contractor. There is also a Condition, regarding publicity, which allows for external communication by mutual consent only. These Conditions complement and are based upon the Code of Practice agreed between MOD and its suppliers.

Correspondence

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter of 29 November 2004 from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford, ref 05963/2004. [219565]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 3 March 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 10 March 2005.

Dean May

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what disciplinary measures were taken against Staff Sergeant Dean May following his conviction for manslaughter at Winchester Crown court in July 2002; and what his rank was before discharge from the Army. [220495]

Mr. Caplin: Staff Sergeant May was found guilty of manslaughter by gross negligence at Winchester Crown court and was fined £1,500. No further action was taken against him in relation to this case. A Serviceman is not liable to be tried by court-martial or by his commanding officer for the same, or substantially the same, offence for which he has been tried in a competent civil court. Staff Sergeant May continues to serve in the Army.

Harrier Aircraft

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of current work on the Harrier GR7 to GR9 conversion and majors is being undertaken at *(a)* RAF Cottesmore and *(b)* BAE Warton; and at what cost. [220841]

Mr. Ingram: 16 Harrier GR7 aircraft are currently undergoing joint upgrade and maintenance at RAF Cottesmore at a cost of £20.7 million.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 802W.

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of work on the Harrier GR7 to GR9 conversion and majors was previously scheduled to be undertaken by the Defence Aviation Repair Agency. [220844]

Mr. Ingram: No scheduling was planned before the decision to roll-forward the Harrier air depth maintenance support to RAF Cottesmore was made in March 2004.

Jaguar Aircraft

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to extend the in-service life of the Jaguar. [220840]

Mr. Ingram: None. As announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on the 21 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 343 to 366 the final Jaguar squadron will be disbanded in 2007.

Mark 8 Mod 1 Gun

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the cost was of retrofitting the Mark 8 Mod 1 gun to HMS Gloucester; and when he expects the vessel to be decommissioned; [218447]

(2) which *(a)* Batch 3 Type-42 and *(b)* Batch 2 Type-42 destroyers are to be retrofitted with the Mark 8 Mod 1 gun; and what the timetable is for the fitting. [218448]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Gloucester is fitted with the 4.5" Mark 8 Mod 0 gun and there are no plans to retrofit her with the updated Mark 8 Mod 1 gun. On current plans she will be decommissioned in 2010.

Two Batch 3 Type 42 destroyers, HMS York and HMS Edinburgh were recently fitted with the Mark 8 Mod 1 gun as part of their scheduled upkeep work. There are no plans to retrofit the gun to any other Batch 2 or Batch 3 Type 42s.

Nuclear Warheads

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the UK Government are undertaking research into the miniaturisation of nuclear warheads. [222052]

Mr. Hoon: No.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on Government policy on the *(a)* deployment and *(b)* targeting of United Kingdom nuclear warheads. [222056]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the 1998 Strategic Defence Review, particularly Chapter Four and Supporting Essay Five.

Oil Tankers

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many single-hulled tankers are *(a)* owned and *(b)* chartered by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. [221135]

Mr. Ingram: A total of nine single-hulled tankers are currently in service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Seven of these vessels are owned and the remaining two vessels are chartered.

RAF Aston Down

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list representations he has received in the last 12 months regarding the sale details of RAF Aston Down. [220651]

Mr. Caplin: In the last six months, Ministry of Defence has received three written requests for information on the sale details of RAF Aston Down. The first letter was sent in September 2004, and subsequent requests were made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Personal details of the correspondent are being withheld under the Data Protection Act.

Recruitment (Scotland)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on armed forces recruitment in Scotland. [221064]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 125W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Govan (Mr. Sarwar).

Royal Regiment of Fusiliers

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter about the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers which was sent to him by the hon. Member for Chesham and Amersham on 8 December 2004. [221880]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to the hon. Member on 11 March 2005.

Scottish Infantry Training

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence where the training centre for the Scottish infantry soldiers is to be located. [221612]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* All Infantry training is conducted at the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) at Catterick. There are no plans for Scottish Infantry recruits to be trained anywhere else in the UK apart from at ITC Catterick.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of the military operation in Sierra Leone in 2001 was; and how many UK troops were involved. [221386]

Mr. Ingram: The cost to the Ministry of Defence of military operations in Sierra Leone during 2000–01 was £16.9 million.

At its peak in May 2000 there were 4,500 personnel deployed in Sierra Leone on Operation Palliser.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which Ministers were not present; [210539]

(2) if he will list the speeches his special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210566]

Mr. Caplin: Ministry of Defence special advisers have many regular meetings with a wide variety of external bodies as a routine part of their duties. All meetings held by departmental special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

All speeches given by special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Trident

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answers to the hon. Members for North Tayside (Pete Wishart) and for Banff and Buchan (Mr. Salmond), of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1234W, on Trident, whether he has made an estimate of potential casualties in the west of Scotland arising from a catastrophic malfunction of a Trident nuclear warhead at the base on the Clyde that leads to a nuclear yield; and whether he has made an estimate of potential casualties in the west of Scotland arising from a malfunction of a Trident nuclear warhead at the base on the Clyde that resulted in a radioactive release short of a nuclear yield into *(a)* the atmosphere and *(b)* the Firth of Clyde. [221028]

Mr. Hoon: There is no requirement under Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2001 to assess the number of potential casualties arising from a malfunction of a Trident nuclear warhead at the base on the Clyde and no estimates have therefore been made. However, it is highly unlikely that any catastrophic malfunction of a Trident warhead, resulting in a radioactive release into the atmosphere or the Firth of Clyde, would occur.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence at what times in each of the last four years emergency services have been called to handle *(a)* fire, *(b)* smoke and *(c)* electrical malfunction at the Explosives Handling Jetty at the Royal Naval Armament Depot at Coulport on Loch Long; and on which of these occasions nuclear material was within (i) 50 yards, (ii) 100 yards and (iii) 500 yards of the incident. [221034]

Mr. Ingram: Since March 2001, there have been eight occasions when smoke or electrical malfunction has led to the Defence Fire Service (DFS) being called to the Explosives Handling Jetty (EHJ) at the Royal Naval Armament Depot at Coulport on Loch Long. There have been no fires. All incidents were addressed promptly and none posed a threat to personnel, submarines, the facility or nuclear material.

Date	*Incident*	*Nuclear material*
April 2001	Smell of burning. False alarm.	None
May 2001	Electrical malfunction. Smoke.	Submarine within 50 yards
October 2002	Electrical malfunction. Smoke.	None
October 2002	Smoke from vehicle engine.	None
March 2003	Electrical Malfunction. Smoke.	None
April 2003	Smell of burning. Overheating battery.	None
August 2004	Electrical Malfunction. Smoke.	Submarine within 50 yards
September 2004	Smell of burning. False alarm.	Submarine within 100 yards

The EHJ is fitted with a comprehensive and sensitive fire detection system which reflects the value of the facility and the activities undertaken there. Flammable material is strictly controlled and constitutes only a small percentage of the EHJ construction. A vigorous precautionary approach is taken to all alarm triggers and all are attended by the on-site Defence Fire Service (DFS).

Nuclear material is strictly controlled throughout the Depot and is not stored on the EHJ. While nuclear material onboard a submarine is likely to be within 100 yards of the EHJ, any fire on the jetty would present negligible hazard to the onboard nuclear material because submarine design limits the risk from external hazards.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the operational costs of *(a)* the UK nuclear warhead programme, *(b)* the Trident submarine programme and *(c)* the warhead delivery system were in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [221371]

Mr. Hoon: The combined capital and running costs of the United Kingdom nuclear warhead programme, the Trident submarine programme and the warhead delivery system was around 3 per cent. of the annual defence budget for financial year 2003–04. The total cost for the current financial year is not yet available.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experimentation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many licences he has issued in each of the last five years to Wickham Research Laboratories for the purposes of experiments on live animals; what the aims of the experiments were; what species of animals were involved; how many animals were involved; what the level of severity of the experiments was; and if he will make a statement. [218718]

Caroline Flint: It is an offence under section 24 of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 for anyone with functions under the Act to disclose information given to them in confidence. I am therefore only prepared to provide information of the type requested with the agreement of the establishment concerned.

On that basis I am able to confirm no more than that the named establishment currently holds three project licences granted under the 1986 Act, that it undertakes safety and quality assurance testing of medicines and other healthcare products, and that the species it uses are rats, rabbits, mice and guinea pigs.

Asylum Seekers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals against initial decision have been filed by asylum seekers in each year since 1992. [217748]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is published in the annual and quarterly asylum statistics, available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of asylum seekers have appealed against their initial decision in each year since 1992. [217749]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is published in the annual asylum statistics bulletin "Asylum Statistics United Kingdom", available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of asylum cases, including final appeal, were decided within six months in 2004. [219127]

Mr. Browne: Information on the proportion of new substantive asylum applications in 2004, that were decided, including final appeal, within six months, is not yet available. Information relating to applications made in 2004 will be available in August 2005.

Information on the timeliness of asylum cases is published in the quarterly asylum statistics on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of failed asylum seekers were removed in 2004. [219129]

Mr. Browne: It is not possible to know what exactly proportion of applications made in 2004 will prove to be unfounded, or will eventually result in removal. Some applications made in 2004 are still awaiting the outcome of initial decisions or of appeals. Other cases are in the process of removal, can, in certain cases, create a number of barriers, for example the length of time it takes to obtain documentation to allow individuals to be accepted back by their countries of origin. Many failed applicants may either leave the UK voluntarily without advising the Home Office, or seek to evade the Home Office in order to try to avoid removal, or come from countries where removal is very difficult due to the situation in the country (e.g. Iraq).

The level of asylum applications has continued to fall. There were 33,930 applications for asylum, excluding dependants, in the UK in 2004, a third fewer than in 2003.

Information on the numbers of asylum applications and removals of failed asylum seekers is published in the quarterly asylum statistics on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been made by his Department to the Iranian Government for passports or other travel documentation to facilitate the repatriation of failed asylum seekers in each of the last six months; and what the average time between the application and the delivery of such documentation has been over that period. [220872]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* Applications for travel documents to facilitate return are made by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND). Internal statistics show that, over the last six months, IND has applied for a total of 24 Iranian travel documents.

Of the 24 applications for travel documents made by IND, none have as yet been issued by the Iranian authorities.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many failed asylum seekers have been compulsorily returned to Iran in each of the last six months. [220873]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The latest available information on the number of failed asylum seekers who have been returned to Iran shows that in the six months from July to December 2004, 30 persons were removed. A breakdown by month is shown in the table.

Persons removed from the United Kingdom to Iran in each of the last six months of 2004 [1,2]

	Persons removed
July	5
August	5
September	5
October	5
November	10
December	5
Total	30

[1] Persons who had sought asylum at some stage, including dependants.

[2] Excluding persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration and other voluntary departures.

Notes:

These figures are based on management information and are not National Statistics; the data are also provisional and are rounded to the nearest five and may not sum due to rounding.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to focus the asylum system on those genuinely fleeing persecution by taking speedy, high quality decisions and reducing significantly unfounded asylum claims; [219124]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to ensure the fast turnaround of manifestly unfounded asylum cases; [219125]

(3) whether the public service agreement target to ensure that 75 per cent. of substantive asylum applications are decided within two months by 2004 was met; [219126]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to enforce the immigration laws more effectively by removing a greater proportion of failed asylum seekers; [219128]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce unfounded asylum claims; [219135]

(6) what recent progress has been made towards the Public Service Agreement target to tackle abuse of the immigration laws and promote controlled legal migration. [219136]

Mr. Browne: Performance against my Department's targets is published in the Annual Report and the Autumn Performance Report available in the House Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Begging (Children)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 there have been of individuals for procuring a child to beg in each year since 1990; and if he will make a statement. [220667]

Paul Goggins: The available information contained in the table gives the number of offenders found guilty at all courts for

"causing a child or young person to be in any street, etc., for purpose of begging"

under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933, Section 4, England and Wales 1990 to 2003.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2004 will be published in the autumn.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts for "the employment of children for begging"[1] England and Wales 1990 to 2003

	Found guilty
1990	5
1991	6
1992	19
1993	25
1994	11
1995	31
1996	29
1997	29
1998	57
1999	121
2000	44
2001	16
2002	9
2003	28

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Control Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the effect the operation of Control Orders will have on the families of those subject to the orders. [216836]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The implications for the family of someone subject to a Control Order will vary depending on the particular conditions imposed on the individual.

Correspondence

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Northavon dated 11 January (Home Office ref: B1020/5) regarding a constituent, Mr. Peter Tippett. [219748]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the hon. Member on 2 March 2005.

Fixed Penalty Notices

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fixed penalty notice offences have been issued for each basic command unit in England and Wales for *(a)* selling alcohol to a person under 18, *(b)* the purchase of alcohol for a person under 18 on licensed premises, *(c)* the consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 and *(d)* allowing delivery of alcohol to a person under 18. [209239]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The total number of penalty notices issued for these offences for the period January to November 2004 is 61. The table details the available information for each police force area in England and Wales broken down by offence. Purchase of alcohol for a person under 18 on licensed premises has been broken down into the offence committed in a bar and that in licensed premises as the latter was only added to the scheme from 1 November to target off licence offences. Data are collected centrally at police force level only.

Penalty notice disposal provides the police with a quick and effective way of dealing with this type of minor offence without the need to prosecute. As four of these offences only became liable to disposal by penalty notice from 1 November, the number of offenders dealt with in this way will rise significantly.

The Christmas Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign ran from 17 December 2004 to 3 January 2005 involving 188 Borough Command Units. Data from the campaign show that 72 penalty notices were issued for offences connected with selling alcohol to persons under 18, 32 in connection with on-licences and 40 in connection with off-licences.

Penalty notices for disorder issued relating to buying, selling etc alcohol to persons under 18 in England and Wales during January to November 2004, by police force area (Provisional figures)

Number

	Offence breakdown		
Police force area	*Selling alcohol to person under 18*[1]	*Purchasing alcohol in licensed premises for person under 18*[1]	*Delivering alcohol to person under 18*[1]
Avon and Somerset	—	—	—
Bedfordshire	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	1	—
Cleveland	—	1	—
Cumbria	—		—
Derbyshire	—		—
Devon and Cornwall	—		—
Dorset	5	—	—
Durham	—	—	—
Essex	—	—	—
Gloucestershire	—	—	—
Greater Manchester	—	1	—
Hampshire	—	1	—
Hertfordshire	—	—	1
Humberside	2		—
Kent	—	—	—
Lancashire	—	1	—
Leicestershire	—	1	—

Penalty notices for disorder issued relating to buying, selling etc alcohol to persons under 18 in England and Wales during January to November 2004, by police force area (Provisional figures)

Number

Police force area	Offence breakdown: Selling alcohol to person under 18[1]	Purchasing alcohol in licensed premises for person under 18[1]	Delivering alcohol to person under 18[1]
Lincolnshire	—	—	—
London, City of	—	—	—
Merseyside	—	—	—
Metropolitan police	—	—	1
Norfolk	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	—	—	—
Northumbria	1	—	—
North Yorkshire	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	—	—
South Yorkshire	—	—	—
Staffordshire	—	1	—
Suffolk	—	—	—
Surrey	—	—	—
Sussex	—	—	—
Thames Valley[2]	—	—	—
Warwickshire	—	—	—
West Mercia	—	—	—
West Midlands	—	—	—
West Yorkshire	2	—	—
Wiltshire	—	—	—
Dyfed-Powys	—	—	—
Gwent	—	—	—
North Wales	—	—	—
South Wales	—	—	—
Total	10	7	2

Number

Police force area	Offence breakdown: Purchasing alcohol for consumption in a bar in licensed premises for person under 18	Allowing consumption of alcohol by a person under 18 in bar in licensed premises[1]	Total PNDs issued relating to buying, selling etc alcohol to persons under 18
Avon and Somerset	—	—	—
Bedfordshire	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	—	—
Cheshire	1	—	2
Cleveland	2	—	3
Cumbria	—	—	—
Derbyshire	1	—	1
Devon and Cornwall	—	1	1
Dorset	—	—	5
Durham	—	—	—
Essex	1	—	1
Gloucestershire	—	—	—
Greater Manchester	2	2	5
Hampshire	3	—	4
Hertfordshire	—	—	1
Humberside	—	—	2
Kent	2	—	2
Lancashire	5	—	6
Leicestershire	1	—	2
Lincolnshire	—	—	—
London, City of	—	—	—
Merseyside	8	—	8
Metropolitan police	2	—	3
Norfolk	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	1	—	1
Northumbria	—	—	1
North Yorkshire	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	2	—	2
South Yorkshire	2	—	2
Staffordshire	—	—	1
Suffolk	—	—	—
Surrey	—	—	—
Sussex	—	—	—
Thames Valley[2]	1	—	1
Warwickshire	—	—	—
West Mercia	—	—	—
West Midlands	2	—	2
West Yorkshire	—	—	2
Wiltshire	—	—	—
Dyfed-Powys	—	—	—
Gwent	—	—	—
North Wales	3	—	3
South Wales	—	—	—
Total	39	3	61

[1] New offence added to PND scheme from 1 November 2004.

[2] January to October only.

Immigration (Illegal Working)

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many employers *(a)* were investigated between 27 January and 10 February 2003 and *(b)* have been investigated since 10 February 2003 for offences related to alleged intended or actual employment of illegal workers or facilitation of illegal immigration or other immigration-related offences (i) under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, (ii) under the Nationality, Asylum and Immigration Act 2002 and (iii) under other legislation; how many were prosecuted; how many were convicted; and what the (A) minimum, (B) average and (C) maximum sentences imposed were, broken down by offence. [220877]

Mr. Browne: Internal management information shows that in the financial year 2002–03 301 illegal working operations were reported as having taken place; as a result of these, 1,099 offenders were detected. In the year 2003–04, 697 operations were reported and 2,304 offenders were detected. It is not possible to break down this information into the periods requested.

The latest available information on the number of persons proceeded against for offences under Immigration Acts 1971 to 2002 in England and Wales in the periods requested, together with the penalties imposed, is shown in the table.

Official statistics on the number of people proceeded against during 2004 will be published in autumn 2005 in the Home Office Command Paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2004". This will be available from the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Number of persons proceeded against at magistrates courts, convicted at all courts and sentence breakdown for offences of facilitation under Immigration Acts 1971 to 1996 in England and Wales, 27 January to 10 February 2003 and 11 February to 31 December 2003[1]

		27 January to 10 February 2003					
				Sentence type			
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Total sentenced*	*Absolute/ condition discharge*	*Fine*	*Community sentence*
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(a) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	13	5	17	—	—	—
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(b) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	4	1	1	—	1	—
Knowingly facilitating leave to remain of persons by means of deception	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(c) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	—	—	—	—	—	—
Employing a person subject to immigration control	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 S.8	—	—	—	—	—	—

		27 January to 10 February 2003				
		Sentence type		Custody length (months)		
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Suspended sentence*	*Immediate custody*	*Minimum*	*Average*	*Maximum*
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)*(a)* as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	2	15	4	11.7	18
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)*(b)* as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	—	—	—	—	—
Knowingly facilitating leave to remain of persons by means of deception	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)*(c)* as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	—	—	—	—	—
Employing a person subject to immigration control	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 S.8	—	—	—	—	—

		11 February to 31 December 2003					
				Sentence type			
Offence description	*Principal statute*	*Proceeded against*	*Found guilty*	*Total sentenced*	*Absolute/ condition discharge*	*Fine*	*Community sentence*
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(a) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	192	138	186	4	1	3
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(b) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	10	5	4	—	—	1
Knowingly facilitating leave to remain of persons by means of deception	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(c) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	8	9	9	1	—	1

Offence description	Principal statute	11 February to 31 December 2003 Sentence type: Proceeded against	Found guilty	Total sentenced	Absolute/ condition discharge	Fine	Community sentence
Employing a person subject to immigration control	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 S.8	2	1	1	—	1	—

Offence description	Principal statute	11 February to 31 December 2003 Sentence type: Suspended sentence	Immediate custody	Custody length (months): Minimum	Average	Maximum
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an illegal entrant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(a) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	9	169	2	16.3	84
Knowingly facilitating the entry of an asylum claimant	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(b) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	—	3	9	19	36
Knowingly facilitating leave to remain of persons by means of deception	Immigration Act 1971 S.25(1)(c) as amended by Asylum & Immigration Act 1996 S.5	—	7	3	13.7	42
Employing a person subject to immigration control	Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 S.8	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Principal immigration offence.

Tuberculosis (UK Entrants)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action is taken if an individual is tested on entry to the UK and found to have tuberculosis. [217744]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Cases of tuberculosis (TB), which are identified at the ports are currently followed up within the United Kingdom by the national health service. This is because refusal of entry and summary removal on grounds of public health would put the person concerned and other passengers at risk.

Under the new approach announced in our recent asylum and immigration strategy, we will apply TB checks overseas, rather than at the port of entry, thus ensuring that TB is treated before the person concerned travels to the UK.

Laptop Computers

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which suppliers service his Department's laptop computers; what the *(a)* length and *(b)* total value of each contract is; how many laptop computers are covered by each contract; what the annual or monthly charge per laptop for servicing them is; what the tariff for services not covered by the general servicing agreement is; which such additional services have been purchased; and in what quantities. [216314]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Sirius (Fujitsu Alcedo Ltd.) is responsible for providing the remote access laptops service for the Core Home Office. The length of the contract remaining is five years 359 days. The total value of the contract based on current usage is £3,368,617. The contract is based on variable demand with an upper limit of 9,999. We currently have 1,127 users.

The monthly charge per laptop for A4 size is £162.93 and for A5 size is £158.19. This includes the supply of laptop, network infrastructure, ongoing support including break fix and technology refresh of infrastructure and laptop.

Enhancements to the base remote access service are:

Standard docking service. This service enables the laptop to be plugged in and used as standard workstation in the office. The service charge is £22.73 per month per workstation for first 472 and £61.62 per month per workstation for more than 473. The current demand is 87.

ISDN Adaptor. The charge is £5.37 per adaptor per month. The current demand is 177.

Additional multi-user. This allows the sharing of one laptop with up to 10 users at a charge of £16.44 per month additional user with password access to a particular laptop. The current number of users sharing is 445.

Leave to Remain Applications

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent representations he has received from the English language school industry in the UK on his proposals to increase the cost of Leave to Remain applications from international students; and if he will make a statement. [221387]

Mr. Browne: Since 1 September 2004 I have received 12 letters from MPs on behalf of the English language school industry. The following organisations responded to the

Home Office Consultation "Charges for Immigration Applications", which closed on 8 December 2004: English UK, Association of English Language Teaching Centres, British Council Accredited English Language Schools for Adults, the London School of English, and the Wimbledon School of English.

An assessment of the impact of the charges on the English language sector was published in a regulatory impact assessment on 7 February 2005 and is available on the Home Office website: www.ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Metropolitan Police Authority

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what meetings he has had with Sir Ian Blair to discuss proposed efficiency savings in the Metropolitan Police Authority. [215697]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It is the duty of police authorities to maintain an effective and efficient police force for their area. I meet the Commissioner and representatives of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) from time to time to discuss a range of matters including efficiency.

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) has a good record of exceeding the annual target for 2 per cent. efficiency gains that has been in place since 1999–2000. Like all other police authorities in England and Wales, the MPA has been asked to make cumulative efficiency gains of 3 per cent. per year from 2005–06 to 2007–08.

I welcome the service review of the Metropolitan Police announced by the Commissioner supported by the MPA and led by an Assistant Commissioner to carry out and then to implement the review.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Metropolitan Police Authority spent on counter-terrorism in each year since 1997, broken down by borough. [215698]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is not available in the form requested. Dedicated Counter Terrorism funding for the Metropolitan Police Service has increased from £47 million in 2002–03 to £61 million in 2004–05.

Ministerial Residence

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate has been made of the market value of his official residence. [209868]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The last valuation was carried out on 31 March 2001 when the property was valued at £1.8 million.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to move into his official residence. [209871]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Prime Minister has agreed that the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) can continue to have use of the Home Office official residence while his and the current Home Secretary's security arrangements are reviewed. Appropriate measures will be put in place once this is completed.

Motorway Accidents (HGVs)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what percentage of accidents resulting in the closure of a motorway in England and Wales and in which a heavy goods vehicle was involved proceedings were subsequently brought against the owner or driver in each of the last five years for which figures are available, excluding ongoing cases. [219898]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The information is not collected centrally by the Home Office. Motoring offence statistics do not identify the circumstances in which an offence takes place nor the nature of the vehicle involved.

People Smuggling

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many boats have patrolled UK shores to prevent people smuggling in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* the number and *(b)* type of boats; how many individuals were employed in this capacity in each year; and what the (i) total and (ii) average time spent on patrol was in each year. [221164]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The UK Immigration Service mounts joint operations with other agencies on an intelligence led basis, notably HM Customs and Excise.

HM Customs and Excise have advised that the deployment of their Cutters varies, but that they routinely patrol UK waters. Their Cutters are deployed in a proactive and reactive way, gathering intelligence and enforcing our sea borders.

Population Growth

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding his Department has earmarked for growth areas to ensure that they have the resources required to meet the demands of a growing population. [218330]

Fiona Mactaggart: Several Home Office funding streams will benefit the locations that have been designated as growth areas, as they will other areas of the UK.

Crime Reduction

From April 2005, the main funding streams for crime reduction in communities will come under the Safer Stronger Communities Fund. This is a joint fund from the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Home Office, merging a number of current funding streams, including the Building Safer Communities Fund and the Antisocial Behaviour CDRP Allocation. In 2004–05, the authorities that cover the growth areas received £11,278,810 from the Building Safer Communities Fund. Funding for local areas in 2005–06 will be finalised shortly.

Policing

The eight police authorities that cover the growth areas will receive a total of £2,824.3 million in general police grants in 2005–06. Formula grant, which takes into account the relative needs of authorities, consists of:

Revenue Support Grant;

Redistributed Business Rates; and

Police Grant.

Grant increases for these authorities next year range from the minimum increase of 3.75 per cent. up to almost 6.1 per cent.

In addition, these authorities will also receive, in 2005–06, a total of around £295.5 million in specific grant funding for a range of schemes.

Allocation of these resources is a matter for each chief constable and police authority, who will make decisions according to local plans and operational priorities.

Antisocial Behaviour

In February 2005 the Home Office announced that intensive family support will be introduced in 50 TOGETHER antisocial behaviour action areas through a £1.25 million cash boost. The £1.25 million will be split equally between the 50 action areas with each area getting £25,000. The growth areas which will be covered by the scheme are: Harlow, Peterborough, Southend on Sea, Northampton and Hackney.

Additionally, in 2005–06 some growth areas will receive funding from ASBU to tackle local issues. Commitments are already in place for the following areas:

Hackney will receive £106,000 for the Hackney Crackdown project.

Harlow will receive action area funding of £25,000.

Peterborough will receive action area funding of £27,800.

Southend on Sea and Northampton are still to be agreed.

In 2005–06, the growth areas named will receive at least £283,800 between them for antisocial behaviour action.

Tackling Drug Misuse

Tackling Drug Misuse is a priority of this Government and their policy is set out in the 10-year National Drug Strategy launched in 1998 and updated in December 2002. (A copy of the Updated Drug Strategy 2002 is held in the House Library.) Under this, the Government have invested substantially in measures to reduce the harms caused by illegal drugs, focusing on the four strands of:

reducing the supply of illegal drugs;

preventing young people from becoming problematic drug users;

providing effective treatment to all who need it; and

reducing drug-related crime.

Direct annual funding nationally to tackle drug misuse across all four strands—not only those delivered by the Home Office—amounted to £1,244 million in 2003–04, rising to £1,344 million in 2004–05.

The growth areas have seen a significant increase in direct funding for tackling drugs, in particular for drug treatment services and the throughcare and aftercare elements of the Drugs Intervention Programme. In 2003–04 the allocation for Drug Action Teams in the growth areas totalled £65.97 million, rising to £85.58 million in 2004–05. Allocations for Drug Action Teams for 2005–06 have not yet been agreed, but it is expected that figures will be finalised in early April.

Details of action taken to tackle drugs in the growth areas can be obtained from the Drugs Action Teams, for contact details see http://www.drugs.gov.uk/Links/DrugActionTeams.

Prisons

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were doubling up in cells designed for single occupancy at the most recent date for which figures are available. [214068]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 4 February 2005]:* At the end of December 2004,15,786 prisoners were doubled up in cells certified to hold one person.

Sentencing (Violent Crime)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average sentence length for offenders convicted of *(a)* rape, *(b)* robbery, *(c)* sexual assault, *(d)* grievous bodily harm, *(e)* actual bodily harm and *(f)* violence against the person was in each year since 1997; and how many convictions there were in each case in each of those years. [217750]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The available information is contained in the table and gives the number of offenders found guilty and the average custodial sentence length at all courts for the requested offences, England and Wales 1997 to 2003.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2004 will be published in the autumn.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts and the average custodial sentence length received for certain offences[1], England and Wales 1997 to 2003

Offence		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Rape	Found guilty (Number)	618	675	659	598	572	655	673
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	78.7	79.8	79.8	83.2	81.1	83.7	86.4
Robbery	Found guilty (Number)	5,589	5,542	5,626	5,891	6,822	7,711	7,303
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	39.1	35.3	35.7	36.1	35.4	38.9	39.3

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts and the average custodial sentence length received for certain offences[1], England and Wales 1997 to 2003

Offence		*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Sexual assault[3]	Found guilty (Number)	2,963	2,894	2,868	2,633	2,517	2,590	2,467
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	24.5	24.8	24.1	24.6	25.4	26.3	26.3
Grievous bodily harm[4]	Found guilty (Number)	6,126	6,397	6,004	5,784	5,775	6,134	5,966
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	26.1	24.8	25.6	24.9	26.3	26.8	28.9
Actual bodily harm[5]	Found guilty (Number)	17,685	18,388	17,337	16,569	14,962	14,904	14,961
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	7.8	7.5	7.8	8.0	8.5	9.2	9.2
Violence against the person	Found guilty (Number)	34,562	37,050	35,700	35,270	35,298	37,708	38,036
	Average custodial sentence length[2] (months)	17.4	16.1	15.7	15.8	16.7	17.6	18.8

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Excludes life sentences.
[3] Includes: Indecent assault on a male and female.
[4] Excludes racially and religiously aggravated GBH.
[5] Excludes racially and religiously aggravated ABH.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to assess the effectiveness of the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [218363]

Caroline Flint: The Serious Organised Crime Agency and Police Bill provides that the Secretary of State may determine strategic priorities for the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and, where he has done so, he may direct SOCA to establish levels of performance ("performance targets") to be aimed at.

Special Constables

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the average age of serving special constables was, broken down by police force area in 1997; [216312]

(2) what the average tenure of serving special constables was, broken down by *(a)* year of entry and *(b)* police force area in 1997. [216313]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested is not available.

Staff Identity Passes

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of producing a staff identity pass was in the Department on the latest date for which figures are available; and how many staff identity passes have been reported lost or stolen in each year since 1997. [215088]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The cost of producing a staff pass in February 2005 was £4.25 per pass (including the cost of the pass and administrative costs).

The number of Home Office passes reported lost or stolen on the central London and Croydon estates annually is as follows:

	Number
1998	95
1999	34
2000	89
2001	64
2002	138
2003	291
2004	321

Note:
Figures for 1997 are not available.

Tetra

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources were given to Sussex Constabulary to roll out the commission for Tetra police communication networks in Sussex. [220483]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The Home Office has provided funding to Police Authorities for the implementation of the Airwave service. Sussex Police Authority received £4.575 million from the Home Office in 2002–03 to support installation costs within the force.

A further £441,000 has been provided during the current financial year and a one-off payment £1.067 million will be paid in 2005–06 to meet our commitment to provide all forces with sufficient funding to meet their initial costs from when ready for service status has been achieved.

Proceeds of Crime

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action is to be taken by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* other appropriate authorities to seek to confiscate the money that has been earned by women forced into prostitution in the UK by foreign nationals who have recently been found guilty of the trafficking of women in court cases; and if he will make a statement. [220383]

Caroline Flint: The Government have introduced new legislation to enable appropriate authorities to confiscate the proceeds of crime. The Government encourage the police and other agencies to make use of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) at every appropriate opportunity. Under the Act anyone convicted of a criminal offence is liable to confiscation proceedings to recover any proceeds of their criminality. In the absence of a conviction it is open to law enforcement agencies to refer the case to the Assets Recovery Agency to consider civil recovery or taxation proceedings instead. POCA also contains provisions for enabling the seizure of cash where it can be demonstrated that it is from, or intended for use in, crime.

The Home Office funds Reflex, the multi-agency enforcement taskforce established to tackle organised immigration crime, including human trafficking. Many of the recent court cases have resulted from Reflex supported operations. Confiscating the proceeds of crime is an important part of the reflex strategy and a new dedicated Reflex Financial Investigation Unit has recently been established within the National Crime Squad.

In addition the Home Office funds five multi agency Regional Asset Recovery Teams to increase the confiscation of the proceeds of crime and tackle money laundering.

Under-age Drinking (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have taken place for under-age drinking in each London borough in each year since 1990. [216846]

Paul Goggins: There is no specific offence of under-age drinking.

However, the available information from the Home Office Court Proceedings database, gives the number of defendants aged 10–17 years who were proceeded against in each London borough, for offences of being drunk, drunk at a designated sports event and drunk and disorderly together with defendants proceeded against for the offence of:

"Selling etc., intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 for consumption on the premises".

Figures for 1990 to 2003 are given in the following table. Statistics for 2004 will be available in the autumn.

In addition, the penalty notice for disorder scheme provides for persons who commit specified penalty offences to be issued with a fixed penalty notice instead of being prosecuted or cautioned. The scheme was extended to 16 and 17-year-olds from 20 January 2004. The second table details the number of penalty notices issued for the listed offences which involve under age drinking. These include offences committed by 16 and 17-year-olds and alcohol offences involving the purchase for, sale or delivery to persons aged under 18 years.

The penalty notice for disorder scheme has been extended to allow penalty notices to be issued to 10 to 15-year-olds and pilots of these powers are now under way in seven police force areas including the borough of Kingston in the Metropolitan police force area. A further under age drinking offence, purchase of alcohol on licensed premises by a person under 18, is to be added to the scheme as set out in a draft Order laid before Parliament on 17 March.

Persons aged 10 and under 18 proceeded against at magistrates courts for certain alcohol related offences, by London borough 1990 to 2003[1]

Offence/London borough	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*
Drunk in a highway or other public place, whether a building or not, or on licensed premises							
Inner London magistrates courts[2]							
City of London police							
Guildhall Justice rooms	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Metropolitan police							
Bow Street[3]	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge	—	2	—	—	—	—	—
Greenwich and Woolwich	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Highbury Corner[4]	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Horseferry Road	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Marylebone	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Western	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West London	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
Inner London Juvenile Courts[5]	4	—	1	—	—	—	1
Outer London boroughs							
Metropolitan police							
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bexley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brent	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Bromley	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Croydon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Ealing	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Persons aged 10 and under 18 proceeded against at magistrates courts for certain alcohol related offences, by London borough 1990 to 2003[1]

Offence/London borough	*1990*	*1991*	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hillingdon	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Kingston-upon-Thames	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
Merton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Redbridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sutton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Metropolitan police	3	—	4	1	3	—	1
Total Greater London	11	2	8	1	3	—	2

Offence/London borough	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Drunk in a highway or other public place, whether a building or not, or on licensed premises							
Inner London magistrates courts[2]							
City of London police							
Guildhall Justice rooms	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Metropolitan police							
Bow Street[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Camberwell Green/Tower Bridge	—	—	—	3	—	1	—
Greenwich and Woolwich	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Highbury Corner[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Horseferry Road	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marylebone	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Western	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thames	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West London	—	1	1	2	1	—	1
Inner London Juvenile Courts[5]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Outer London boroughs							
Metropolitan police							
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
Barnet	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bexley	—	—	—	—	1	—	3
Brent	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bromley	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Croydon	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ealing	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enfield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Haringey	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Havering	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
Hillingdon	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Hounslow	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Kingston-upon-Thames	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Merton	—	—	—	1	2	—	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Redbridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	1	1	1	1	1
Sutton	1	—	—	1	—	1	1
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Metropolitan police	2	1	1	5	10	4	5
Total Greater London	2	2	2	10	11	5	6

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Information held centrally does not allow a breakdown of cases by borough in the Inner London area.
[3] Includes Marlborough Street 1997–99.
[4] Includes Clerkenwell and Hampstead, 1997–98.
[5] Cases included with adult courts from 1998 (from 1999 for cases heard at the Crown court).

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Number of penalty notices for disorder issued in London[1] for offences relating to alcohol—2004 (Provisional figures)

Offence	*Statute*	*Number of notices issued*
Offences committed by juveniles aged 16 and 17 years		
Drunk and disorderly	Criminal Justice Act 1967, Sec 91	22
Being drunk in a highway, other public place or licensed premises	Licensing Act 1872, Sec 12	2
Consumption of alcohol in designated public place	Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001, Sec 12	—
Consumption of alcohol by under 18 in licensed premises[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169E(1)	—
Offences involving the purchase for, sale or delivery to, persons aged under 18 years		
Sell alcohol to person under 18[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169A	5
Purchase of alcohol in licensed premises for person under 18[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169C(2)	—
Purchase of alcohol for consumption in bar of licensed premises for person under 18	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169C(3)	2
Allowing consumption of alcohol by under 18 in bar of licensed premises[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169E(2)	—
Delivery of alcohol to person under 18 or allowing delivery[2]	Licensing Act 1964, Sec 169F	3

[1] City of London and Metropolitan police force areas.
[2] Offence added to PND scheme only from 1 November 2004.

Work Permits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individual work permits were issued in 2004. [216688]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 22 February 2005]*: 181,432 individual work permits were issued in 2004.

Young Offenders Institutions

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* baseline Certified National Accommodation (CNA), *(b)* in use CNA, *(c)* operational capacity and *(d)* prisoner population was for each young offenders institution on 28 January. [220514]

Paul Goggins: The *(a)* baseline Certified National Accommodation (CNA), *(b)* in use CNA, *(c)* operational capacity and *(d)* prisoner population for each Young Offenders' Institution on 31 January 2005 are given as follows. Table 1 gives the figures for establishments which only hold sentenced young offenders.

Table 1

Establishment	*Baseline CNA*	*In use CNA*	*Operational capacity*	*Population*
Portland	533	447	472	455
Deerbolt	513	513	518	441
Rochester	392	392	392	371
Aylesbury	421	356	392	357
Huntercombe	360	360	368	337
Northallerton	153	78	126	110
Werrington	146	146	148	111

Table 2, gives the numbers for establishments that hold other prisoners in addition to sentenced young offenders. The data for CNA and Operational Capacity are available only for the whole of these establishments and cannot be broken down for particular groups.

Table 2

Establishment	*Population*
Stoke Heath	580
Glen Parva	505
Lancaster Farms	383
Hindley	374
Moorland	361
Pare	330
Swinfen Hall	302
Castington	280
Wetherby	264
Thorn Cross	249
Ashfield	245
Brinsford	223
Doncaster	207
Feltham	206
Warren Hill	175
Onley	167
Reading	149
Norwich	133
Bullwood Hall	96
Hull	66
Guys Marsh	61
Moorland Open	54
New Hall	53
Chelmsford	46
Woodhill	41
Low Newton	40
Eastwood Park	37
Elmley	36
Holloway	32
Dover	30
Exeter	24
Styal	23
Dorchester	18
Highdown	18
Drake Hall	14
Hollesley Bay	13
Haslar	12
Lewes	12

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Aegis Defence Services

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what information his Department has *(a)* supplied to and *(b)* received from the United States Administration regarding that government's award of the Iraq Reconstruction Security Support Services contract to Aegis Defence Services; [220988]

(2) what discussions there have been between the British and American governments regarding the award of the US Administration's Iraq Reconstruction Security Support Services' contract to Aegis Defence Services. [220989]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement made on 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 53–54WS, by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary in which he stated that

> "the contract in question was awarded by the United States Government. Her Majesty's Government is not a party to the contract, nor was it involved in any way in its negotiation."

Attorney-General (Iraq Advice)

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1575W, on the Attorney-General (Iraq Advice), whether he had a role other than in its framing, drafting and drawing up in the parliamentary answer given by the Attorney-General on 17 March 2003 on Iraq. [221611]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Attorney-General, Lord Goldsmith, to Baroness Hanham on 28 February 2005, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA1, which clearly describes those involved in the parliamentary answer given by him on 17 March 2003 on Iraq and confirms that my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary had no role.

Bangladesh

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information his Department received from the Government of Bangladesh concerning the perpetrators of the attempted assassination of the British high commissioner in Sylhet in 2004. [221647]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The investigation into the attack on the British high commissioner in Sylhet in 2004 is ongoing and we remain in contact with the Bangladeshi authorities on this. I emphasized to the Prime Minister in Dhaka in December the importance which we attach to the investigation reaching a swift conclusion.

China

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last had discussions with Chinese officials concerning the Chief Executive and Legislative Council of Hong Kong; and if he will make a statement. [221042]

Mr. Rammell: Ministers and officials regularly discuss Hong Kong matters with Chinese officials. My right hon. Friend, the Foreign Secretary discussed Hong Kong's constitutional reform and progress towards universal suffrage with Premier Wen Jiabao and Foreign Minister, Li Zhaoxing in China in January. I also raised these issues when I visited China in July last year. During my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister's talks with the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on 10 May 2004, both Governments reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Joint Declaration and agreed to continue their exchanges of view on these issues.

Her Majesty's Government support democracy throughout the world as the best means for creating stable, accountable and transparent government, of protecting rights and freedoms, and of upholding the rule of law. The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) contains provisions regarding the methods of selecting the Chief Executive of the SAR and the formation of the Legislative Council. The ultimate aim of the Basic Law is a Chief Executive and Legislative Council elected by universal suffrage. The Government favour early progress to this end. We hope that the Hong Kong SAR Government will take full account of the wishes of the people of Hong Kong.

We continue to follow developments in Hong Kong closely, in line with our responsibilities as a co-signatory to the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on China's occupation of Tibet. [221043]

Mr. Rammell: Successive British Governments have regarded Tibet as autonomous while recognising the special position of the Chinese authorities there.

We monitor Tibet-related developments closely. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the case of a Tibetan prisoner during his visit in January 2005. I personally raised the issue of Tibet with Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui during my visit to China in October 2004. We also discuss Tibet at our biannual UK/China Human Rights Dialogue, the last round of which was held in Beijing on 22 November 2004.

We have welcomed visits to China by representatives of the Dalai Lama. We have made clear to the Chinese authorities our view that a long-term, peaceful solution to the Tibet issue can be found only through substantial dialogue without pre-conditions.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the relationship between Taiwan and China. [221044]

Mr. Rammell: In recent months there have been a few signs suggesting an improvement in the political relationship between China and Taiwan. For example, over the Chinese new year there were direct flights

across the Strait for Taiwanese businessmen, the first time for over 50 years that mainland commercial aircraft have landed in Taiwan. Moreover, cross-Strait trade increased by a third last year.

We welcome these developments and believe that such practical measures build confidence and promote dialogue. We believe that through such pragmatism, real progress can be made. We continue to oppose the use of force and to take the view that the Taiwan question should be settled peacefully through negotiation between the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

We are paying close attention to the development of China's proposed anti-secession legislation, the background to which I discussed recently with the Vice Minister of China's Taiwan Affairs Office. We continue to urge both sides to avoid unilateral measures that might raise tension.

Departmental Structure

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what definition of the terms *(a)* directorate, *(b)* section, *(c)* unit and *(d)* team he uses in relation to his Department's internal structures. [221235]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not have specific definitions for the terms directorate, section, unit and team. However, guidance issued to staff on 6 August 2004 in the context of continuing organisational change is that the long-term aim should be consistency across the Office, while accepting in the short-term this may not be possible.

The guidance explained that:

Directorates will remain as they are now.

The terms Group or Department will describe the next level down

Team or Section will be the next level below that.

With the exception of the Strategy Units the term Unit will only be used to describe a temporary operation.

Changes can be phased in over time.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the sections, teams and units within his Department's Europe Directorate. [221237]

Mr. MacShane: The answer is as follows:

Director-General

Director

Resource Management Unit

Presidency Unit

EU-EXTERNAL

CFSP/France/Benelux Team

CFSP Functional Section

Civilian Crisis Management Section

France/G8/CFSP Section

Enlargement/Wider Europe Team

EU Enlargement Negotiations Section

GOF Reuniting Europe Programme Management Team

Northern and Eastern European Team

EU/FSU and Nordics Section

Baltic and Eastern European Section

EU-Middle East/North Africa Section

EU-Africa/ACP/Development and Economic Section

Americas/Asia Section

Eastern Mediterranean Team

Cyprus/Greece Section

Turkey Section

EFTA Section

EU—EASTERN ADRIATIC DEPARTMENT

EAD

Kosovo Policy/Albania Section

Serbia and Montenegro Section

Regional Issues Section

Bosnia/Macedonia Section

EU—INTERNAL

EU Constitution Team

Justice and Home Affairs/Global Migration Team

Global Migration/Austria Section

EU Justice and Home Affairs/Germany Section

EU Economic, Ireland and Central Europe Team

EU Economic Reform and Analysis Unit

Agenda 2007 Unit

International Trade Team

EU Forward Planning Unit

Western Mediterranean Team

Iberia Section

EU-Gibraltar/Italy/Malta/Holy See Section

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the directorates and sections within his Department. [221236]

Mr. Straw: The Directorates and Sections operating within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are:

Americas and Overseas Territories Directorate

Latin America and Caribbean Department

North America Team

Overseas Territories Department

Defence and Strategic Threats Directorate

Counter Proliferation Department

Counter Terrorism Policy Department

Drugs and International Crime Department

International Security Directorate

Security Policy Group

Conflict Issues Group

International Organisations Department

Middle East / North Africa Directorate
- Islamic World Group
- Arab Peninsular and Iran Group
- Arab Israel Group

South Asia and Afghanistan Directorate
- Afghanistan Group
- South Asia Group
- Afghan Drugs Unit (a cross Whitehall Group located in the FCO)

Iraq Directorate
- Iraq Policy Unit
- Operations Unit
- Security Sector Reform Unit

Europe Directorate
- EU Internal
- EU External
- EU Presidency
- Eastern Adriatic Department

Economic Policy Directorate
- Global Economy Group
- Global Business Group
- G8 Presidency
- Science and Innovation Group

Global Issues Directorate
- Sustainable Development and Commonwealth Group
- Climate Change and Energy Group
- Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance Group
- Global Opportunities Fund Central Management

Africa Directorate
- Africa Department (Equatorial)
- Africa Department (Southern)
- Pan Africa Policy Unit
- Sudan Unit

Asia Pacific Directorate
- Association of South East Asian Nations Group
- Far Eastern Group

Strategy and Information Directorate
- Strategy Group
- Information Management Group
- Public Diplomacy Group

Finance Directorate
- Financial Planning and Performance Department
- Internal Audit Department
- Prism Programme
- Procurement Policy Department
- Resource Accounting Department
- Financial Compliance Unit

Human Resources Directorate
- HR Direct
- Health and Welfare Policy Team
- Professional Development Policy Group
- Employment Policy Team
- Workforce Planning Team
- Pay and Benefits Policy Team

Consular Directorate
- Crises Group
- Passports and Documentary Services Group
- Resources Group
- Service Quality Group
- Assistance Group

Communications Directorate
- Press Office
- Islamic Media Unit

Some Departments report directly to a Director General or the Permanent Under Secretary.

These are:
- Eastern Department
- Estate Strategy Unit
- IT Strategy Unit
- Security Strategy Unit
- Protocol Division
- Whitehall Liaison Department
- Legal Advisers

Other parts of the organisation which do not form part of the directorate structure are:
- FCO Services
- UK Visas—A joint FCO and Home Office organisation
- UK Trade and Investment—A joint FCO and DTI organisation.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221110]

Mr. Straw: No.

eBay

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220954]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) only holds centrally the values realised for the disposal of assets, not the methodology employed for the disposal of those assets. The global nature of the FCO's operations means that this information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1251W, on the European Constitution, what his Department's policy on the title of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe is; and whether the UK Government proposed an amendment to this title during the negotiation of the Treaty. [221234]

Mr. MacShane: The title of the Treaty is "the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe". The Government did not propose any amendments to it during the negotiations.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 3 March, *Official Report*, column 1381W, on the European Constitution, what definition he uses of partnership marketing; and whether the costs of the agencies for partnership marketing and online information were met from the EU Constitution Team programme budget of £613,000 for 2004–05. [221238]

Mr. MacShane: The aim of partnership marketing is to work with organisations in the private, public and voluntary sector to deliver information and extend the reach of communication activities. Partners are defined as organisations or companies that provide free or value-added opportunities (as distinct from paid for sponsorship opportunities). The costs of the agencies for partnership marketing and online information are being met from the EU Constitution Team programme budget.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1381W, on the European Constitution, what the total staff costs are of the EU Constitution Team in 2004–05; and whether these are met from the overall programme budget of £613,000 for financial year 2004–05. [221239]

Mr. MacShane: Based on average grade costs, staff costs for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's EU Constitution Team amount to £542,819 for 2004–05. These costs are not met from the Team's programme budget of £613,000.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to decide whether the Government will distribute the EU Constitution to all households in the United Kingdom prior to the referendum; and what factors will inform his decision. [221259]

Mr. MacShane: There are no current plans for such a distribution. Factors informing a decision on this issue include the overall cost and public demand. The text of the EU Constitutional Treaty and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Commentary upon it are available free at www.europe.gov.uk. The full text and Commentary have also been made available to central libraries, and are available to members of the public on request from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information the Government intend to distribute to every household regarding the EU Constitution *(a)* prior to the relevant period, *(b)* during the relevant period and *(c)* during the referendum period, as defined by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. [221260]

Mr. MacShane: No decisions have yet been made on this issue.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answers of 19 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1020W, to the hon. Member for Hornchurch (John Cryer), on the European Constitution, what activities of the Institutions of the EU have been agreed with the Government to date; when he intends to announce the date of the referendum on the European Constitution; and what factors will inform his decision on the date. [221261]

Mr. MacShane: The Institutions of the EU undertake a basic level of factual information provision about the European Union for the European public. They are in regular contact with Ministers and officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office regarding these activities in the UK.

Clause 6 (1) of the European Union Bill provides for the date of the referendum to be set by order, after the Bill has been approved by Parliament. No decision has yet been taken on the date. All member states have agreed to pursue ratification of the Treaty by November 2006.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answers of 19 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1020W, to the hon. Member for Hornchurch (John Cryer), on the European Constitution, if he will ensure that the referendum on the European Constitution will not take place on the same date as the nationwide elections to local authorities in May 2006. [221262]

Mr. MacShane: No decision has yet been taken on the date of the referendum.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1020W, on the European Constitution, how he intends to balance the requirement that information issued by his Department is objective with the requirement that it supports Government policy; and who is responsible for ensuring that information issued by his Department is objective. [221263]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Hornchurch (John Cryer) on 19 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1020W.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will decide on the service provider for delivering referendum addresses during the referendum on the EU Constitution; and on what criteria he will base his decision. [221379]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12 to the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 provides that the service provider for delivery of referendum addresses is to be the universal service provider. Royal Mail is currently the United Kingdom's only postal operator licensed to provide the universal service.

Expatriates

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will estimate how many UK expatriates are living abroad; and if he will make a statement. [220668]

Mr. Mullin: The estimated number of British nationals living abroad for the period financial year 2003–04 is 13,155,540. This compares to 12,764,134 and 12,927,040 in financial year 2002–03 and financial year 2001–02 respectively.

Hajj Delegation

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost to public funds of the UK Hajj delegation was in 2003–04; and what proposals he has to increase it. [220096]

Mr. Mullin: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) contributed approximately £30,000 to the costs of the British Delegation to the Hajj in February 2004. The Department of Health contributed a further £20,000. Final figures are not yet available, but we estimate that the FCO contributed about £60,000 to the British Delegation for the most recent Hajj in January 2005. This represents an increase of about £30,000 in the FCO's annual contribution.

It is not possible to predict at this stage what level of funding will be provided for the Delegation for future Hajjs. Funds are drawn down according to need as planning for each Hajj progresses. Officials will be meeting with other members of the Hajj Advisory Group, including leading representatives of the British Muslim community, to discuss all aspects of planning for the next Hajj in January 2006, including funding.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki (Commemoration)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether commemorations are planned in August to mark the 60th anniversary of nuclear explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. [221646]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The UK has no plans at present to hold separate commemorative events. We do however fully sympathise with the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The UK is committed to working towards a world free of nuclear weapons, in order to prevent the possibility of a repetition of the terrible events of August 1945.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Iraqi administration that it makes it a condition sine qua non that there be a determination by the UN about the legality of the use of force against Iraq before any person is accused of having committed crimes in Iraq. [220811]

Mr. Rammell: As the Solicitor-General made clear in his written answer of 17 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 515W, authority to use force against Iraq derived from the combined effect of UNSCRs 678, 687 and 1441; and all of these resolutions were adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which allows the use of force for the express purpose of restoring international peace and security. We would therefore have no reason to make representations to the Iraqi Government about the legality of the use of force in Iraq.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Iraqi administration on establishing the impartiality of judges operating in Iraq where the identity of the judge is not revealed. [220812]

Mr. Rammell: We have provided capacity building assistance to the Iraqi Criminal Justice sector, which includes training for the judges of the Iraq Special Tribunal (IST) on the requirements for conducting fair trials according to international standards of due process. The IST comprises senior Iraqi judges and is part of the Iraqi Criminal Justice system. For security reasons the identities of these judges are not made public but this is not expected to have any effect on the impartiality of their judgments.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Tariq Aziz has been allowed to see the evidence against him since his arrest. [220815]

Mr. Rammell: Assuming an indictment is formally issued against Tariq Aziz, Iraqi law provides that the full disclosure of all evidence does not occur until his case is referred to a trial panel. This has yet to occur.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what access Saddam Hussein has had to the alleged evidence against him. [220816]

Mr. Rammell: Saddam Hussein was arraigned before an Iraqi investigative judge on 1 July 2004 in relation to the following crimes:

The 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The suppression of the 1991 uprisings.

The ethnic cleansing campaign against Kurds from 1987 to 1988.

The gassing of Kurdish villagers in Halabjah in 1988.

The killing of political activists over a 30-year period.

The killing of religious figures in 1974.

The killing of thousands of the Kurdish Barzani clan in 1983.

This procedure, which informs the accused of his rights, is the start of the investigative process under Iraqi law. Assuming an indictment is formally issued against Saddam Hussein, Iraqi law provides that the full disclosure of all evidence does not occur until his case is referred to a trial panel. This has yet to occur.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has had from ISNAD, the body formed to co-ordinate the efforts aimed at ensuring respect for the law in Iraq, about the *(a)* legitimacy and *(b)* legality of the Iraqi Special Tribunal. [220817]

Mr. Rammell: No representations have been received from ISNAD.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 805, which parts of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty *(a)* recognise the United Kingdom as a nuclear state and *(b)* legally allow the United Kingdom to hold nuclear weapons. [221887]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom, along with China, France, Russia and the United States, are

recognised as nuclear weapon states under Article IX.3 of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. It states that:

"a nuclear-weapon State is one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device prior to January 1, 1967."

All other states parties are therefore recognised as non-nuclear weapon states. All states parties must comply with their treaty obligations set out under the treaty articles. These include the obligation under Article VI to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

Project Coast

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 28W, on Project Coast, if he will place the information referred to in the Library. [219418]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The transcripts of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission are available on the internet at www.doj.gov.za/trc/special/index.htm#cbw. Reports on the trial are available on the Disarmament Diplomacy website at http://www.acronym.org.uk/textonly/dd/dd64/64nr13.htm and http://www.acronym.org.uk/textonly/dd/dd52/index.htm.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the *(a)* strength, *(b)* leadership and *(c)* political objectives of the Ugandan People's Redemption Army; how long it has been active; what assessment he has made of whether it has caused damage to Uganda's infrastructure; and if he will make a statement. [221281]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1896W.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Business Starts

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses started up on average each week in the London region in 2004; what the weekly average of such start-ups has been since May 1997; and if she will make a statement on the *(a)* sustainability and *(b)* employment-creating and prosperity-generating features of such businesses. [208768]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation, which includes non-VAT registered firms, shows there were 84,000 business start-ups in the London region in 2003 and this approximates to about 1,600 per week. A further 57,000 businesses started up in the first six months of 2004. Since Barclays revised their methodology for calculating the number of start-ups they have not published revised figures for the London region before 2003.

To give an indication of business start-up rates for 1997 to 2003, DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for the London region are shown as follows.

VAT registrations in London

	Number per year	*Average per week*
1997	36,935	708
1998	38,850	745
1999	37,165	713
2000	37,075	709
2001	33,380	640
2002	33,340	639
2003	36,590	702
1997 to 2003	253,335	694

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations
1994–2003, Small Business Service, available from:
http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997 and is currently £58,000. Across the UK, only 1.8 million out of 4 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2003.

The percentages of VAT registered businesses in the London region still registered after one year are given in the following table:

One year survival rates for VAT registered businesses

Year of registration	*Percentage still trading—London*
1997	88.7
1998	88.8
1999	88.0
2000	89.6
2001	91.2

Source:
Business Survival Rates, Small Business Service, available from:
http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/statisticssurvivalrates.php

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) make a significant contribution to the prosperity of the London region. For example latest statistics show that SMEs in the London region had a combined turnover of £270 billion at the start of 2003, which represents an average turnover of £420,000 per business. In total, SMEs in the London region provided 1.8 million jobs, representing an average of 2.8 employees per SME.

Chile

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list military equipment contracts with the Government of Chile since 1990, broken down by value of goods. [207695]

Ms Hewitt: Information on the number of Government to Government transfers of major equipment are published, by destination, in the Government's Annual Reports on Strategic Export Controls, available from the Libraries of the House.

Commercial Power Diallers (Silent Telephone Calls)

Anne Picking: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what studies have been carried out on the *(a)* extent, *(b)* nature and *(c)* sources of unsolicited silent telephone calls by commercial power diallers. [207766]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Communications Act 2003 confers powers on the Office of Communications (Ofcom) to regulate forms of behaviour, which fall within the Act's definition of persistent misuse of an electronic communications network or service. Unsolicited silent calls are an example of behaviour, which might represent persistent misuse.

Ofcom is not aware of any studies that have been carried out in relation to unsolicited silent calls. The most common form of an unsolicited silent call is not intentional, but arises from the use of automated calling systems, also referred to as power diallers or automated calling equipment located within call centres. Calls are automatically generated but in the absence of an available operator to speak to the called party, the call is abruptly terminated.

Anne Picking: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to combat silent telephone calls by commercial power diallers. [207767]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Communications Act 2003 confers powers on the Office of Communications (Ofcom) to regulate forms of behaviour, which fall within the Act's definition of persistent misuse of an electronic communications network or service. Unsolicited silent calls are an example of behaviour which might represent persistent misuse. The department is in close contact with Ofcom which is in contact with relevant trade bodies.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Minister of State at the Department of Trade and Industry will reply to the letter dated 26 January from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding her constituent, Mr. E. Martin of Fraserburgh. [221623]

Nigel Griffiths: I answered the letter yesterday.

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of exports *(a)* from Northern Cyprus to the United Kingdom and *(b)* from the UK to Northern Cyprus was in each of the last three years. [221549]

Mr. Alexander: Information on UK trade in goods is classified by HM Customs and Excise according to the Geonomenclature of the European Communities. The nomenclature does not distinguish between Northern Cyprus and the rest of Cyprus and, as a result, the information requested is not available.

Export Control Organisation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library material she has *(a)* requested and *(b)* received relating to the operation of the Export Control Organisation and private sector involvement in delivering the Organisation's services. [221711]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* No. To do so would inhibit the internal discussion on the matter.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library material she has *(a)* requested and *(b)* received from the Export Control Organisation relating to efficiency savings. [221712]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Export Control Organisation (ECO) is part of the DTI and as such is subject to the same headcount constraints as other Directorates.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* services and *(b)* operational areas of the Export Control Organisation have been assessed for potential outsourcing to the private sector; and if she will make a statement. [221713]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The DTI is considering, as part of its overall Efficiency Programme, how best it can continue to deliver high quality export licensing services to industry and Ministers, and as part of that review the Export Control Organisation (ECO) is looking to see whether private sector partner involvement in delivering some of its services would help maintain or improve them within expected resource constraints. No decisions have been taken yet on whether to seek partners and if so, for which functions.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* discussions and *(b)* meetings (i) she, (ii) other Ministers in the Department, (iii) officials in the Department and (iv) staff of the Export Control Organisation have held with industry or representatives from industry relating to the future of the Export Control Organisation and private sector involvement in delivering some of that Organisation's services. [221734]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* There has been no such discussion at this stage except that Export Control Organisation (ECO) officials have briefed the Export Control Advisory Committee that the DTI is considering the matter.

EU Internal Market

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the draft directive establishing a general legal framework for services in the internal market. [220507]

Mr. Alexander: In March 2004 the Department launched a wide-ranging public consultation into the EU Directive on Services in the Internal Market. An initial launch event attended by over 200 people was followed up by a series of regional events that took in each of the devolved Administrations. The public consultation attracted 116 written responses all of which were analysed before the Government published their response to the consultation in November 2004.

Simultaneous to the public consultation the Department consulted across Whitehall to ensure the views of all Government Departments fed into the agreed 'UK negotiating line' that was published along with the responses to the public consultation.

I believe the liberalising aims of this directive could deliver significant benefits for businesses, consumers and employees here in the UK and across Europe.

The Department will continue to consult widely on the directive as negotiations develop.

Post Office

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have closed in Ribble Valley since 1997. [221983]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Decisions on post office closures are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. (POL). My officials have asked POL to arrange a direct reply to the hon. Member.

Renewable Energy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will extend permitted development status to the installation of small scale renewables by householders, subject to adequate controls to ensure no or minimal visual intrusion; if she will include this measure in the draft microgeneration strategy due to be published pursuant to section 82 of the Energy Act; and if she will make a statement. [221568]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In January, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister launched a review of the legislation that governs minor development by householders. Meanwhile, it is already the case that, as a general rule, those in dwelling houses can install solar panels and photovoltaic cells without needing to make a planning application, provided the panels do not project significantly above the plane of the roof.

The strategy for the promotion of microgeneration in the UK will look at a wide variety of measures and there will be a formal public consultation giving all interested parties the opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategy.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many inspections of the MOX facility at Sellafield have been carried out by Euratom since 1 May 1997; on what dates; and on which occasions Euratom expressed concerns about the operation of this facility. [221566]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Euratom safeguards measures are to detect the diversion of nuclear material from its declared uses. The frequency of Euratom safeguards inspections at the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) has been a function of the type and form of nuclear material and the processing activities involved. Such inspections were performed at intervals ranging from two weeks to a month in the run-up to plutonium commissioning of SMP in 2002, with the frequency increasing thereafter—and currently running at an inspection every two weeks. Our information shows that the plant has been subject to approximately 240 safeguards inspections during the period in question.

Materials accountancy and safeguards issues that arise in the course of particular safeguards inspections are addressed during the inspection and by means of follow-up correspondence from the European Commission. Such correspondence is classified by the Commission, and this classification must be respected by the UK Government. The Commission does however publish an annual report of its safeguards activities and their findings. Reports are available for the years 1999 to 2003 (references COM (2001) 436, COM (2002) 566, COM (2003) 764 and COM (2004) 861 respectively) and include information on Euratom safeguards activities at SMP.

Small Firms

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how the small firms productivity growth referred to in Public Service Agreement Target 6 of her Department's Business Plan 2005–8 is measured; and what small firms productivity growth was in each year between 1984 and 2004 on the basis of this measurement. [220697]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Productivity growth in small firms is collected through a special analysis of the Office for National Statistics' Annual Business Inquiry. The ABI is an annual survey of around 70,000 businesses. Productivity is measured as Gross Value Added per employee, with small firms defined for this purpose as registered enterprises with 0 to 249 employees.

Data on small firms productivity growth between 1999 and 2002 are set out in the following table. They show that small firms productivity has grown by at least 3.5 per cent. each year over the last three years.

Data in this series are not available for periods before 1999. Data for 2003 will be available later this year.

Productivity growth in small firms

	Percentage
1999–2000	3.5
2000–01	4.3
2001–02	3.5

Small Firms Loan Guarantee

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Government intends to implement the findings of the Graham Review relating to the future of the Small Firms Loan Guarantee. [221316]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* In his pre-Budget report in December 2004 my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer committed the Government to implementing the 38 recommendations of the Graham Review by the end of 2005.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220949]

Ms Hewitt: The Department has not sold surplus stock on eBay to date. Most of our IT hardware is owned by Fujitsu Services Ltd., our PFI services provider.

Taxation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the

likely effects of additional tax rises on businesses in the UK in the period 2005–07 on national *(a)* private sector employment growth, *(b)* productivity growth and *(c)* competitiveness. [214199]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

Changes to taxation will be set out by the Chancellor in the budget tomorrow. Prospects for employment, productivity, and competitiveness will be contained in the corresponding Economic Fiscal and Strategy Report.

Tidal Power

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of reports on tidal lagoon electricity generation made available to her Department by WS Atkins and AEA Technology. [221790]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department has carried out an assessment of both reports in order to inform its thinking on these matters. We have already provided feedback on the AEA Technology report to the company behind the project and are willing to provide similar feedback on our assessment of the WS Atkins Study.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representation she has received on the proposal for tidal lagoon electricity generation in Swansea Bay. [221791]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department has received a number of representations regarding a tidal lagoon project in Swansea Bay and these discussions are ongoing.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) for what reasons tidal lagoon projects were not included for support under the proposed Marine Renewables Development Fund; [221792]

(2) what financial support is being given by the Government to companies that have demonstrated an interest in tidal lagoon electricity generation as a contribution to the Government's renewables objectives. [221793]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Marine Renewables Deployment Fund implements a main recommendation of the Renewables Innovation Review. That is to assist emerging technologies, which show significant potential for cost reduction, to bridge the funding gap between research and development and commercialisation.

Tidal lagoons are technically feasible being the application of available and well understood technology and are eligible for support through the Renewables Obligation.

If claims about the favourable economics of these schemes are correct and the projects are sound they should have no difficulty in attracting commercial funds to develop projects.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the potential generating capacity of tidal lagoons in UK offshore waters. [221794]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Tidal lagoons as with other forms of large-scale barrage have the potential to contribute to the UK's renewable energy targets.

There have been a number of published studies that considered the potential for tidal barrages. These have provided a good understanding of the potential to exploit variations in the tidal range in a range of locations.

In assessing particular sites, developers will need to consider both the economics and potential environmental impacts of any scheme.

Vehicle Imports

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many vehicles were imported into the UK in each year since 1997. [221452]

Jacqui Smith: According to figures published by HM Customs and Excise, the numbers of motor vehicles imported into the UK were as follows:

Number of motor vehicles imported into the UK 1997 to 2004

	Million
1997	1.7
1998	2.2
1999	1.8
2000	1.9
2001	2.3
2002	2.5
2003	2.7
2004	2.4

Note:
Motor vehicles are defined as codes 781, 782 and 783 of the Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 3, (SITC Rev 3).

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of implementing a system of collective responsibility for all future waste electronic and electrical products on *(a)* the incentives for electronic and electrical producers to implement eco-design policies and *(b)* the ability of producers to avoid contributing to recycling costs by going out of business or other methods. [207759]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government have consulted on draft Regulations to implement the EU Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), which proposed provisions to allow producers to discharge their producer responsibility obligations in relation to household WEEE from their own products, within a system of collective responsibility.

The Government will be taking final decisions shortly on the shape of the final implementing regulations. The Government are considering how best to reflect the Directive's objectives in relation to individual producer responsibility for new household WEEE, bearing in mind the encouragement this provides towards sustainable design.

The Government are considering carefully the consultation responses, which have shown varying producer views on collective and individual producer responsibility. It appears from discussions with

producers that individual producer responsibility is, in many instances, not yet practical, but it may become so in the future. The Government are concerned in UK implementation both to deliver the objectives of the WEEE Directive and to establish a workable UK system for separate collection, treatment and recovery of WEEE.

Wind Energy Conference

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her Department's co-sponsorship of the European Wind Energy Conference and Exhibition. [207841]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI co-sponsored the European Wind Energy Conference event in 2004. All previous events have been part sponsored by the host nation's Government Department.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State delivered the keynote address and I also spoke.

The event had over 1,500 participants and 260 companies exhibiting, including many UK companies and it provided an opportunity to showcase British business in the renewables supply chain to European and International businesses.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Child Support

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of child support cases in Northern Ireland were being assessed under the new criteria on 1 March. [221329]

Mr. Spellar: The percentage of child support cases in Northern Ireland being assessed under the new rules as of 1 March 2005 is 18 per cent.

Engagements

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in his Department, the hon. Member for Dudley, South (Mr. Pearson), will meet the hon. Member for East Londonderry to discuss the financial implications of the range of cultural matters in Northern Ireland that have been communicated to him by the hon. Member for East Londonderry. [221402]

Mr. Pearson: My office has proposed a meeting with the hon. Gentleman before the end of this month.

Public Processions

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on which date *(a)* the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was first consulted about the draft Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005 and *(b)* the Department received a response from the NIHRC. [221502]

Mr. Pearson: The Public Processions (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 is part of a package of measures I announced by written ministerial statement on 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 14WS. The package responded to Sir George Quigley's review of the Parades Commission and the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, the consultation on that report on parading was published in January this year. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission contributed to the consultation on the Quigley report in October 2003 and gave evidence to NIAC.

I wrote to the Human Rights Commission on 22 February indicating that I had laid, on that day, the draft Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005. The Human Rights Commission has not responded to this letter to date.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will place in the Library a copy of the response from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the draft Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005. [221503]

Mr. Pearson: I wrote to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on the 22 February 2005 with regard to the Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005. The NIHRC has not yet responded to that letter.

Shellfish and Whitefish

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been provided to the fish processing sector of the Northern Ireland fishing industry in relation to the tie-up scheme which was in operation in 2004. [221337]

Mr. Pearson: The 2004 Transitional Aid Scheme was designed to compensate those most affected by the closure namely the whitefish fleet. The Fish Processing sector did not qualify for this particular scheme.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disabled Access

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost of his Department's advertising campaign to inform small businesses of the adjustments required for disabled access under the Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995 was. [221558]

Maria Eagle: The total budget for the 2004–05 communications campaign to inform small businesses of their duties under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 is £4.4 million. The first phase of the campaign ran from April to September last year at a cost of £2.4 million, and aimed to alert small employers and service providers to the introduction of the October 2004 duties of the DDA. The second phase of the campaign, which started in January this year and ends this month, has a budget of £2 million; this is aimed at reminding service providers of new duties placed on them by the changes to the access provisions introduced from October 2004.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the first payments will be

made to the former workers at the Allied Steel and Wire Works in Cardiff under the Government's Financial Assistance Scheme. [221506]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer to the written ministerial statement I gave on 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 16WS.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the estimated cost is of implementing the Financial Assistance Scheme for all former Cardiff Allied Steel and Wire workers who were 57 years or older on 14 May 2004. [221507]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates cannot be made of the cost of assistance for members of individual schemes until we have received more detailed information; including information on what the scheme pension age is for individual members, their distance from scheme pension age as at 14 May 2004, and their individual losses in the schemes.

Information (Post Offices)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what information published by his Department *(a)* may be obtained by the public in post offices and *(b)* could previously be obtained by the public in post offices but may not now be so obtained; and how much was spent making each of these categories of information available in the most recent period for which figures are available. [209720]

Maria Eagle: The following leaflets are currently available for post offices to stock.

Your Guide to Winter Fuel Payments (WFPL1)

Direct Payment (DPL1DEC04)

Pension Credit (PCL1OCT04)

Pensioners Guide (PG1OCT04)

Jobcentre Plus Services (JPS1OCT04)

Child Support Agency—What it may mean for you (CSL103)

Cut Your Council Tax (GL17FA5)

Notes:

1. The winter fuel payments leaflet is usually only displayed between October and March to coincide with the information campaign.
2. Bilingual or stand alone Welsh versions are available from post offices in Wales.
3. Until June 2004, the new deal for lone parents leaflet was also available from post offices. This information product is now targeted at a more local level, for example through the local office relationship with libraries etc.

Prior to 2 June 2004, the Department had a contract in place with Post Office Ltd. for the display of key Departmental leaflets and posters in post office display panels. This was known as the POPOS (post office point of sale) display. Post Office Ltd. terminated this contract with effect from 2 June 2004.

The last direct cost for displaying leaflets in post offices was £332,000, which covered the final quarter of the POPOS contract (April 2004–June 2004).

The leaflets currently available from post offices are issued as part of the wider Order Book Encashment Contract. It is not possible to separately identify the costs for this service from the fixed costs within the contract.

Myasthenia Gravis

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the benefit entitlements are for people under pensionable age who are diagnosed as suffering from myasthenia gravis. [222140]

Maria Eagle: I refer my hon. Friend to reply I gave to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan) on 1 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 177W.

New Deal (Blyth Valley)

Mr. Ronnie Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* young people, *(b)* single mothers and *(c)* other people have participated in the new deal in Blyth Valley. [214213]

Jane Kennedy: The available information is in the table.

New deal in Blyth Valley

	Individual starts	*Individuals into work*
Total	4,080	2,380
Young people	1,950	1,270
Single mothers	940	560

Notes:

1. Young people data relate to the number of people who have started, and gained a job through, the new deal for young people and people aged 24 and under on the new deal for lone parents.
2. Single mothers data relates to the number of female lone parents who have started, and gained a job through, the new deal for lone parents. 3. The total relates to the number of individuals in Blyth Valley who have benefited from the new deal for young people, new deal 25 plus, new deal for lone parents and the new deal 50 plus.
4. New deal for disabled people and new deal for partners information is not available at constituency level.
5. New deal for young people, new deal 25 plus and new deal for lone parents data are to September 2004.
6. New deal 50 plus data are to March 2003. New deal 50 plus information is not available at constituency level after March 2003.
7. The new deal for young people started in January 1998; new deal 25 plus started in July 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998; new deal 50 plus started in April 2000.
8. Individuals can be counted in more than one category.
9. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate

Pensions (Ribble Valley)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on *(a)* male and *(b)* female recipients of (i) the basic state pension, (ii) SERPS and (iii) pension credit in the Ribble Valley in the last year for which figures are available. [222099]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

£ million

Expenditure 2003–04	*Male*	*Female*
Basic state pension	32	43
Additional state pension	10	4
Pension credit	3	2

Notes:

1. Figures are for Ribble Valley constituency and are rounded to the nearest £ million.

2. Ribble Valley data are taken from a 5 per cent. sample of benefit records and is subject to a degree of sampling variation. These data are then used to provide the male and female splits and are applied to expenditure from Departmental accounting systems.
3. Basic state pension figures do not include non-contributory retirement pension.
4. Expenditure on pension credit includes minimum income guarantee for April to September 2003.
Source:
DWP 5 per cent. sample March 2004.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Sarah Teather: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many civil servants were *(a)* suspended and *(b)* dismissed from employment in the Office in each year since 2001 for gross professional misconduct, [221723]

Mr. Miliband: The Cabinet Office has suspended and dismissed the following number of employees for gross professional misconduct since 2001.

	Suspended	*Dismissed*
2001	2	0
2002	0	0
2003	1	1
2004	2	1
2005 (To 15 March)	0	1

Sarah Teather: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many civil servants were *(a)* suspended and *(b)* dismissed from employment in the Office in each year since 2001 under suspicion of having breached the Official Secrets Act 1989. [221724]

Mr. Miliband: The Cabinet Office has not suspended or dismissed any if its employees for breach of the Official Secrets Act 1989 since 2001.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether Ministers in the Cabinet Office have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221104]

Mr. Miliband: I refer the hon. Member to the answer that my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury gave to him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Members (Consultancy)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what inquiries he has made into payments made to the right hon. Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) by companies involved in major commercial deals with the NHS; and if he will make a statement; [220233]

(2) what inquiries he has made into payments made to the right hon. Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) for speeches and consultancy services, by a firm which has been involved in major commercial dealings with the Department for Education and Skills; and if he will make a statement. [220564]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 4 and 7 March 2005]:* None.

Official Residences

Chris Grayling: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the official residences for which his Department is responsible; who occupies each one; what the annual cost is of running each property; what contribution the occupants of each made towards running costs; what the total capital and refurbishment expenditure has been on those properties in each of the past five years; how much money was spent in each property on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills and *(e)* electricity and gas in 2003–04; how many (i) domestic and (ii) maintenance staff are employed at each property, broken down by post; and what the total cost of staff employment was in 2003–04. [213557]

Mr. Miliband: With regards to which residences the Department is responsible for and who occupies them, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 20 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1037W, by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister.

On general running and refurbishment/maintenance costs in each of the last five years, I refer the hon. Member to the answer which my right hon. Friend, the then Minister for the Cabinet Office (Ruth Kelly), gave on 1 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 129W, to the hon. Member for Hertford and Stortford (Mr. Prisk).

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions because of commercial confidentiality. [216518]

Mr. Miliband: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to a specific element within a project as well as to an entire project. It is, therefore, not possible to provide the information requested.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many people employed by the civil service state their religion as Sikh. [221666]

Mr. Miliband: Information on the numbers of civil servants by religious group is not collected centrally.

HEALTH

Ageing Population

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects on costs of social services of an ageing population; what

research he has commissioned on the impact of an ageing population on *(a)* social services and *(b)* the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [219490]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department commissioned the personal social services research unit (PSSRU) at the London School of Economics to conduct a study of the demand for and cost of long-term care for older people. The research team reported in August 2003. The findings of this research have been published, and are available on the PSSRU's website at www.pssru.ac.uk.

The European Union Economic Policy Committee (EPC) has also made projections of public expenditure on health and long-term social care. The results of its research can be found on the EPC's website at http://europa.eu.int/index en.htm. The EPC projections will be updated later in 2005.

In his report, "Securing our Future Health: Taking a Long Term View", published in April 2002, Sir Derek Wanless indicated that the cost impact of increased life expectancy is likely to be small compared with other cost drivers.

Allergy Services

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what progress his Department has made in the review of the available data and research on the epidemiology of allergic conditions that the Government undertook to carry out in their response to the Health Select Committee's Report on the Provision of Allergy Services; [221473]

(2) what assessment he has made of the need for specific allergy services outlined by the Health Select Committee's Report on the Provision of Allergy Services; and what progress his Department has made with the provision of specific allergy services since publication of the Committee's report; [221474]

(3) what assessment he has made of the resources necessary to commission the evidence review of allergy services mentioned in the Government's response to the Health Select Committee's Report on the Provision of Allergy Services. [221475]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government's response (Cm 6433) to the Health Committee's report on the provision of allergy services stated that the first step towards any programme of improvements in allergy services should be a review of the available data and research on the epidemiology of allergic conditions and the effectiveness of relevant interventions. Officials are currently working to identify the resources needed to take forward this work.

We hope to complete the review by summer 2006 and we will consider what further action to take in light of this review.

Alzheimer's Disease

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of *(a)* donepezil, *(b)* rivastigmine and *(c)* galantamine in treating Alzheimer's sufferers; and if he will make a statement. [220459]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The National Institute of Clinical Effectiveness (NICE) issued guidelines in 2001 on the clinical and cost effectiveness of donepezil, rivastigmine and galantamine in the treatment of mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease. It is currently reviewing this guidance and on 1 March issued draft guidance for consultation. Further details are available on NICE'S website at www.nice.org.uk.

NICE is a special health authority, which was set up in April 1999 to give advice to the national health service on best clinical practice, including the clinical and cost effectiveness of drugs and other treatments, to help reduce variation in prescribing practice.

NICE is an independent body, which develops its guidance after careful consideration of the available evidence, and in close consultation with patient groups, professional organisations and the pharmaceutical industry.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects a decision from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on the use of the drug Ebiza for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. [221022]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the timescales for the production of all National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance is available on its website at www.nice.org.uk.

Bed Occupancy (London Acute Trusts)

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the bed occupancy rates for acute trusts in London were in each of the last four years. [221020]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table.

Average daily number of available and occupied beds by sector in London Acute Trusts, 2000–04

		2003–04 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RF4	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	1,491	1,348	90.4
RVL	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	1,001	934	93.2
RRP	Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	751	677	90.2
RNJ	Barts and the London NHS Trust	1,090	987	90.6
RG3	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	546	480	88.0
TAP	Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	424	385	90.9
RV3	Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	814	707	86.8
ROM	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	503	460	91.4
RC3	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	436	388	89.0

Average daily number of available and occupied beds by sector in London Acute Trusts, 2000–04

		2003–04 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RWK	East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	628	586	93.3
RVR	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	873	735	84.2
RP4	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	293	213	72.7
RJ1	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust	1,278	992	77.7
RON	Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1,037	940	90.6
RQX	Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	508	434	85.5
RJZ	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	966	887	91.8
RAX	Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	585	515	88.1
RJ6	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	729	639	87.7
RP6	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	49	33	68.0
RNH	Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	449	366	81.4
RAT	North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	726	660	90.9
RAP	North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	478	440	92.1
RPG	Oxleas NHS Trust	442	423	95.7
RG2	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	484	423	87.5
RGZ	Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	453	379	83.7
RT3	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	388	340	87.7
RAL	Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	889	782	88.0
RAN	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	194	143	73.6
RV5	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	1,054	996	94.5
RQY	South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	740	86.6	846
RJ7	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	1,000	865	86.5
RJ5	St Mary's NHS Trust	635	594	93.5
RAS	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	539	472	87.6
RJ2	The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	583	517	88.7
RV8	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	874	779	89.2
RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	231	194	84.1
RKE	The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	443	403	90.9
RRV	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	926	799	86.2
RKL	West London Mental Health NHS Trust	673	625	92.8
RFW	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	388	362	93.3
RGC	Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	739	671	90.8

		2002–03 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RF4	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	1,473	1,346	91.4
RVL	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	1,030	937	90.9
RRP	Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	701	670	95.5
RNJ	Barts and the London NHS Trust	1,093	985	90.1
RG3	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	606	524	86.5
TAP	Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	451	388	86.0
RV3	Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	847	718	84.8
ROM	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	509	465	91.4
RC3	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	415	375	90.5
RWK	East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	637	593	93.1
RVR	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	872	744	85.3
RP4	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	282	205	72.9
RJ1	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust	1,267	1,004	79.2
RON	Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1,021	917	89.8
RQX	Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	473	411	87.0
RJZ	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	925	837	90.5
RAX	Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	576	504	87.6
RJ6	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	711	663	93.3
RP6	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	51	29	57.3
RNH	Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	452	397	87.9
RAT	North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	757	693	91.6
RAP	North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	477	443	92.9
RPG	Oxleas NHS Trust	483	471	97.5
RG2	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	493	420	85.3

		2002–03 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RGZ	Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	447	358	80.0
RT3	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	392	343	87.6
RAL	Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	906	784	86.6
RAN	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	179	130	72.8
RV5	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	925	908	98.1
RQY	South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	846	716	84.6
RJ7	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	983	829	84.4
RJ5	St Mary's NHS Trust	636	592	93.1
RAS	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	668	594	88.9
RJ2	The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	583	512	87.7
RV8	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	895	755	84.3
RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	232	192	82.9
RKE	The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	429	417	97.2
RRV	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	834	717	86.0
RKL	West London Mental Health NHS Trust	654	623	95.2
RFW	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	431	378	87.8
RGC	Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	751	669	89.1

		2001–02 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RF4	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	1,426	1,328	93.2
RVL	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	1,037	923	89.0
RRP	Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	743	690	92.9
RNJ	Barts and the London NHS Trust	1,115	982	88.1
RG3	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	655	521	79.5
TAP	Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
RV3	Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	640	584	91.2
ROM	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	509	402	78.9
RC3	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	395	364	92.1
RWK	East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	493	408	82.7
RVR	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	960	814	84.8
RP4	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	279	210	75.1
RJ1	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust	1,248	982	78.7
RON	Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1,021	901	88.3
RQX	Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	461	417	90.5
RJZ	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	913	807	88.3
RAX	Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	590	501	84.9
RJ6	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	727	654	90.0
RP6	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	61	43	70.5
RNH	Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	463	390	84.1
RAT	North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	840	727	86.6
RAP	North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	487	439	90.3
RPG	Oxleas NHS Trust	452	446	98.6
RG2	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	483	455	94.3
RGZ	Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	435	351	80.7
RT3	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	378	340	89.9
RAL	Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	923	703	76.1
RAN	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	163	120	73.7
RV5	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	967	925	95.6
RQY	South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	838	777	92.6
RJ7	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	990	842	85.0
RJ5	St Mary's NHS Trust	636	570	89.6
RAS	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	661	585	88.6
RJ2	The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	560	521	92.9
RV8	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	830	757	91.2
RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	241	197	81.8
RKE	The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	405	387	95.6
RRV	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	832	707	85.0
RKL	West London Mental Health NHS Trust	569	543	95.6
RFW	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	432	419	96.9
RGC	Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	846	732	86.5

		2000–01 Total		
		Available	*Occupied*	*Percentage occupied*
RF4	Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RVL	Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	913	835	91.4
RRP	Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RNJ	Barts and the London NHS Trust	1,056	892	84.5
RG3	Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	655	521	79.5
TAP	Camden and Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RV3	Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Trust	732	621	84.8
ROM	Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	481	367	76.2
RC3	Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	379	333	87.8
RWK	East London and the City Mental Health NHS Trust	514	480	93.4
RVR	Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	935	771	82.4
RP4	Great Ormond Street Hospital For Children NHS Trust	272	203	74.6
RJ1	Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust	1,243	979	78.8
RON	Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	1,056	866	82.0
RQX	Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust	491	444	90.5
RJZ	King's College Hospital NHS Trust	978	803	82.1
RAX	Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	575	503	87.5
RJ6	Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	767	568	74.0
RP6	Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	61	42	68.9
RNH	Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	470	405	86.2
RAT	North East London Mental Health NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RAP	North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	397	334	84.3
RPG	Oxleas NHS Trust	391	354	90.7
RG2	Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	477	436	91.4
RGZ	Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	448	370	82.5
RT3	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	421	357	85.0
RAL	Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	974	805	82.7
RAN	Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	194	151	78.0
RV5	South London and Maudsley NHS Trust	960	929	96.8
RQY	South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	595	541	90.9
RJ7	St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	984	833	84.6
RJ5	St Mary's NHS Trust	579	510	88.0
RAS	The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	654	581	88.8
RJ2	The Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	561	491	87.6
RV8	North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	852	698	81.9
RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	240	200	83.3
RKE	The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	461	400	86.8
RRV	University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	848	786	92.8
RKL	West London Mental Health NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
RFW	West Middlesex University NHS Trust	410	367	89.5
RGC	Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—

[1] No data.

Source:

Department of Health form KH03

Care Homes

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average length of stay of an elderly person in a care home was in the last period for which figures are available. [220803]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected routinely. However, a study by the personal social services research unit has shown that the estimated average length of stay of older supported residents is around 30 months.

Child Poverty

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to achieve the Government's targets of ending child poverty by 2020, and halving it by 2010; and if he will make a statement. [220883]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Government sets out the steps that departments across Government are taking to achieve the targets of ending child poverty by 2020 and halving it by 2010 in the Child Poverty Review, published alongside the 2004 Spending Review and available at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_sr04/associated_documents/spending_sr04_childpoverty.cfm.

There is a strong link between poverty and ill health. The Government have set targets to reduce health inequalities and have set out an extensive programme in "Tackling Health Inequalities: A Programme for Action" (2003) and the "Choosing Health" (2004) White Paper.

Cross-border Tracking

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what cross-border tracking of adults on the at risk register takes place between the relevant authorities in England and Wales. [220326]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* There is no at risk register for adults. Councils with social services responsibilities who are placing people in services between the relevant authorities in England and Wales, must ensure that all appropriate information about the person, including information relating to risk, is made known to the new authority.

The protection of vulnerable adults scheme lists people who have been banned from working in regulated social care sector. The scheme, which was introduced in July 2004, applies in both England and Wales.

"No Secrets", the guidance to councils on developing and implementing procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, encourages councils to adopt adult protection committees to lead on preventing and tackling abuse. We expect councils to have regard to the guidance particularly where vulnerable adults are transferred across boundaries.

Dentistry

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Lancashire are accepting *(a)* children, *(b)* pensioners and *(c)* adult NHS patients, broken down by primary care trust. [222102]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the number of dental practices in Lancashire which are accepting of new patients.

Primary care trust (PCT)	*Total practices in PCT*	*Registering children aged 0–18 years for NHS treatment*	*Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment*	*Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment*
Blackburn and Darwen	25	—	—	—
Blackpool	18	—	—	—
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale	37	—	—	—
Chorley and South Ribble	27	4	1	—
Fylde	14	5	2	2
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley	20	—	—	—
Morecambe Bay	55	4	—	—
Preston	28	—	—	—
West Lancashire	16	8	7	6
Wyre	15	—	—	—
Total	230	21	10	8

Note:
The totals do not differentiate between pensioners and adult patients. However, it does differentiate between charge exempt and charge paying adults.
Source:
nhs.uk website on 11 March 2005.

Dentists

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of provision of NHS dental care in England; and if he will make a statement. [217228]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We are aware that, in some parts of the country, people have difficulty in accessing a national health service dentist. We are undertaking a programme of reforms to make NHS dentistry more attractive to dentists and increase the number of dental training places. As an interim measure, we are committed to recruiting the equivalent of 1,000 dentists by October 2005. Recruitment from countries with a surplus of dentists is already proving helpful. For example, 28 Polish dentists began work in England in January, with a further 41 starting work during March and early April.

Departmental Policies (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Tamworth constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [221936]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have put in place a programme of National Health Service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Tamworth constituency.

For example:

At the end of December 2004, the number of people waiting more than nine months for in-patient treatment within the Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth primary care trust (PCT) has fallen to zero, from 261 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2004, the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for out-patient treatment within Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT has fallen to 198, from 300 in June 2002.

In June 2003, at Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust, 89.3 per cent. of patients spent less than four hours in accident and emergency from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. Figures for December 2004 show an improvement to 99.5 per cent.

Between September 1997 and June 2004, the number of consultants at Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust has increased from 63 to 80. Between September 1997 and September 2003, the number of nurses has increased from 687 to 836.

Between September 2001 and June 2004, the number of general medical practitioners within Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT has increased from 85 to 96.

Figures for December 2004 show that all patients within Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a GP within two working days and a primary care professional within one working day.

100 per cent. of urgent GP referrals to Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust, with suspected cancer, are seen by a specialist within two weeks of the referral.

An additional new cardiac catheter laboratory, which includes x-ray equipment for diagnosis and treatment of cardiac disease, will be delivered to the Staffordshire General Hospital during spring 2005.

Drug Treatment (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients have received treatment for drug abuse in Tamworth in the last 12 months. [221937]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available at constituency level.

1,240 individuals were in contact with structured drug treatment services in Staffordshire during 2003–04.

Source:
National Treatment Agency for Drug Abuse.

Private Finance Initiative Contracts

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the private finance initiative contracts which *(a)* his Department and *(b)* NHS Estates advertised in 2004, indicating in each case whether the output specification included *(a)* clauses specifically relating to energy consumption and energy efficiency, *(b)* a requirement for relevant equipment being purchased to be on the Government's Energy Technology List, *(c)* a requirement to use whole life costing to assess energy costs for new buildings or major refurbishments and *(d)* a requirement that new buildings or major refurbishments would be constructed to a specific energy standard; and what standard was specified in each case. [221885]

Mr. Hutton: It is for national health service trusts to advertise their private finance initiative contracts. Neither the Department nor NHS Estates placed any adverts for private finance initiative contracts in 2004.

Local Authorities (Caring Responsibilities)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which local authorities have sought determination from him in relation to which local authority is responsible for people for which more than one local authority has a caring responsibility in each year since 2000; and on what particular matters they sought determination in each case. [219734]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 3 March 2005]:* The local authorities that have sought determinations from the Secretary of State are shown in the following table. In each case, the determination sought was of the ordinary residence of an individual under Section 32 (3) of the National Assistance Act 1948.

	Local authority
2001	Barnet and Westminster
	Camden and West Sussex
	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire
	Lambeth and West Sussex
	Cheshire and Surrey
2002	Hounslow and Slough
	Wolverhampton and Powys and Worcestershire
2003	Oldham and Liverpool
	Tower Hamlets and Thurrock
	Bexley and Lambeth
	Waltham Forest and Hackney
	Telford and Wrekin and Cheshire
2004	Milton Keynes and Derbyshire
	Warrington and Wirral
	Bracknell and Woking
	Greenwich and Bexley
	North Somerset and Warwickshire

Mount Vernon Hospital

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future of the burns and plastic surgery unit at Mount Vernon hospital, Northwood. [222008]

Dr. Ladyman: The burns services at Mount Vernon are currently housed in temporary buildings erected in 1943 and it is felt by Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority (SHA) that they are not suitable for delivery of 21st century care. Therefore, it is proposed through their 'Investing in your health' programme that the burns and plastics unit be re-sited to Watford general hospital. There is a programme board considering the viability of this move, with representation from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire SHA and the North West London SHA, Hillingdon primary care trust and the community voice (an umbrella action group of local organisations interested in the service). The outcome of the review will be subject to consultation.

Paddington Health Campus

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what hospital facilities are to be combined on the Paddington Health Campus site; and what the change is in the number of beds to be available at the site in comparison to the number offered at the locations which the new hospital is to replace. [221715]

Dr. Ladyman: The outline business case for the Paddington Health Campus, submitted in December 2004, provides full details about the combined facilities to be provided for the Royal Brompton, Harefield and St Mary's national health service trusts, which include laboratory medicine, therapies, pharmacy, education and training, facilities management and corporate support services. The key facilities to be provided within the campus are shown in the following table.

	Number
Operating theatres	22
Delivery suites	8
Scoping rooms	6
Cardiac catheter laboratories	7
Angiography	2
Computed tomography/magnetic resonance imaging	13

The number of in-patient beds proposed for the Paddington Health Campus is 923, compared to the total of 1,017 beds currently provided at the St. Mary's, Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals. The reduction in bed

numbers reflects a transfer of local cardiology services to local hospitals and a redistribution of clinical care into community settings, following a major review involving local primary care trusts.

Respite Care

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he gives to London boroughs on the provision of respite care in each borough. [221448]

Dr. Ladyman: Research shows the best way to enable carers to continue to care is by enabling them to take a break from caring. The Government are increasing the amount of money put aside specifically to support carers in England through the carers grant. The grant is worth £125 million in 2004–05 and rises to £185 million in 2005–06. The grant will then continue at this level until at least 2007–08.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many days of respite care were available in each London borough in each year from 1997 to 2004. [221643]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally.

Social Care Costs

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people contribute to *(a)* some or *(b)* all of their social care costs for (i) home care and (ii) all residential care following a means-test, in the area which most closely corresponds to Mid Worcestershire constituency. [220071]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally.

Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the likely total debt of Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust at the end of this financial year; and if he will make a statement. [222003]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Audited information on the financial position of national health service trusts will be published in their individual annual accounts. These data will be available centrally in the autumn. We have no plans to publish un-audited information.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 16 March 2005

TRANSPORT

Crossrail

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he intends to announce the final funding arrangements for Crossrail. [221656]

Mr. Darling: A hybrid Bill to take powers for the construction of Crossrail was introduced into the House of Commons on 22 February 2005. We intend to bring forward proposals on the funding arrangements for Crossrail during the passage of the Bill.

Cycling Accidents

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* fatal, *(b)* serious and *(c)* slight casualties suffered by cyclists on (i) urban roads and (ii) rural roads in each year since 2000 resulted from collisions involving (A) at least one motor vehicle, (B) no motor vehicles and (C) powered two-wheel vehicles. [218490]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Pedal cycle casualties by severity, vehicle involved and urban/rural roads

casualties

Severity/accidents involving	2000		2001		2002		2003	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Fatal								
At least one motor vehicle	61	49	62	55	58	55	58	46
No motor vehicles[1]	6	10	7	12	5	9	2	8
Two-wheeled motor vehicle[2]	2	4	5	2	0	0	2	0
Serious								
At least one motor vehicle	1,868	554	1,802	545	1,672	487	1,644	479
No motor vehicles[1]	119	87	115	64	101	56	95	73
Two-wheeled motor vehicle[2]	29	16	37	17	33	17	37	8
Slight								
At least one motor vehicle	14,701	2,543	13,481	2,410	12,086	2,205	12,041	2,170
No motor vehicles[1]	383	134	339	130	251	76	311	88
Two- wheeled motor vehicle[2]	247	50	246	54	244	46	234	56

[1] Includes accidents involving pedal cycles, ridden horse and other non-motor vehicles.
[2] Included in the figure for "at least one motor vehicle".

Disabled Access

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding has been made available to improve disabled access transport services in Tamworth. [221927]

Charlotte Atkins: Regulations introduced under Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) require that all new public service vehicles used on local and scheduled service with a carrying capacity of more than 22 passengers, and all new rail vehicles, have to be accessible to disabled people. In addition, duties under Part 3 of the DDA require service providers to take reasonable steps to provide access to transport infrastructure such as bus station and railway stations.

On funding, the Government provide funding to improve access to public transport through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process. Local transport authorities in England outside London produce five-year LTPs, and report on progress against these plans in Annual Progress Reports (APRs). The first five-year plans were submitted in 2000. The following table details the relevant funding categories allocated to the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan area, which includes Tamworth.

Decisions on how to target funding towards specific projects and initiatives such as those to improve public transport accessibility are made at local level.

On access to the rail network, the SRA intends to consult on its Disability Strategy at the end of March. This will include priorities for improving accessibility at stations.

Tamworth (Staffordshire) local authority

£ million

Nature of funding	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Capital maintenance	4.55	8.68	9.32	11.64	12.80
Integrated block (small schemes)	2.6	5.7	5.70	6.73	6.64
Targeted bus grants[1]	0.93	1.26	1.42	1.38	1.24
Total	8.08	15.64	16.44	19.75	20.68

[1] Includes rural bus subsidy grant and both rural and urban bus challenge funding.

Light Railways

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the implications for companies operating light railways of *(a)* the new safety regime for light railways proposed by the Health and Safety Executive and *(b)* the European Urban Rail Directive; and what estimate he has made of the cost to light rail operating companies of meeting each of these safety provisions. [221710]

Charlotte Atkins: The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) has consulted publicly on new railway safety regulations and on a supporting regulatory impact assessment (RIA). Comments were invited from all interested parties, including the light rail industry. The Department expects to receive the HSC's final proposals and RIA shortly. The Department is currently considering its response to the European Urban Rail Directive consultation.

Motorcycle Accidents

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of *(a)* fatal, *(b)* serious and *(c)* slight casualties suffered by riders of powered two-wheel vehicles in (i) urban areas and (ii) rural areas occurred (A) at signal-controlled junctions, (B) at other junctions and (C) while overtaking in the last period for which figures are available. [218431]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Proportions of two-wheeled motor vehicle rider casualties: GB 2003

Percentage

	Accident location		
Severity	*Auto traffic signal*	*Other junctions*[1]	*While overtaking*
Fatal			
Urban	8.9	54.7	16.7
Rural	0.4	34.8	14.3
Serious			
Urban	9.4	65.6	15.9
Rural	1.4	43.2	14.1
Slight			
Urban	11.7	66.5	16.9
Rural	2.5	50.2	12.9

[1] Includes junctions controlled by an authorised person, stop sign, give way sign or markings and uncontrolled junctions

It should be noted that a two-wheeled motor vehicle rider may have been injured either at a 'signal-controlled junction' while overtaking or at an 'other junction' while overtaking, since these are not mutually exclusive.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216627]

Charlotte Atkins: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to specific elements within a project as well as to an entire project. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Pedestrian Casualties

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pedestrian casualties occurring on a footway in each year since 2000 resulted from a collision with a *(a)* motor vehicle and *(b)* pedal cycle. [218488]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Pedestrians injured on the footway or verge: GB 2000–03

Casualties

	Motor vehicles	*Pedal cycles*
2000	3,445	77
2001	3,504	78
2002	3,432	65
2003	3,453	72

Road Casualties (Children)

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of road casualties suffered by child *(a)* pedestrians and *(b)* cyclists in each year since 2000 occurred within 200 m of a school. [218489]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available.

Transport (Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the cost of providing the transport infrastructure to support the proposed level of housing development for South Hampshire set out in the South East England Regional Assembly's document, The South East Plan. [221751]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The consultation draft of the plan that the South East England Regional Assembly published in January 2005 does not at this stage specify the transport projects in South Hampshire that will be required to implement the plan's objectives.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what grants were made to *(a)* Hampshire county council, *(b)* Portsmouth city council and *(c)* Southampton city council for (i) new transport schemes and (ii) road maintenance in each of the last five years. [221753]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The total allocations over the five years, from 2000–01 to 2004–05, follow. Hampshire has been allocated a total of approximately £139.6 million—of which £53.3 million has been provided for capital road maintenance, £77.2 million for new transport schemes and £9.1 million specific grants for bus services.

Portsmouth has been allocated a total of approximately £21.4 million—of which £5.7 million has been provided for capital road maintenance and £15.7 million for new transport schemes. Southampton has been allocated a total of approximately £19.4 million—of which £6.8 million has been provided for capital road maintenance, £11.9 million for new transport schemes and £0.7 million specific grants for bus services.

The funding provided directly to the three authorities, including a breakdown by year, is shown in the following table. It has been for Hampshire county, Southampton city and Portsmouth city councils to determine exactly how the allocation should be spent, in line with their local transport plans and their priorities. The funding has been provided through a mixture of direct grants and borrowing approvals supported through revenue support grants.

£ million

Nature of funding	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Hampshire county council					
Capital maintenance	4.388	9.870	10.524	13.303	15.221
Integrated block	5.432	13.500	13.204	14.393	15.783
Major schemes	—	—	0.750	6.654	7.500
Targeted bus grants[1]	1.880	1.600	2.050	2.190	1.370
Total	11.700	24.970	26.528	36.540	39.874
Portsmouth city council					
Capital maintenance	0.579	0.803	0.835	2.296	1.149
Integrated block	0.796	2.100	3.470	2.282	3.002
Major schemes	—	—	1.200	2.888	—
Targeted bus grants	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1.375	2.903	5.505	7.466	4.151
Southampton city council					
Capital maintenance	0.581	1.085	1.152	1.421	2.522
Integrated block	1.015	2.800	2.727	2.643	2.721
Major schemes	—	—	0.750	—	—
Targeted bus grants[2]	—	—	0.750	—	—
Total	1.596	3.885	4.629	4.064	5.243

[1] Includes Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and both Rural and Urban Bus Challenge funding
[2] Includes Urban Bus challenge funding

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biofuels

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many plants there are in the UK producing biodiesel or bioethanol using UK farmed and produced raw materials as their feedstock; what the production capacity of each is; and what new plants plan to commence production of biofuels in the UK in the next five years. [221341]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* We are aware of a number of companies that are either currently producing biofuels from UK farm-sourced raw materials or have plans to do so. The details are set out in the table provided.

Other companies are known to be interested in establishing production facilities in the UK but are awaiting the results of the feasibility study on the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation and the decision on the UK's 2010 target for the use of biofuels under the Biofuels Directive.

Company	Location	Type of biofuel	Capacity (in tonnes per annum)	Feedstock	Current situation
Argent Energy	Motherwell	Biodiesel	45,000	Animal fats (and used cooking oil)	Started operating in February 2005. Further sites may follow in a few years time
Biofuels Corporation Ltd.	Middlesbrough	Biodiesel	250,000	Oilseed rape (and other virgin vegetable oils)	Under construction
Biofuels Corporation Ltd.	Middlesbrough	Biodiesel	250,000	Oilseed rape (and other virgin vegetable oils)	Aiming to start construction in 2005
Global Commodities (UK) Ltd.	East of England	Biodiesel	83,000	Oilseed rape	Aiming to start construction in 2006. A further site may follow in a few years time
Greenergy	Preferred location is thought to be Humberside	Biodiesel	100,000	Oilseed rape (and used cooking oil and other material)	Aiming for 2005–6
British Sugar	King's Lynn	Bioethanol	55,000	Sugar beet	Planning application has been submitted

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1169W, on foot and mouth, how any animals vaccinated following a future outbreak would be treated subsequently. [220707]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Emergency Vaccination Protocol sets down how vaccinated animals and any meat or milk produced from them would be subject to specific restrictions. This document is on the Defra website http://www.defra.gov.uk/footandmouth/pdf/vacprotocol.pdf, and I am also arranging for a copy to be placed in the Library of the House.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the difference in total payments of compensation paid for *(a)* sheep and *(b)* cattle in the foot and mouth epidemic would have been if the amount paid per animal had remained the same as the amount paid per animal in February 2001. [221408]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The difference in total payments of compensation paid for sheep would have been £254,005,966, and for cattle £367,455,967 if the amount paid per animal had remained the same as in February 2001.

Growth Areas (Funding)

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funding her

Department has earmarked for growth areas to ensure that they have the resources required to meet the demands of a growing population. [218329]

Alun Michael: Defra's aim is sustainable development, ensuring that environmental, social and economic considerations are balanced and integrated. As a result most of the Department's activities benefit the locations which fall within the growth areas, either directly or indirectly. As well as Defra's own actions we can achieve a great deal by working with a variety of partners and through exerting influence on Government Departments and others.

The key Defra policy areas which have a direct impact on growth areas include waste and recycling initiatives, flood defence works, our wide-ranging rural development programmes and regulation of the water supply industry. Funding associated with these activities has not been exclusively earmarked for growth areas, and will be part of mainstream business delivery, not specifically as a result of growth area status.

Delivery is carried out on Defra's behalf by a number of delivery agents, including the Environment Agency, the Countryside Agency, Government Offices, local authorities, and the Rural Development Service, all of whom have a strong regional focus. We also provide support to regional development agencies, rural community councils, parish and town councils and the voluntary and community sector.

Turning to specific policy areas, the priority for flood defence is to optimise the protection of people and the reduction in flood risk as measured by net damages from flooding in relation to the funding available. Total Government spend has risen from £312 million in 1997–98 to £478 million in the current year and £570 million for 2005–06 and the following two years. Where growth areas might have a risk of flooding, in many cases they will already have benefited from investment to protect them to a high standard, e.g. in the Thames Gateway. These defences will be subject to a renewal programme. Where further investment is needed, the development partnerships will consider provision in consultation with the Environment Agency, taking account of Planning Policy Guidance Note 25.

The main source of funding for local authority waste management is the Environmental Protection and Cultural Services block of the central Government revenue support grant, which is allocated through the Local Government Finance Settlement using a population-based formula. Defra's waste performance and efficiency grant, which totals £255 million over the three years from 2005–06, is also allocated to all authorities using a population-based formula. Defra is currently considering mechanisms other than direct funding to assist authorities in growth areas in addressing the additional challenge they face in meeting their landfill directive obligations as a result of population growth.

The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to secure the proper use of water resources in England and Wales. The Environment Agency's Water Resources Strategy looks some 25 years ahead and considers the needs of public water supply, agriculture, commerce and industry, as well as the environment, examining the uncertainties about future water demand and availability including the potential effects of climate change and different societal values. It takes account of the Sustainable Communities Plan where the numbers and locations of housing have been defined and recognises the impact that the growth areas will have on the water supply infrastructure. It concludes with a series of actions that will provide the right amount of water for people, agriculture, commerce and industry and an improved water-related environment.

Marine Environment

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for protecting the marine environment. [221923]

Mr. Morley: We have announced in the Defra five-year strategy that we will bring forward a Marine Bill some time in the next Parliament to deliver our vision of clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. A Marine Bill will provide the framework within which those who regulate marine activities can ensure the sustainable use and protection of our marine resources.

We are introducing regulations later this year to extend the conservation requirements of the EU Habitats and Bird's Directives offshore, and will identify further special areas of conservation and special protection areas as part of that process.

We are committed to having a representative and ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas in the OSPAR region by 2010.

New Rural Agency

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she has received from English Nature about the creation of the new agency for rural delivery; and if she will place in the Library a copy of the advice received. [211148]

Margaret Beckett: I have received, and given due weight to, advice and representations from a number of organisations and individuals about the creation of the 'Integrated Agency' from English Nature, much of the work of the Rural Development Service and the landscape, access and recreation responsibilities of the Countryside Agency. Ministers have received advice from English Nature in the form of letters from the chair and deputy chair of English Nature. As English Nature gave oral evidence to the inquiry into the Rural Strategy 2004 by the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee of the House, their position on the creation of the Integrated Agency is already in the public domain. Most recently, they have welcomed the draft Natural Environment and Rural Communities Bill published on Thursday 10 February 2005, to which they made a significant input. I am not minded to disclose the specific advice I have received as I consider to do so would be harmful to future free and frank discussions, and thus inhibit the development of good policy.

Rendering

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether animal by-product rendering is considered to be a waste process; and if she will make a statement. [221334]

Mr. Morley: A statement was made on 9 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 106WS, that the Government had published for consultation the draft Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2005. The consultation paper is available in the Library of the House and on the Department's website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/agwaste-regs/index.htm. The application of the waste framework directive (WFD) to waste animal by-products is discussed in paragraphs 8, 3.24–3.28 and 4.7–4.21 of the consultation paper.

In summary, it is the Department's view that a range of animal by-products are consigned to rendering plant as waste within the meaning of the WFD and that the processing of this waste in rendering plant is a waste management operation subject to control under Articles 9 or 10 of the directive. The animal by-products which the Department has identified as waste include those which Articles 4(2), 5(2) and 6(2) of the EU Animal By-Products Regulation require to be processed in rendering plant and disposed of by incineration, co-incineration or landfilling; or recovered in biogas or composting plants.

Waste and Resources Action Programme

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the recent developments in waste product marketing by the Waste and Resources Action Programme. [221508]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Defra monitors the performance of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) on the basis of delivery of or progress towards targets which are agreed with Government, and which are published in its business plan. The targets cover its work on market development.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the development of recycled wood products by the Waste and Resources Action Programme. [221509]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) has a target to deliver an additional 150,000 tonnes recycling capacity for waste wood into added-value end markets by March 2006. WRAP will do this through: supporting further diversification of waste wood recycling, focusing on higher-value applications; increasing the consumption of waste wood by the panel board manufacturing industry; incentivising demand for recycled wood products by raising awareness and encouraging action among potential buyers in targeted sectors; exploiting the commercial opportunities identified by research on treated timber recycling; and, promoting the increased segregation of wood waste for recycling at household waste recycling centres, in the furniture recycling industry and during construction and demolition activities.

Defra is monitoring WRAP's progress towards achievement of this target and will assess whether it has been met in the course of 2006.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Civil Society Challenge Fund

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many not-for-profit organisations in the UK benefit from his Department's Civil Society Challenge Fund. [221760]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In the current financial year, 2004–05, DFID is supporting 231 projects with 84 UK-based, not-for-profit organisations through our Civil Society Challenge Fund.

Since its introduction in 2000, we have supported 339 projects with 114 UK-based, not-for-profit organisations through the fund.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221113]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Banbury to the reply given by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

HIV/AIDS

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 55W, on HIV/AIDS, (1) how the spending of funds for HIV and AIDS orphans and vulnerable children through his Department's African country programmes will be monitored; [221648]

(2) what proportion of the money for HIV and AIDS orphans and vulnerable children spent through his Department's African country programmes will take the form of budget support to Governments; and how it will be monitored. [221639]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The spending target to meet the needs of orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS covers the next three financial years: 2005–06, 2006–07, 2007–08. At this stage, in advance of money being spent, we cannot predict with certainty what proportion of the money going through this Department's African country programmes will take the form of budget support to Governments, and what proportion will be spent directly on programmes. Early estimates indicate that spend through budget support will account for a relatively small proportion of the £85 million that will be spent through African Country Programmes out of the £150 million we have committed for OVCs worldwide.

Monitoring of spend against programme, sector and budget support will be through a combination of annual Country Assistance Plan (CAP) reviews and central tracking of expenditure against Policy Information Markers relevant to HIV and AIDS and orphans and vulnerable children.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on HIV/AIDS (Children) which sub-Saharan African countries have drawn up national orphans and vulnerable children action plans; [221655]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 13 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 623W, which sub-Saharan African countries have developed national action plans for orphans and vulnerable children. [221658]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Last year, UNICEF, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) worked together on an initiative to focus on accelerating responses to the situation of orphans and vulnerable children. They undertook a Rapid Assessment, Analysis and Action Planning (RAAAP) exercise in 17 countries in sub-Saharan African countries with high HIV prevalence rates and orphan populations. These countries were: Botswana, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of South Africa, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The RAAAP exercise consisted of three basic elements: situation analysis, response analysis, and preparation of two-year costed action plans for scaling up responses. Sixteen countries (all except Botswana) presented country profiles and plans to a UNICEF meeting in Cape Town, South Africa, last September. Uganda and Zimbabwe already had long-term plans of action. Botswana's focus was and remains the evaluation of their Short Term Plan of Action in order to develop a longer term plan in the future.

Independently of the above, Ghana has also produced "National policy guidelines on orphans and other children made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS". We expect to see other plans for orphans and vulnerable children developed—whether under a second wave of the RAAAP process or independently.

Palestine

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will commission research on the impact of the separation barrier in Palestine on availability of *(a)* water and *(b)* arable land to Palestinians. [221823]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not plan to commission research on the impact of the separation barrier. Other donors are already active. A preliminary analysis of the barrier's revised route published by the UN's Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in March 2005 identified that some 142,640 acres (10 per cent.) of West Bank land will lie between the completed barrier and the Green Line. This is some of the most fertile land in the West Bank and currently home to 49,400 Palestinians. Thousands more Palestinians living to the east of the barrier will be separated from their land on the west. The OCHA plans to publish a more extensive technical analysis towards the end of this month. Other bodies researching this issue include the DFID-funded Palestinian Negotiations Support Unit (NSU). The NSU's work indicates that the barrier will deny Palestinian access to 25 per cent. of the 20 million cu m of groundwater currently abstracted annually from the Western Aquifer Basin, and that in the Eastern Aquifer Basin estimated losses will be in the order of 3 to 5 million cu m per year.

Vietnam

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what part his Department's aid programmes have played in the effort to reduce poverty in Vietnam. [221761]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Government of Vietnam have made rapid progress in reducing poverty in recent years and in maintaining a high rate of economic growth. The number of people living in poverty halved from 58 per cent. in 1993 to 29 per cent. in 2002 and economic growth has averaged approximately 7 per cent. per annum over the last 10 years.

This progress is a result of the Government of Vietnam's programme of economic reform and sustained commitment to development and poverty reduction. Recognising that Vietnam is an environment in which aid works, DFID has rapidly increased its programme in Vietnam from £6 million in 2000–01 to an expected spend of £55 million in 2005–06. The DFID programme supports the Government of Vietnam's own poverty reduction and growth strategy. We work very closely with the Government and other donors to support the reform process and ensure that we achieve the maximum impact from the use of our resources. We co-finance the poverty reduction support credit with eight other donors. Key outcomes of our assistance include helping to define methods to target and reach the poor more effectively, and the development of policies in Vietnam that lead to broad-based growth and poverty reduction.

Despite these notable successes, approximately 23 million people still live below the poverty line and an estimated 8.8 million live in hunger. DFID supports rural development programmes in the poorest regions of Vietnam such as the Northern Mountains and Central Highlands. We also support Government targeted poverty reduction programmes that include investments in roads, irrigation, village classrooms, commune health centres and clean water schemes in the poorest communes. In transport, DFID has co-financed a programme that will have built over 2,000 roads linking communes to markets in rural Vietnam by the end of 2005. Evaluations of these road programmes show positive results such as stimulating economic growth and increasing school attendance. In education, we are collaborating with Government and other donors to support the achievement of education for all objectives: 100 per cent. attendance at primary school, and 100 per cent. adult literacy.

DFID also supports poverty reduction in Vietnam through its contributions to the European Commission development budget (currently approximately 18 per cent. of the total budget). The EC spent €28.1 million in Vietnam in 2003 (UK contribution: €5.06 million), and is committed to spend €112 million between 2004 and 2006 (UK contribution: €21.6 million).

DEFENCE

Infantry

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of whether the correct protocol was followed for Infantry regiments which have a non-British colonel in chief being downgraded to battalions. [221484]

Mr. Ingram: I am satisfied that all issues surrounding the Future Army Structure were handled correctly.

Iraq

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medically trained staff are serving in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [215074]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 10 February 2005]:* There are some 335 UK medically trained staff in Iraq. We have defined these as personnel that have medical, nursing or paramedical training and whose primary role when deployed is the co-ordination or delivery of medical care.

Nuclear Proliferation Treaty Review

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his priorities are for the forthcoming Nuclear Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May. [221640]

Mr. Hoon: The United Kingdom's goals for the Review Conference are to make the case for stronger and more effective counter-proliferation measures and to emphasise the importance of compliance with the Treaty. We will do this in the context of emphasising the UK's good record on nuclear disarmament. The UK will produce for the Review Conference the concluding part of three reports of the studies that MOD and AWE have conducted on the verification of nuclear disarmament since the 2000 Review Conference and those involved in the studies will make a presentation on them.

Nuclear Warheads

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many vehicles are available exclusively to transport nuclear materials related to the United Kingdom nuclear weapons programme. [222053]

Mr. Hoon: Ten vehicles are available to transport nuclear materials related to the United Kingdom nuclear weapons programme. This fleet comprises of two types of vehicle: the Truck Cargo Heavy Duty Mk 2, which is used to transport nuclear weapons, and the High Security Vehicle, which is used to transport Special Nuclear Materials.

Oath of Allegiance

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the wording is of the oath of allegiance which military personnel swear. [221483]

Mr. Caplin: The wording of the oath of allegiance is as follows:

"I [name] swear by almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the second, her heirs and successors and that I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend Her Majesty, her heirs and successors, in person, crown and dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors and of the generals/air officers [depending on Service] and other officers set over me."

Those who do not believe in God,

"solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm . . ."

Overseas Military Training

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list countries whose armed forces received military training and advice in the United Kingdom during the period 2001 to 2004. [221193]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* During the period 2001 to 2004, armed forces of 133 countries received military training and advice from the Ministry of Defence. A complete list of countries is as follow:

Countries whose military forces have been provided with training in the UK: Period 2001–04

Afghanistan
Albania
Algeria
Angola
Antigua and Barbuda
Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Barbados
Belgium
Belize
Bermuda
Bhutan
Bolivia
Bosnia
Botswana
Brazil
Brunei
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
China
Colombia
Croatia
Czech (Republic)
Denmark

Egypt
Eritrea
Estonia
Ethiopia
Fiji
Finland
France
Gambia
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
Honduras
Hong Kong
Hungary
Iceland
India
Indonesia
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Ivory Coast
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Korea
Kosovo
Kuwait
Kyrghistan
Latvia
Lebanon
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Macedonia
Malawi
Malaysia
Malta
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mexico
Moldova
Morocco
Mozambique
Namibia
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Papua New Guinea
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Poland
Portugal
Qatar
Romania
Russia
Rwanda
Saudi Arabia
Senegal
Serbia and Montenegro
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
St. Christopher/Nevis
St. Vincent
Swaziland
Sweden
Switzerland
Syria
Tajikistan
Tanzania
Thailand
Tonga
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
Uruguay
USA
Uzbekistan
Venezuela
Vietnam
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zambia

PFI Contracts

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the private finance initiative contracts which his Department advertised in 2004, indicating in each case whether the output specification included *(a)* clauses specifically relating to energy consumption and energy efficiency, *(b)* a requirement for relevant equipment being purchased to be on the Government's Energy Technology List, *(c)* a requirement to use whole life costing to assess the energy costs for new buildings or major refurbishments and *(d)* a requirement that new buildings or major

refurbishments should be constructed to a specific energy standard; and what standard was specified in each case. [221883]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* No private finance contracts were advertised in 2004.

Queen's Flight

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions his Department's Ministers used the Queen's Flight in each of the past five years. [213705]

Mr. Caplin: The number of occasions Defence Ministers have used the aircraft of 32 (The Royal) Squadron in each of the past five financial years is as follows:

Financial year	*Number of occasions*
1999–2000	90
2000–01	56
2001–02	66
2002–03	66
2003–04	58

Travel by Ministers makes it clear that special flights may be authorised when a scheduled service is not available, or when it is essential to travel by air, but the requirements of official or parliamentary business or security considerations or urgency preclude the journey being made by a scheduled service. In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list published in 1999 covers the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 1999. Where RAF/Private Charter aircraft are used this is shown in the list. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. Information for 2004–05 will be published in due course. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

South African Nationals

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether South African nationals who are serving officers in the British Army are eligible to remain in the British Army while applying for a British passport; [205466]

(2) whether South African nationals who are serving officers in the British Army and are married to British citizens are eligible to remain in the British Army while applying for a British passport. [205467]

Mr. Ingram: Regulations allow for citizens of any Commonwealth country to apply to join the British Army. Once serving it would be for the individual to decide whether he or she wished to apply to the Home Office for naturalisation as a British citizen.

On making an application for naturalisation, an officer may continue to serve in the Army for so long as their commission allows. If an officer's commission comes to an end during the process of making an application, this will not influence any decision to extend their service. A commission will only be extended when it is in the Army's interests to do so. Marital status has no bearing on such matters.

Spearhead Regiment

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the spearhead regiment is fully equipped *(a)* at present and *(b)* for the next regiment to take over. [221485]

Mr. Ingram: I have assumed that the hon. Lady is referring to the Spearhead Land Element (SLE), a Very High Readiness (VHR) Battalion Group (based on a light infantry battalion) whose role is to deploy at short notice to conduct a wide range of demanding, non-warfighting tasks. I can confirm that the current and future nominated SLE battalions are both fully equipped to undertake the task as SLE.

Strensham Heliport

Sir Michael Spicer: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1342W, on near air misses, if he will instruct the Royal Air Force to cease flying over Strensham Heliport until he has had the opportunity to assess the findings of his investigations into the near air misses on 14 December 2004 and 9 February 2005. [221678]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* There are at present no grounds on which we feel it appropriate to create an exclusion zone at the Strensham helicopter landing site. The site has, however, been marked as a warning on low flying charts. The position will be reviewed when the results of the UK Airprox Board investigations are known.

Surface Combatants

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Medium Versatile Surface Combatant and its relationship to the Future Surface Combatant programme. [220568]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The Future Surface Combatant project is still in its concept phase. Studies continue to develop ideas for the platform solution and no decisions have been taken. Our current assumption for planning purposes is that the Future Surface Combatant requirement will be delivered by a two-class solution. The principal element, now known as the Versatile Surface Combatant, is expected to enter service around 2023, and a 'Military Off The Shelf' variant known as the Medium Sized Vessel Derivative is expected to enter service between 2016–19.

Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps are being taken by the Government to comply with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. [221694]

Mr. Hoon: The United Kingdom is fully committed to and in full compliance with its obligations under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), including under Article VI, and has a good record on disarmament. We have reduced the total explosive power of our nuclear forces by over 70 per cent. since the end of the Cold War and in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review we announced that only one Trident submarine would be on deterrent patrol at any one time. That submarine would normally be on several days' notice to fire with its missiles de-targeted. We have conducted studies on the verification of nuclear disarmament since the Review Conference in 2000 and will report the concluding part of our findings to the NPT Review Conference this May. The UK has ratified and continues to support the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty without further delay and without preconditions.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Attorney-General

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General whether the document from the Attorney-General considered by the Cabinet on 17 March 2003 relating to the legality of the war in Iraq is a paper under the Ministerial Code of Conduct. [221892]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General attended Cabinet on 17 March 2003 and reported that he had answered a parliamentary question on the authority for the use of force in Iraq. He produced the text of that answer for Cabinet, made an oral presentation and was present throughout to answer questions. Paragraph 23 of the Ministerial Code is not relevant in circumstances where the Law Officer provides his advice in person.

HEALTH

Bed Occupancy

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received from *(a)* healthcare professionals and *(b)* other interested parties on the optimal levels of bed occupancy. [218120]

Mr. Hutton: No recent representations have been received from healthcare professionals on the optimum levels of bed occupancy.

I have received written representation from my hon. Friend the Member for Wakefield (Mr. Hinchliffe), following the Public Expenditure 2004 Health Committee on 8 December 2004. In addition, right hon. and hon. Members have tabled parliamentary questions on a range of bed occupancy issues.

Cancelled Operations (Statistics)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were cancelled in *(a)* 1979, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* the latest year for which figures are available. [218173]

Mr. Hutton: Data for 1979 is not available. Data from 1996–97 to the third quarter of 2004–05 is available on the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Cleaning and Hygiene

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department has spent on the "Cleanyourhands" programme. [219411]

Miss Melanie Johnson: After the success of the pilot "Cleanyourhands" programme, the Department is providing the National Patient Safety Agency with £490,000 to roll out the programme across the national health service; less than £3,000 per acute NHS trust.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole-time equivalent NHS dentists there have been per head of population in each year since 1997; and how many were offering NHS treatment in *(a)* England, *(b)* each NHS region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year. [217204]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 February 2005]:* The available information is shown in the following tables.

Table 1: Headcount dentists per head of population by NHS region and strategic health authority

	NHS dentists per head of population (10,000)							
Strategic health authority	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[1]
In England	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.31
Eastern Cluster	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.92
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	4.1	4.3	4.5	4.6	4.8	4.7	4.8	5.14
Essex	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.76
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.40
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.94
Trent	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.58
London Cluster	4.9	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.29
North Central London	5.5	5.6	5.8	6,0	6.0	5.7	5.9	6.02
North-east London	3.6	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.34
North-west London	6.1	6.4	6.3	6.1	6.0	5.7	5.7	5.98
South-east London	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.72
South-west London	5.0	5.1	5.3	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.1	5.45

Table 1: Headcount dentists per head of population by NHS region and strategic health authority

Strategic health authority	NHS dentists per head of population (10,000)							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004[1]
North-east Cluster	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.81
County Durham and Tees Valley	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.59
North and east Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.75
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.03
South Yorkshire	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.85
West Yorkshire	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.80
North-west and West Midlands Cluster	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.99
Birmingham and the Black Country	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.84
Cheshire and Merseyside	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.27
Cumbria and Lancashire	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.82
Greater Manchester	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.93
Shropshire and Staffordshire	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.68
West Midlands South	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.36
Southern Cluster	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.63
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.45
Dorset and Somerset	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.31
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.16
Kent and Medway	3.8	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.99
South-west Peninsula	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.50
Surrey and Sussex	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.8	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.36
Thames Valley	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.7	5.08

[1] Population data is 2003 figures as 2004 data is not available yet.

Notes:

1. This is a file containing the numbers of dentists as at 31 December from 1997 to 2004.
2. The figures are based on the numbers of dentists with open general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) contracts.
3. The dentists include principals, assistants and trainees.
4. Prison contracts have not been included in this analysis.
5. The areas have been defined using practice postcodes within the specified area.
6. The figures provide a snapshot of the number of individual dentists with an open contract at 31 December.
7. A dentist with a GDS or PDS contract may provide as little or as much NHS treatment as he or she chooses or has agreed with the PCT.
8. The Dental Practice Board has no information concerning the amount of time dedicated to NHS work by individual dentists.
9. The figures provide an accurate figure taking into account any notifications received up to 31 January 2005.
10. As data is not available by whole time equivalent, headcount has been used to determine the number of national health service dentists per head of population in the table.
11. Areas have been defined using the Office of National Statistics All Fields Postcode Directory—November 2004.

Table 2: Number of dental practices that offer NHS treatments to new patients as at 15 February 2005 by NHS region and strategic health authorities strategic health authorities

Strategic health authorities	Number of dentist practices accepting NHS patients as at 15 February 2005 (a practice can be represented in more than one category)			
	Providing occasional NHS treatment to non registered patients	Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment	Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment	Registering children aged 0 to 18 years for NHS treatment
In England	1,433	2,762	2,414	3,702
Eastern Cluster	200	457	411	689
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic HA	54	163	126	216
Essex strategic HA	74	98	94	141
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	17	55	57	74
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire strategic	22	71	67	142
Trent strategic HA	33	70	67	116
London Cluster	454	943	804	1088
North central London strategic HA	83	139	128	173
North-east London strategic HA	121	188	174	199
North-west London strategic HA	101	294	252	340
South-east London strategic HA	64	175	131	195
South-west London strategic HA	85	147	119	181
North-east Cluster	200	357	329	423
County Durham and Tees Valley strategic HA	53	102	95	109
North and east Yorkshire and Northern Lincoln	13	21	21	49
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear strategic HA	92	142	133	149
South Yorkshire strategic HA	35	41	37	47
West Yorkshire strategic HA	7	51	43	69

Table 2: Number of dental practices that offer NHS treatments to new patients as at 15 February 2005 by NHS region and strategic health authorities strategic health authorities

	Number of dentist practices accepting NHS patients as at 15 February 2005 (a practice can be represented in more than one category)			
Strategic health authorities	*Providing occasional NHS treatment to non registered patients*	*Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment*	*Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment*	*Registering children aged 0 to 18 years for NHS treatment*
North-west and West Midlands Cluster	425	607	544	793
Birmingham and the Black Country strategic HA	159	236	199	271
Cheshire and Merseyside strategic HA	146	185	181	225
Cumbria and Lancashire strategic HA	16	11	8	23
Greater Manchester strategic HA	80	112	103	172
Shropshire and Staffordshire strategic HA	6	14	9	33
West Midlands south strategic health authority	18	49	44	69
Southern Cluster	154	398	326	709
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire strategic HA	9	44	35	74
Dorset and Somerset strategic HA	7	24	24	43
Hampshire and Isle Of Wight strategic HA	27	31	30	64
Kent and Medway strategic HA	—	50	31	91
South-west Peninsula strategic HA	5	19	17	39
Surrey and Sussex strategic HA	66	161	139	240
Thames Valley strategic HA	40	69	50	158

Notes:
1. The figures provide an accurate figure taking into account any notifications received up to 31 January 2005.
2. This information relates to dentists offering at least one type of NHS treatment to at least one category of patient.

Derriford Hospital

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will permit the Vanguard Project at Derriford hospital to proceed with a single bidder with appropriate financial safeguards; and if he will make a statement. [221825]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Plymouth hospitals national health service trust is currently considering the options for the Vanguard project. The Department's private finance unit is providing support and working with the trust to discuss the next steps.

Diagnostic and Treatment Centres

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to the NHS per patient is for each contract placed by the NHS with private sector diagnostic and treatment centres; and against what NHS comparator each was assessed. [220339]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Wave 1 independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) providers are paid according to the contracted payment mechanism based on a price per procedure. In 2003–04, it is estimated that procedures purchased under the ISTC programme cost on average 9 per cent. more than the national health service equivalent cost, using NHS tariff as the base for the equivalent cost calculation. We are engaged in independent sector procurement to provide choice, contestability and additional capacity to reduce waiting times.

Great North Air Ambulance Service

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with the Northumbria Ambulance Trust about the withdrawal of the Great North Air Ambulance Service based at Blyth. [221285]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Department has not had any discussion with the Northumbria Ambulance Trust about the withdrawal of the Great North Air Ambulance Service.

Hepatitis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what arrangements are being made to treat the individuals in English prisons who are infected with hepatitis C; [220482]

(2) what measures are in place to identify the number of individuals in English prisons who are infected with hepatitis C. [220484]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The Hepatitis C Action Plan for England (June 2004) envisages that prisoners, who are one of the priority groups identified within it, should have equal access to the full range of testing, diagnostic, assessment and treatment services that it specifies.

Information about the number of prisoners with hepatitis C is not collected centrally. Prisons and their national health service partners draw up, and regularly review, prison health delivery plans within which prisoners' health care needs are assessed, prioritised resources allocated and delivery monitored.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many London acute trusts undertake post-discharge surveillance for hospital acquired infections; [221018]

(2) which London acute trusts have separate budgets for infection control; and what those budgets are, broken down by acute trust; [221019]

(3) what the infection control nurses to bed ratio was in acute trusts in London on the latest date for which figures are available. [221021]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not available centrally.

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of hospital-acquired MRSA have been reported at *(a)* Berwick Infirmary, *(b)* Alnwick Infirmary, *(c)* Rothbury Community Hospital and *(d)* Wansbeck General Hospital in the most recent period for which figures are available. [220373]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The information is not available in the format requested. The number of reported methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) blood stream infections for Northumbria Healthcare National Health Service Trust from April to September 2004 was 27.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of MRSA were found in *(a)* the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS trust and *(b)* in all hospitals in each year since 1996. [220615]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* Data for methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacteraemias in national health service acute trusts has only been collected on a mandatory basis since 2001. It is published in six-monthly periods (April to September and October to March). The number reported from the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS trust and for all acute trusts in England is shown in the table.

	University Hospitals Leicester	*England*
April to September 2001	80	3,598
October 2001 to March 2002	83	3,651
April to September 2002	62	3,574
October 2002 to March 2003	82	3,799
April to September 2003	69	3,744
October 2003 to March 2004	63	3,940
April to September 2004	59	3,519

The figures for England for April to September 2004 show a 6.3 per cent. reduction compared with the same period for 2003.

IT Projects

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much Atos Origin has been paid to date for the development and provision of the full choose and book system; and what monthly payment is currently being made to the company. [220863]

Mr. Hutton: Total payments to date to Atos Origin relating to the development, delivery and maintenance of the core choose and book service total £15,699,795.

A fixed monthly payment of £715,075 is made to the company for ongoing maintenance and management services.

Meat Hygiene

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many meat plants with a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan have been prosecuted for breaching UK Hygiene Regulations in each year between 2000 and 2004. [219009]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The relevant legislation requires all licensed fresh meat and poultry meat plants in Great Britain and Northern Ireland to have hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP) plans in place. This requirement had to be implemented in large plants by 7 June 2002 in Eng'and, Scotland and Wales and by 15 July 2002 in Northern Ireland: and across all small plants by 7 June 2003.

The total number of licensed fresh and poultry meat plants prosecuted under United Kingdom meat hygiene legislation with a HACCP plan in place at the time the offence occurred since this statutory requirement came into force is shown in the table.

	Great Britain	*Northern Ireland*
2002	0	0
2003	2	0
2004[1]	0	1

[1] The figure for 2004 is provisional as a number of investigations into offences reported in 2004 have yet to be concluded.

NHS Expenditure

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 888W, on NHS expenditure, what information on NHS regional and strategic health authority budgets since 1997 has been validated. [215994]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 10 February 2005]:* Expenditure on administration, and total expenditure, by national health service region, at 2003–04 prices (in thousands of pounds), between 1997–98 and 2000–01, is shown in the following tables.

£000

	1997–98		*1998–99*	
Region	*Administration*	*Total expenditure*	*Administration*	*Total expenditure*
Northern and Yorkshire	263,680	4,530,991	269,920	4,818,392
Trent	224,356	3,606,348	226,773	3,808,438
West Midlands	235,256	3,697,458	239,286	3,896,059
North West	297,817	4,753,555	286,100	5,080,647
Eastern	199,377	3,422,432	192,784	3,611,134
London	412,801	5,803,466	457,071	6,204,313
South East	342,130	5,604,306	321,640	5,838,039
South West	174,512	3,290,983	185,756	3,409,326

£000

	1999–2000		*2000–01*	
Region	*Administration*	*Total expenditure*	*Administration*	*Total expenditure*
Northern and Yorkshire	273,935	5,462,085	283,322	5,766,407
Trent	219,701	4,318,500	228,082	4,532,084
West Midlands	240,390	4,335,469	249,865	4,550,790
North West	281,410	5,809,534	300,862	6,312,317
Eastern	241,166	4,101,533	235,365	4,380,406
London	474,226	7,118,785	451,201	7,705,034
South East	337,815	6,703,755	363,988	7,095,852
South West	192,171	3,888,130	202,218	4,372,124

Expenditure on administration, and total expenditure, by strategic health authority (SHA) area, at 2003–04 prices (in thousands of pounds) for 2001–02, is shown in the following table.

£000

	2001–02	
SHA area	*Administration*	*Total expenditure*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	102,195	1,959,135
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	77,137	1,674,582
Birmingham and the Black Country	128,404	2,534,182
Cheshire and Merseyside	107,959	2,453,646
County Durham and Tees Valley	56,238	1,149,103
Cumbria and Lancashire	113,133	2,084,557
Dorset and Somerset	57,378	1,436,201
Essex	75,732	1,347,326
Greater Manchester	156,273	2,605,624
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	73,430	1,706,428
Kent and Medway	80,302	1,373,794
Leicestershire, Northants and Rutland	54,860	1,253,267
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	119,178	1,939,973
North and East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire	65,594	1,458,122
North Central London	101,804	1,441,377
North East London	94,772	1,686,092
North West London	128,255	2,085,940
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	71,292	1,497,303
Shropshire and Staffordshire	59,322	1,453,177
South East London	107,193	1,736,797
South West London	66,974	1,336,071
South West Peninsula	64,659	1,433,649
South Yorkshire	84,916	1,415,297
Surrey and Sussex	126,108	2,485,046
Thames Valley	109,779	1,805,204
Trent	168,108	2,617,750
West Midlands South	69,047	1,367,553
West Yorkshire	104,173	2,039,883

Notes:

1. Figures for 2002–03 are not available.

2. Figures for 2003–04 are currently being validated.

3. NHS regions no longer existed from 2001–02. Figures quoted are based on nominal strategic health authority area, even though SHAs did not come into being until the following year.

4. Total expenditure is taken from audited health authority accounts and primary care trust summarisation schedules, which are prepared on a resource basis and therefore differ from cash allocations in the year. The expenditure is the total expenditure by the relevant health authorities, and the commissioner costs of the primary care trusts.

5. Total NHS expenditure cannot be identified by regional or health authority area because the majority of general dental services expenditure is not included in the individual health authority accounts or primary care trust summarisation schedules and is separately accounted for by the Dental Practice Board. The majority of pharmaceutical services expenditure is accounted for by the Prescription Pricing Authority and not by health authorities or primary care trusts.

6. All figures are based on returns submitted by individual NHS organisations. These returns are signed off by the directors of finance of the NHS organisations and audited by auditors appointed by the Audit Commission.

Sources:

Audited accounts of the health authorities 1997–98 to1998–99.

Audited summarisation forms of the health authorities 1999–2000 to 2000–01.

Audited summarisation schedules of the primary care trusts 2000–01, 2001–02.

Audited summarisation schedules of the NHS trusts 1997–98 to 2001–02.

Her Majesty's Treasury gross domestic product deflator.

NHS Finances

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what unplanned financial support is made available to NHS *(a)* trusts and *(b)* primary care trusts which are forecasting a year-end deficit. [219391]

Mr. Hutton: The Department's policy is that in-year deficits occurring in national health service bodies because of poor financial performance should not receive unplanned financial support, except in exceptional circumstances.

Exceptionally, the Department has agreed to provide Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust with unplanned financial support of £30 million in the 2004–05 financial year.

NHS Staff (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses on average were employed in (i) 1997 and (ii) the last period for which figures are available in (A) East Lancashire Acute Trust and (B) Burnley General Hospital; and if he will make a statement. [219496]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the number of national health service hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) doctors and nurses within specified organisations employed within Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust and East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust in September 1997 and September 2003.

Number—headcount and full-time equivalent (fte)

	Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	*East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust*[2]
1997		
Doctors		
Number	239	n/a
Full-time equivalent	198	n/a
Nurses		
Number	1,382	n/a
Full-time equivalent	1,158	n/a
2003		
Doctors		
Number	n/a	530
Full-time equivalent	n/a	491
Nurses		
Number	n/a	2,143
Full-time equivalent	n/a	1,835

n/a = not applicable.

[1] In 2003 Mental Health Services from Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust merged with Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Healthcare NHS Trust (mental health services); Blackpool, Wyre and Fyde Community Health NHS Trust (mental health services); Chorley and South Ribble NHS Trust (mental health services); Communicare NHS Trust (psychology and drugs services) Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust; North Sefton and West Lancashire Community NHS Trust; to form Lancashire Care NHS Trust.

[2] East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust was established on 1 April 2003 as a result of the merging of Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley and Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust.

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

Obesity

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have become obese in the Chelmsford primary care trust area in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [219769]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The information requested is not held centrally.

Paddington Basin Health Campus

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the outcome has been of negotiations between Multiplex Ltd. and his Department concerning the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [221732]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Department has not been in negotiations with Multiplex Ltd. in relation to the proposed Paddington Health Campus (PHC) and has no plans to do so.

Multiplex Ltd. has a shareholding in Paddington Development Corporate Ltd. (PDCL), a privately owned consortium, which among other things, owns land in Paddington. PDCL is currently negotiating with Westminster city council and the Paddington Health Campus team for land required for the proposed PHC. Westminster city council has agreed to broker the land deal.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role he expects that the Paddington Development Corporation will play in the NHS Paddington Basin Health Campus project. [221755]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Royal Brompton and Harefield and St. Mary's national health service trusts are continuing discussions with Westminster city council with regard to the acquisition of land for Paddington Health Campus (PHC). Paddington Development Corporation Ltd. (PDCL) also own land required by PHC.

Westminster city council has agreed to negotiate with PDCL with the aim of trying to acquire their land. This will mean that the PHC team will only have to deal with one party for the acquisition of all the land needed.

It will only be possible to define the PDCL role when, and if, those aforementioned discussions are concluded satisfactorily.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) from whom his Department is purchasing land for the construction of *(a)* homes for (i) key workers and (ii) relatives of inpatients and *(b)* hospital facilities at the Paddington Basin Health Campus; and what acreage of land his Department is to acquire in each instance; [222005]

(2) what his estimate is of the cost to his Department of the acquisition of land at Paddington Basin for housing of *(a)* key workers and *(b)* relatives of inpatients at the hospital facilities on the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [222009]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The land needed for the Paddington Health Campus has been identified. Terms for its purchase, including costs and ownership, acceptable to the national health service have not yet been agreed.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his estimate is of the cost to his Department up to 2014 of providing key worker housing for those employed at the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [222007]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Royal Brompton and Harefield and St. Mary's national health service trusts will require significant accommodation for staff within the locality of the Paddington Health Campus (PHC), which is planned to open in 2013. The trusts propose to locate over 200 units for key workers on the PHC's site and are in discussions with Westminster city council and registered social landlords about the provision of additional accommodation. It is too early in the process for definitive costs to be available.

Parliamentary Questions

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he will reply to question reference 218474 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222111]

(2) when he will reply to question reference 218756 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222112]

(3) when he will reply to question reference 218757 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222113]

(4) when he will reply to question reference 218753 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222114]

(5) when he will reply to question reference 218327 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222115]

(6) when he will reply to question reference 218457 from the hon. Member for St. Ives. [222116]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I replied to the hon. Member on 10 March.

Payment of Bills

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of bills of each NHS acute trust in England were paid within 30 days in the most recent period for which figures are available; and what the value was in each case. [218114]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

The most recent period for which figures are available is as reported in the individual final accounts of national health service trusts for 2003–04.

Practice Closures

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner practices closed in *(a)* England and *(b)* each primary care trust in each year since 1996. [218163]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

The Government have embarked on one of the most sustained programmes of primary care modernisation in the history of the national health service and that work is ongoing to ensure a primary care infrastructure that is fit for purpose and suitable for the 21st century. Surgery closures are normally due to replacement premises

providing higher quality facilities for one or more general practitioner practices, or the modernisation of existing surgeries.

Between 2000 and 2004, 2,848 GP premises have been replaced or refurbished or are under construction.

Primary Care Trusts (Mergers)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from *(a)* NHS organisations and *(b)* other interested bodies on the merits of merging primary care trusts. [216147]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is in ongoing discussions with the national health service on primary care trust development and system reform.

Professor Roy Meadow

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what speaking engagements have been undertaken by Professor Roy Meadow to NHS employees since December 2003. [210220]

Mr. Hutton: The Department keeps no records of the speaking engagements of doctors or other health professionals or whether these are attended by national health service staff.

Radiographers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the implementation by *(a)* NHS trusts and *(b)* NHS foundation trusts of the terms and conditions of Agenda for Change with respect to radiographers. [220466]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The implementation of Agenda for Change in individual national health service trusts, including NHS foundation trusts, is a matter for the employer in partnership with staff locally.

However, we have asked NHS employers to monitor average hourly rates of pay for radiographers and others currently working standard hours of less than 37½ per week and to alert the NHS Staff Council in good time if at any point it appears that, when the hours are finally standardised at 37½ per week, they might fall below pre-Agenda for Change rates.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to ensure that all radiographers receive protection of working hours under the Agenda for Change proposals. [220578]

Mr. Hutton: Under the Agenda for Change terms and conditions of service, existing radiographers will migrate gradually over a period of seven years to the new standard working hours of 37.5 per week. These protection arrangements will continue to apply where staff move to a post with the same hours under the old pay system during the protection period. Newly appointed or promoted staff should be appointed or promoted on the new terms, except where they are recruited after 1 October 2004 on pre-Agenda for Change terms and conditions pending assimilation of their posts to the new pay system.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received regarding NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts failing to honour the terms and conditions of Agenda for Change with respect to radiographers. [220608]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The Society of Radiographers has written to me on this subject.

Vitamin D

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many and what proportion of eligible mothers and babies obtained free vitamins containing vitamin D on the NHS in the last year for which figures are available; [217270]

(2) what steps his Department has taken to promote the use of NHS-recommended vitamins containing vitamin D to mothers; and how much the Department spent on such promotion in each of the last 10 years. [217272]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the form requested.

Vitamin supplements are available free under the welfare food scheme for pregnant women and children under the age of five in families in receipt of income support, job seekers allowance and child tax credit (below a certain level).

Government advice on vitamins is set out in booklets "Pregnancy" and "Birth to Five", which are given to all mothers during pregnancy and soon after birth. Information on spending specifically on promotion of national health service-recommended vitamins containing vitamin D in the last 10 years is not available.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what proportion of mothers bought NHS-recommended vitamins containing vitamin D in the last year for which figures are available. [217271]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Gypsy Encampments

9. **Mr. Gray:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with the Prime Minister about illegal Gypsy encampments. [221856]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I meet with my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister regularly to discuss a range of issues.

This has included discussions on matters concerning Gypsy encampments.

Small Businesses

10. **Mrs. Anne Campbell:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to introduce rate relief for small businesses. [221857]

Mr. Raynsford: From 1 April 2005 over 400,000 small businesses will be eligible to receive small business rate relief. This will be a significant benefit to many small businesses for whom business rates can represent a disproportionate burden. Under the new relief scheme, those businesses occupying single main premises with a rateable value below £10,000 are likely to qualify for some reduction in their rates bill, rising to a 50 per cent. rebate for those with rateable values below £5,000. All those small businesses which believe they may qualify should be encouraged to apply for this relief and we have made provision for this by informing all rate payers of the relief in their rates bill.

Social Housing

11. **Mr. Soley:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on increasing mobility in the social rented sector. [221858]

Keith Hill: The Government are committed to increasing the mobility of people in the social rented sector. As part of this commitment let a contract (in February 2004), to develop a service that will bring together, for the first time, social housing and employment opportunities across the UK. This service was unveiled in the Deputy Prime Minister's five-year plan 'Sustainable Communities—Homes for All' and is known as 'moveUK'. We expect the service to commence later this year.

Land

12. **Mr. Edwards:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the use of article 4 directives with respect to the sub-division and sale of agricultural land and woodland. [221859]

Keith Hill: The Government recognise that directions made under article 4 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 could play a greater role in bringing under full planning control much unsightly minor development associated with the sale of subdivided rural land. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects in the next few months to put forward for consultation two amendments to the order. These measures would make it easier for local planning authorities to serve article 4 directions promptly on farm or forest plots where owners cannot readily be traced, and without the need to obtain in advance the approval of the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

Regeneration

13. **Jim Dobbin:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the role of his Department is in furthering economic regeneration. [221860]

Yvette Cooper: In 2005–06 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will spend £3.2 billion on regeneration programmes, including about £1.5 billion directed through the regional development agencies. In addition, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister works with other Departments and stakeholders to further regeneration through its work to deliver PSA 1 (Neighbourhood Renewal), PSA 2 (Regional Economic Performance and PSA 5 (Sustainable Communities).

14. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what methods he uses to assess the impact of Government policies on regeneration. [221861]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister publishes guidance on appraising regeneration projects in "Assessing the Impacts of Spatial Interventions—Regeneration, Renewal and Regional Development—'The 3Rs guidance'". This follows the principles set out in the Treasury Green Book on investment appraisal.

Councillors' Conduct (Highway Regulations)

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he has issued to local authorities on the propriety of councillors commenting on proposals for changes in highway regulations in advance of decisions being taken. [221520]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has issued no guidance of this kind. Standards of conduct for councillors are contained in the model code of conduct issued in November 2001. The Standards Board for England is currently reviewing this code.

Fire Service

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average response time of the fire and rescue service to 999 calls was in *(a)* Hartlepool and *(b)* England and Wales in each year since 1997. [221990]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Hartlepool (Iain Wright) on 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1247W.

Housing

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to issue his proposals for a revised measurement of overcrowding. [221632]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister hopes to take a decision shortly on the timing of consultation on the statutory overcrowding standards.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total spending by the Housing Corporation in the London borough of Islington was in each year since 1997–98; and what proportion of this was spent on *(a)* capital repairs and *(b)* new build. [221420]

Keith Hill: The following table sets out the total expenditure through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) from 1997–98 to 2003–04, where Islington is the sponsoring authority, and the proportion of this that was spent on new build and miscellaneous works.

Approved development programme

	Total investment (£000)	*Percentage of total* *New build*	*Miscellaneous works*[1]
1997–98	9,130	37	1
1998–99	14,318	70	8
1999–2000	5,800	50	12
2000–01	9,815	83	4
2001–02	10,313	63	0
2002–03	24,906	48	1
2003–04	46,716	43	2

[1] Miscellaneous works are mainly items of major repair but also include other works such as adaptations for people with disabilities and insulation/energy conservation works.

Source:
Housing Corporation (extract from RCM)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total central Government Housing Investment programme allocation to the London borough of Islington was in each year since 1997–98; and what proportion of this was used for *(a)* capital repairs and *(b)* new build. [221421]

Keith Hill: Details of the housing capital allocations (£ million) made to Islington since 1997–98 are tabled as follows. The Major Repairs Allowance and Arms Length Management Organisation funding are both wholly for use on council housing. The bulk of the housing investment programme funding supports the authority's overall housing capital programme; decisions on what these funds are used for are a matter for the authority. The following table shows the composition of Islington's overall programme.

Allocations

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Housing investment Programme[1]	14.9	18.7	18.0	28.4	12.7
Disabled Facilities	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Major Repairs Allowance	—	—	—	—	25.4
Arms Length Management Organisation	—	—	—	—	—

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Housing investment Programme[1]	15.0	13.6	15.8	17.8
Disabled Facilities	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
Major Repairs Allowance	25.0	25.5	24.0	25.0
Arms Length Management Organisation	—	—	0.9	24.0

[1] Includes Housing Annual Capital Guidelines/Supported Capital Expenditure, Capital Receipts Initiative, private sector renewal grant and Cash Incentive Schemes.

Capital spend

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Council Housing	27.9	37.3	30.9	34.6	37.8
Private Sector Housing	0.8	0.9	1.5	1.4	2.0
Other[1]	0.3	0.2	1.2	7.3	3.7
Total	29.0	38.3	33.6	43.2	43.5

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Council Housing	44.9	62.7	55.8	83.7
Private Sector Housing	2.5	1.8	2.7	2.7
Other[1]	1.1	1.5	0.3	1.0
Total	48.5	66.0	58.7	87.4

[1] Mainly funding for provision of affordable housing through housing associations.

Local Government Finance

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what expenditure has been allocated to Implementing Electronic Government capital grants to local authorities in each year since their inception; and what the estimated allocation is for 2005–06. [219856]

Mr. Raynsford: Local authorities in England were allocated £200,000 each in capital grant for Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) in 2002–03, an additional £200,000 each in 2003–04 and £350,000 each in 2004–05. The allocation for every local authority in 2005–06 is £150,000. The grant is intended to support the proposals set out in receiving authorities IEG statements and is only payable to authorities that have submitted a satisfactory IEG statement.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216620]

Yvette Cooper: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is considered on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to a specific element within a project as well as to an entire project. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Planning (Country Houses)

Alan Howarth: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether it is his intention in Planning Policy Statement 7 not to preclude approval of applications to build new country houses in any particular architectural style or idiom but to encourage all styles and types provided that the proposals in question are of high quality in terms of design, construction and sustainability; and if he will make a statement. [222648]

Keith Hill: Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) "Sustainable Development in Rural Areas", says (paragraph 10) that isolated new houses in the countryside will require special justification for planning permission to be granted. It goes on to say (paragraph 11) that:

> "Very occasionally the exceptional quality and innovative nature of the design of a proposed, isolated new house may provide this special justification for granting planning permission. Such a design should be truly outstanding and ground-breaking, for example, in its use of materials, methods of construction or its contribution to protecting and enhancing the environment, so helping to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas. The value of such a building will be found in its reflection of the highest standards in contemporary architecture, the significant enhancement of its immediate setting and its sensitivity to the defining characteristics of the local area."

The Government's intention is not to discourage particular styles and/or types of contemporary architecture which also meet the wider objectives of policy set out in PPS7. The fact that a particular design reflects the evolution of architecture from its historical roots is not of itself a reason to reject a proposal for an isolated new house in the countryside. Indeed, as Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) "Delivering Sustainable Development" makes clear (paragraph 38), Government policy is that local planning authorities (when deciding planning applications) should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes, or stifle innovation.

Postal Voting

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people had applied to vote by post *(a)* in June 2001, *(b)* in December 2004 and *(c)* on the latest date for which information is available, broken down by (i) local authority area and (ii) parliamentary constituency; and if he will make a statement. [221726]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Electoral Commission's report on the 2001 general election shows 1,738,055 issued for that election.

Southend

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans the Minister for Local and Regional Government has to visit Southend on official business. [222259]

Mr. Raynsford: The Minister of State for Local and Regional Government currently has no plans to visit Southend on official business.

CABINET OFFICE

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the Office's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221665]

Mr. Miliband: Cabinet Office policy is that there is no reason that Sikh civil servants or members of the public should not wear the Kirpan in Cabinet Office buildings, except in places where security policy might dictate otherwise and where items such as pen knives or letter openers might be banned. In such cases, the Kirpan would be stored in a secure place at the work location during working hours.

Cabinet Office does not discriminate unfairly on any grounds, including religion and belief. This commitment is set out clearly in our equal opportunities policy, including in our dignity at work statement. In support of this, the Department provides guidance and advice to staff and managers about the use of prayer rooms and on making and handling requests for time away from the office for religious observance. There is one designated prayer room on the Cabinet Office estate and other rooms can be made available for staff to use on request.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Mudie: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the future of regional development agencies. [221853]

Jacqui Smith: England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) will continue to play a lead role in delivering sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions, acting as strategic leaders in their regions to develop a region-specific economic development and regeneration agenda. In line with our current policy, where it is appropriate to do so, we will look to increase the flexibilities and freedoms available to RDAs to enable them to fulfil this role effectively.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on advice given by Euratom inspectors to BNFL in respect of the weighing of cans of plutonium nitrate at Sellafield. [221677]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I am assured that plutonium nitrate is not stored in cans at Sellafield and so the weighing by BNFL of such cans has not been the subject of advice from European Commission safeguards inspectors.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Bottled Water

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of

25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 247W, on bottled water, what the names and addresses are of suppliers of bottled water to the Refreshment Department; and what estimate has been made of the number of *(a)* lorry journeys and *(b)* lorry miles generated by these companies in order to meet orders placed by the Refreshment Department in each year. [222154]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Bottled water is supplied to the House of Commons by Hildon Ltd. at Broughton, Hampshire. The Refreshment Department keeps no record of the number of lorry journeys or lorry miles generated by Hildon Ltd. in supplying bottled water to the House of Commons, but is aware that the vehicle dispatched will make deliveries to several other customers on the same journey.

Catering Food Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 247–48W, on catering food waste, if he will estimate the *(a)* weight and *(b)* percentage of food purchased which is (i) disposed of by the Refreshment Department in the general refuse and (ii) re-used for human consumption on an average working day. [222155]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The information is as follows:

(a) The Refreshment Department does not keep any record of the weight of catering food waste.

(b) In the 11 months to the end of February 2005, the Refreshment Department estimates that approximately 2 per cent. of food purchases by value have been written off as wastage. No records are kept of the amount of left-over food re-used at a later time or date within the catering operations of the Refreshment Department.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 247–48W, on catering food waste, what discussions have been held with charitable organisations on the possibility of donating food to such organisations since 1997; and what progress has been made since 25 January in reaching an agreement with such organisations to donate food which otherwise would be disposed of by the Refreshment Department. [222156]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Refreshment Department last made inquiries about the possibility of donating waste food from the House of Commons catering operations to charitable organisations in April 2002. At that time, only three of 20 charities contacted in central London confirmed that they accepted food donations from catering establishments. None of these three organisations were prepared to accept unpackaged food prepared from fresh ingredients in our own kitchens and the Refreshment Department has minimal levels of wastage of packaged foods. All charities contacted in 2002 concluded that the nature, frequency and unpredictable quantity of food waste from the House of Commons Refreshment Department was unsuitable for their needs, but that they would contact us if their policy changed. No further discussions have been held since then.

Cycling

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many cycle parking places are provided for the use of hon. Members and staff of the House of Commons estate; and what plans there are to increase the number of cycle parking places available. [222093]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: There are at present some 100 cycle parking spaces on the parliamentary estate. There are plans to re-organise the parking arrangements in Star Chamber Court which will create some 15 additional cycle parking spaces.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission for what reasons members of the public are prevented from parking their bicycles on the parliamentary estate; and if he will provide secure parking places on the parliamentary estate for such a purpose. [222094]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is undesirable for visitors to bring bicycles on to the estate for security reasons; there are therefore no plans to provide spaces for the public. Cycle parking is available nearby outside 7 Millbank.

Repairs (Vehicle Emissions)

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will estimate the total financial cost of repairing damage caused to House buildings by emissions from motor vehicles on the parliamentary estate in each of the last five years. [222074]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: No such estimate can be made.

Transport

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many hon. Members use *(a)* rail, *(b)* bus, *(c)* bicycle, *(d)* car, *(e)* aeroplane and *(f)* foot as their predominant means of transport to the parliamentary estate. [222091]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Commission has no responsibility for how hon. Members choose to come to Parliament.

TREASURY

Cancer Deaths

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have died due to cancer in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [222144]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many people have died due to cancer in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. (222144)

The latest year for which data are available is 2003. Figures for Jarrow constituency, which is made up of parts of Gateshead and South Tyneside local authorities, are not available. For this reason, the figures for 1997 to 2003, provided in the attached table, are for Gateshead and South Tyneside, the North East Government Office Region and the United Kingdom.

Deaths from cancer[1] in South Tyneside and Gateshead local authorities, North East Government Office Region[2] and the United Kingdom[3]—1997 to 2003[4]

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Gateshead	654	638	630	619	635	624	625
South Tyneside	532	545	528	530	536	508	526
North East	7,816	7,883	7,572	7,486	7,756	7,688	7,618
United Kingdom	154,125	154,729	152,476	151,185	154,731	155,480	154,828

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) for England and Wales, and Northern Ireland, from 1997 to 2000, and for deaths in Scotland from 1997 to 1999. The International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used to define deaths in England and Wales, and Northern Ireland from 2001 to 2003, and in Scotland from 2000 to 2003. The codes used are listed below:
Cancer (Malignant neoplasms)—ICD-9 140–208; ICD-10 C00-C97.
[2] Usual residents of these areas.
[3] UK figures include non-residents.
[4] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death means that data for cancer are not completely comparable with data coded using ICD-9. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution. The effect of the change in classification in 2001 on cancer deaths in England and Wales is described in a report published in May 2002.*
*Office for National Statistics. Results of the ICD-10 bridge coding study, England and Wales, 1999. Health Statistics Quarterly 14 (2002), 75–83.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for the Implementation of the Regulation establishing an Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217895]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I have been asked to reply.

The Committee for the implementation of the Regulation establishing an Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession (ISPA) met once under the Italian presidency of the EU, on 12 and 13 November 2003. The Committee did not meet under the Irish presidency but met once under the Dutch presidency, on 28 October 2004. The meetings took place in Brussels and were attended by an official from the Department for International Development.

The ISPA Committee is convened and chaired by the Commission and is constituted for member states to assist the Commission with implementation of Council Regulation No. 1267/1999 of 21 June 1999.

The ISPA programme consists of support to the environmental and transport infrastructure priorities of the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Council Decision 1999/468/EC sets out to "simplify the requirements for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission". As an obligation to this Decision, the Commission undertakes to publish an annual report on the working of committees. The reports are deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

I refer the hon. Gentleman to the series of Command Papers that sets out the main elements of government business in the EU under the respective presidencies: Cm6174, laid in April 2004 and Cm6310, laid in September 2004 refer.

Identity Cards

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what traffic light status was awarded to the identity cards scheme by the Office of Government Commerce at the Gateway Review 1 stage. [217772]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 25 February 2005]:* The ID Cards programme has not yet undergone a Gate 1 Review. It has, however, undergone two OGC Gate 0 Reviews, in June 2003 and January 2004 respectively. The traffic light status awarded by these reviews is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as disclosure would be likely to prejudice both the ability of OGC to examine the effectiveness, efficiency and economy with which other Government Departments exercise their functions and also the formulation and development of Government policy. I believe the public interest in disclosure of such information is outweighed by the public interest in non-disclosure.

Job Creation

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in *(a)* Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority Area, *(b)* Gordon constituency and *(c)* Banff and Buchan constituency in each year since 1999. [222061]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alex Salmond, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about jobs created in Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority, and Banff and Buchan and Gordon Parliamentary Constituencies. (222061)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to jobs in these areas, from 1999 to 2003 for Aberdeenshire, and from 1999 to 2002 for Parliamentary Constituencies. These are the latest period for which information is available.

Number of employee jobs[1,2] and change in employee jobs in Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority, Banff and Buchan, and Gordon parliamentary constituency—1999 to 2003

Thousand

	Aberdeenshire	Year on year change	Banff and Buchan[3]	Year on year change	Gordon[3]	Year on year change
1999	71	—	26	—	24	—
2000	77	6	30	4	25	2
2001	79	2	29	-1	25	0
2002	75	-4	26	-3	25	-1
2003	79	4	—	—	—	—

[1] Excludes self-employed jobs.

[2] These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) have been excluded.

[3] 2003 Annual Business Inquiry estimates are currently not available by parliamentary constituency.

Note:

Each table entry is independently rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source:

Annual Business Inquiry, 1999–2003

MRSA Deaths

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths from MRSA there have been in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* the Ribble Valley and *(c)* each hospital in Lancashire in each of the last five years. [221988]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Nigel Evans, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths from MRSA there have been in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Ribble Valley and *(c)* each hospital in Lancashire in each of the past five years. (221988)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2003. Numbers of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor are given in the table below.

The information on deaths in each hospital could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Number of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor,[1] Lancashire and Ribble Valley[2], 1999–2003[3]

	Lancashire	Ribble Valley
1999	[4]—	[4]—
2000	12	[4]—
2001	7	[4]—
2002	10	[4]—
2003	16	[4]—

[1] Identified using the methodology described in Griffiths C, Lamagni TL, Crowcroft NS, Duckworth G and Rooney C (2004) Trends in MRSA in England and Wales: analysis of morbidity and mortality data for 1993–2002. "Health Statistics Quarterly" 21, 15–22.

[2] Deaths to residents of these areas.

[3] Figures are for deaths occurring in the years 1999 to 2003.

[4] Fewer than 5 deaths.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

National Debt

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the national debt per head of population was in real terms in *(a)* 1996 and *(b)* 2004. [221924]

Mr. Timms: Figures for public sector net debt at current prices are available on the Office for National Statistics website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/tsdtables1.asp?vlnk=fsf. Table 1.1A: Public Sector Finances (series RUTN) shows figures for public sector net debt in £ billion.

Figures for mid-year population estimates are also available on the Office for National Statistics website. Mid-1996 population estimates for the UK are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Expodata/Spreadsheets/D8601.xls. The latest available population estimates for the UK are mid-2003, which are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=12899.

GDP deflators, to convert nominal values into real terms, are available on the Treasury website at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/3DA/86/GDPdeflator23122004.xls

Perinatal/Infant Mortality

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* perinatal and *(b)* infant mortality rates were in each of the last 10 years. [222060]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Tim Loughton, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the *(a)* perinatal and *(b)* infant mortality rates were in each of the last ten years. (222060)

The most recent year for which infant mortality data are available is 2003. Data for 2003 are provisional. The information is shown in the table below.

Numbers and rates for (a) perinatal and (b) infant mortality in England and Wales for the years 1994 to 2003

	(a) Perinatal mortality		(b) Infant mortality	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
1994	5,958	9.0	4,120	6.2
1995	5,701	8.8	3,982	6.1
1996	5,605	8.6	3,959	6.1
1997	5,380	8.4	3,799	5.9
1998	5,261	8.3	3,625	5.7
1999	5,138	8.3	3,621	5.8
2000	4,956	8.2	3,377	5.6
2001	4,757	8.0	3,240	5.4
2002	4,992	8.4	3,127	5.2
2003[1]	5,334	8.5	3,306	5.3

[1] Data for 2003 are provisional.

Note:

Final figures for 2003 will be published in DH3, no. 36 on 31 March 2005.

Source:

1994–2002: Series DH3 'Mortality statistics: Childhood, infant and perinatal' no. 35, table 12003.

Redundancy Payments

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to raise the threshold at which tax is paid on redundancy payments. [221414]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government keep the £30,000 tax exemption for redundancy payments under review along with all other aspects of the tax system.

Women with Disabilities

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many women with disabilities were in employment in the UK on the latest date for which figures are available. [221604]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Keith Vaz, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about women with disabilities in employment in the UK. (221604)

It is estimated that, for the three-month period ending in November 2004, there were 1,625,000 women with disabilities in employment in the United Kingdom.

The definition of 'disabled' includes those who have a current disability covered by the Disability Discrimination Act, or a work-limiting disability, or both.

This estimate from the Labour Force Survey is, as with any statistical sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Youth Unemployment

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of youth unemployment in Tamworth was in 2004. [221930]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Brian Jenkins, dated 16 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about youth unemployment in Tamworth. (221930)

It is estimated that, for the twelve-month period ending in February 2004, the latest period for which information is available, there were 2,000 unemployed people aged 16–24 resident in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency. This estimate from the Labour Force Survey is, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

The Office for National Statistics also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for local areas. In the year 2004, there were, on average, 290 young people aged 18 to 24 years claiming Jobseeker's Allowance who were resident in the Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Vale of York, of 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1346W, on Child Support Agency, what the *(a)* median and *(b)* mean time taken to process a case of (i) maintenance calculation and (ii) first payment was in the last period for which figures are available; and what proportion of new cases over (A) six months and (B) a year old have (1) yet to receive a maintenance calculation and (2) made a first payment. [220598]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 16 March 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer to the honourable Member for Vale of York of 7th February Official Report column 1346W on Child Support Agency what the *(a)* median and *(b)* mean time taken to process a case of (i) maintenance calculation and (ii) first payment was in the last period for which figures are available; and what proportion of new cases over (A) six months and (B) a year old have (1) yet to receive a maintenance calculation and (2) made a first payment.

The information you seek is not currently available with any level of accuracy. The Agency is currently progressively improving its management information systems. This will lead to a position, during the early summer, where it will be possible to extract this information from our systems. I have therefore noted your request and will provide the information to you when it is available.

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for the Child Support Agency to impose a penalty on absent parents who fail to disclose their income and employee details. [220845]

Mr. Pond: A non-resident parent is required to provide the Child Support Agency with a range of information including their income and employment details in order for a maintenance calculation to be made.

Since January 2001 it has been a criminal offence if a person fails to provide information to the Child Support Agency when required to do so, or knowingly provides false information. This offence carries a fine of up to £1,000 on conviction by a court.

We have no plans to introduce further penalties in such circumstances.

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will give the Child Support Agency (CSA) powers to make it mandatory for absent parents to instruct the CSA of their new employee details when they change employment. [220860]

Mr. Pond: We have no plans to make it mandatory for non resident parents to notify the Child Support Agency when they change their employment.

Employment Rates

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the earliest date is by which the Government expect to have achieved an employment rate equivalent to 80 per cent. of the working age population in work. [215557]

Jane Kennedy: An employment rate equivalent to 80 per cent. of the working age population in work is a long-term aspiration.

This long-term aspiration is very challenging. It will require continued macroeconomic stability and further radical welfare reform to build on the success of achieving the highest employment rate of all the G8 major industrialised countries and one of the highest employment rates in our history.

Our five-year strategy, 'Opportunity and Security throughout life' outlines how we aim to meet this challenge. With unemployment at low levels helping inactive people into work is crucial to achieving our aspiration. We must:

support children and families—including helping lone parents into work by making work possible and making work pay

help people on incapacity benefits to get the support they need to fulfil their ambitions to return to work

break down the barriers that prevent disabled people meeting their desire to move back into work.

It will take time to achieve this. Key elements to the strategy will be the reform of incapacity benefit and the equalisation of state pension age from 2010. The principle behind the strategy is to help people to move back into work while still delivering financial security for those who need it.

Pension Service (Cold Calling)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on cold-calling by Pension Service staff of pensioners; how many such calls the Pension Service has made in each of the last 24 months, broken down by region; whether the calls are made by Pension Service employees; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the script used by callers. [220993]

Malcolm Wicks: The Department does not "cold call" pensioners. Telephone calls are in certain circumstances made to pensioners who may be eligible for pension credit to ask if they wish to apply. In all such cases the recipient would already have received at least one letter about pension credit, including one informing them that such a call might be made. The Department has also sent letters to customers to inform them of the change to Direct Payment, a safer and more secure method of paying benefits and pensions. These letters advise customers that we will try to call them if we do not hear from them.

Pensioners

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average weekly income of single *(a)* female and *(b)* male pensioners was in the latest period for which figures are available. [221603]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table.

The average incomes of single female and single male pensioners in 2002–03

£ per week [1]

	Single female pensioners	*Single male pensioners*
Gross income	197	221
Net income BHC	172	190
Net income AHC	147	165

[1] 2002–03 prices.

Notes:

1. Incomes are presented as pounds per week. Figures for incomes are given in 2002–03 prices and rounded to the nearest pound.
2. BHC stands for "before housing costs" and AHC for "after housing costs".
3. Gross income is income from all sources received by the pensioner including income from social security benefits (including housing benefit), earnings from employment or self-employment, any private pension income, and tax credits. Net income before housing costs deducts direct taxes including council tax, net income after housing costs also deducts housing costs which include rent, water rates and mortgage payments.

Source:

The Pensioners' Incomes Series 2002–03 (which is based on data from the Family Resources Survey).

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in *(a)* Plymouth, Sutton, *(b)* Plymouth, Devonport and *(c)* South West Devon received pension credit in the latest month for which figures are available. [221608]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on numbers of households and individuals in receipt of pension credit in each constituency at 31 December 2004 is contained in the most recent quarterly pension credit progress report, which was published on 3 February. A copy of the report is in the Library.

Pensions

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department keeps a record of the number of lost application forms for pension credit. [221894]

Mr. Pond: The Department does not keep a central record of the number of lost application forms. However, between April 2004 and February 2005 the

pension credit application line was contacted in 714 cases by customers who had not received their forms. Appropriate action is taken as soon as possible when the application line is informed that a customer has not received his or her form.

Statistics

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the publication dates of statistics to be released by his Department and its agencies during the next year. [219747]

Mr. Pond: The majority of the Department's statistics are released quarterly on the internet and summarised in the DWP Statistical Summary. They are scheduled to be issued on the following dates in the coming year:

16 March 2005
15 June 2005
21 September 2005
21 December 2005

The Department's statisticians have recently completed a consultation about improvements to the data sources and coverage of benefit statistics. The outcome of the consultation has been placed in the Library and is available on the Department's website at http//www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/stats_consultation/DWP_Response_to_External_Consultation.pdf. Further details, including the effect on the publication schedule, will be released in the summer.

Publication dates for other DWP statistics prepared by members of the Government Statistical Services are currently scheduled as follows:

Publication	*Period covered*	*Release date*
Fraud and Error in Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit (detailed report)	April 2003 to March 2004	24 March 2005
Neighbourhood Statistics	August 2004	March 2005
Households Below Average Income	1994–95 to 2003–04	30 March 2005
Pensioners' Incomes	1994–95 to 2003–04	6 April 2005
Family Resources Survey	2003–04	6 April 2005
Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit (detailed report)	April 2002 to March 2004	26 May 2005
Tax/Benefit Model	April 2005	June 2005
National Insurance Contributions and Qualifying Years	1978–79 to 2002–03	June 2005
Fraud and Error in Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit (headline report)	October 2003 to September 2004	July 2005
Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit (headline report)	April 2002 to September 2004	21 July 2005
Local Area Labour Force Survey	March 2004 to February 2005	August 2005
Low Income Dynamics	1991–2003	August 2005 (provisional)
National Insurance Number allocations to overseas Nationals entering the UK (previously Migrant Workers Statistics)	2003–04	September 2005 (provisional)
Work and Pensions Statistics	2005	October 2005
Fraud and Error in Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit (headline report)	April 2004 to March 2005	November 2005
Fraud and Error in Housing Benefit (headline report)	April 2002 to March 2005	November 2005
Second Tier Pension Provision	2003–04	December 2005 (provisional)
Take-up of Income-related Benefits	2003–04	December 2005 (provisional)
Households Below Average Income	1994–95 to 2004–05	March 2006

Tamworth

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Tamworth have received *(a)* full and *(b)* partial grants from the Access to Work programme in each year since its introduction. [221934]

Maria Eagle: Access to Work grants are not broken down into full or partial grants. The Access to Work programme assesses the needs of individuals and, within Access to Work guidelines, offers a grant required by the applicant to help them overcome the particular barriers they face in their workplace.

Information is not available broken down by constituency. The available information for the West Midlands Jobcentre Plus region is in the table.

Access to Work programme—new beneficiaries West Midlands Jobcentre Plus Region

	Number
April 1999 to March 2000	960
April 2000 to March 2001	1,590
April 2001 to March 2002	1,540
April 2002 to March 2003	1,310
April 2003 to March 2004	1,270
Total	6,670

Notes:

1. New beneficiary figures relate to people receiving Access to Work assistance for the first time.
2. Information is not available broken down by region before 1999.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

DWP Disability and Rehabilitation Division

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners were in receipt of winter fuel payments in Tamworth in 2004–05. [221935]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of pensioners in Tamworth who received a winter fuel payment in winter 2003–04 is in the Library. Information on winter 2004–05 is not yet available but we expect the number to be similar.

PRIME MINISTER

Engagements

Q9. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Prime Minister whether he plans to visit Colchester on official business before 5 May. [221840]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

Entertainment

Norman Lamb: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list guests entertained at public expense at *(a)* Chequers and *(b)* 10 Downing street in the period from 1 January to 25 February. [221026]

The Prime Minister: The list of guests entertained at Chequers is currently being considered as part of a request under the Freedom of Information Act. Copies of the reply will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

It is a matter of public record that both my officials and I entertain guests at 10 Downing street. A list of guests is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his Answers of 9 March to the hon. Member for Linlithgow, *Official Report*, column 514, and to the hon. Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy (Mr. Llwyd), *Official Report*, column 516, what account he took, in his presentation to the Cabinet of the reasons for going to war with Iraq, of the requirements under the Ministerial Code when a summary of advice is given to Cabinet. [221891]

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Prime Minister whether he intends to make available to a succeeding administration the complete text of the advice of the Attorney-General reported orally to the Cabinet on 17 March 2003 under the Ministerial Code of Conduct. [221893]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Members to the letter from the Attorney-General (Lord Goldsmith) to my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Ladywood (Clare Short), copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Black Male Pupils

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the Government plan to teach black male pupils in separate classes in an effort to improve their GCSE results. [221598]

Derek Twigg: Segregating pupils solely on the grounds of ethnicity is contrary to the Department's approach to inclusion and we have no plans to promote the segregation and teaching of black male pupils in separate classes.

The strategies we have put in place to tackle underachievement by minority ethnic pupils, including targeted work to support black pupils, are delivering year-on-year improvements in GCSE results for all ethnic groups. Black Caribbean boys' achievement has risen this year by almost twice the national average and black African boys' has risen even faster. These improvements are important; however, we are not complacent and recognise that there remains a great deal more to do.

Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what policies her Department has in place for supporting employees with cancer. [218589]

Derek Twigg: My Department takes the health and welfare of all its employees very seriously. Managers are responsible for day to day sickness absence management and work closely with personnel staff on individual cases to identify how best to offer help and support including keeping in touch arrangements for those on long-term sickness absence.

For employees with cancer, a range of support is available including: changed working patterns; approved discretionary special leave or paid time off for treatment; and, if appropriate, we will support applications for medical retirement.

In addition, we encourage the use of Department's Employee Assistance Programme for counselling and information. Staff and their managers can use of departmental occupational health advisers to provide advice on all areas where health may affect attendance and performance. Staff can also have membership of the Civil Service Benevolent Fund, one of the largest benevolent funds in the UK, who can provide help and assistance, including financial assistance and putting cancer sufferers in touch with specialist agencies.

Care Proceedings

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many care proceedings have been terminated after court proceedings have been initiated with the child in question remaining with the birth parent in each of the last 10 years. [222036]

Margaret Hodge: It is not possible to say in how many care proceedings the child in question remained with their birth parents, as information about the parties involved is not collected centrally. The following table shows the number of care proceedings which have been disposed of without a care order being made over the last 10 years:

	Applications withdrawn	*Orders refused*	*Orders of no order*
2003	433	26	257
2002	304	27	185
2001	355	15	164
2000	459	26	177
1999	288	28	95
1998	547	43	121
1997	514	38	128
1996	525	41	124
1995	641	40	108
1994	562	80	162

Source:
Judicial Statistics (Table 5.2)

Child Care Statistics

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the statistics relating to *(a)* child care and *(b)* looked after children and children in care, which, since 1997 (i) are no longer collected by her Department and (ii) have had the way in which the figures are compiled changed. [221796]

Margaret Hodge: My Department's Children's Day Care Facilities Survey collected data on numbers of child care providers and places classified according to type of provider: day nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools, childminders, out of school clubs, and holiday schemes, for each local authority, from local authority Social Service Departments on an annual basis until March 2001, when the survey was discontinued.

With the introduction of the National Day Care Standards and the transfer of responsibilities for registration and inspection of child care providers from Local Authority Social Service Departments to Ofsted in September 2001, data on child care providers and numbers of places were collected as part of the process of registration and inspection and child care providers and places were classified according to type of day care provided: full day care, sessional day care, childminder, out of school day care, and crèche day care.

My Department published figures on numbers of child care providers and places on an annual basis until March 2001 and Ofsted has published figures on numbers of child care providers and places on a quarterly basis since March 2003. There are no figures for March 2002. The two sets of figures are not entirely comparable because one set derives from local authority data classified according to type of provider and the other from provider data classified according to type of child care provided.

The following table summarises the changes made to the children looked after returns since 1997.

Year ending 31 March:	*Change*	*Description*
1997	Children's homes statistical publication changed from annual to triennial publication	Children's homes publication contains details on numbers of children's homes
1998	CLA100 return introduced	To collect aggregate figures for children looked after by local authority. Introduced following a review in 1997 of the statistics on personal social services collected by DH to enable a fast turnaround of data providing more up-to-date summary figures than is possible from the detailed SSDA903 return.
1998	SSDA903 return moves from covering all children looked after to a one-third sample survey	To reduce the burden on local authorities following introduction of the CLA100 return. (The SSDA903 return is a child level return collecting detailed information on episodes of care). Aggregate figures were produced using the CLA100 totals (at 31 March, starters and ceased).
2000	Last year of Children's Homes publications	Responsibility for children's homes passed to CSCI
2001	'Number of children starting to be looked after in year' discontinued from the CLA100 return	To calculate an aggregate number of starters in the year the 31 March total was used in combination with the SSDA903 return. 'Number of children who ceased to be looked after in the year' was discontinued in the year ending 31 March 2002. It was decided to also use the 31 March total in combination with the SSDA903 return to calculate the aggregate number of ceased.
2001	SSDA903 codes revised[1]. Ethnic origin and 'Children in Need' code collected for the first time. 'Reason for being looked after' code discontinued. Most of the 'reason episode ceased' codes[2] were discontinued.	Most of the pre-2001 codes can be mapped uniquely to the 2001 codes. However, at a detailed level some codes can not be uniquely matched. 'Children in Need' code replaced the 'Reason for being looked after' code.
2001	CLA100 return codes revised	To match SSDA903 codes
2004	SSDA903 return moves to a census	Move to web-based data collection facilitates move to census.
2004	CLA100 discontinued	The result of the SSDA903 return move to census.

[1] In the year ending 2001 the codes used on the SSDA903 form, which had previously been numerical, were changed to alphanumeric pairs, in each case a letter followed by a number (except 'reason for new episode' which is a field of one digit in length. Further details on the changes can be found in a document titled 'Information only—new SSDA9Q3 codes introduced on 1 April 2000' which can be downloaded from http://www.dfes.gov.uk/datastats1/guidelines/children/returns.shtml

[2] Discontinued 'reason episode ceased' codes were emigration and reaching the maximum age appropriate to the legal status and placement. The detailed codes indicating that the child continued to be looked after following a placement or legal status change (or both) were summarised into one category, 'episode ceased and new episode begins on the same day, for any reason'.

Children Act Databases

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her latest estimate is of the cost of *(a)* establishing and *(b)* maintaining the databases of children established by the Children Act 2004. [222033]

Margaret Hodge: The detailed costings for a national system of databases or Indexes' are not yet available. We know that the 15 authorities involved in our 10 Trailblazers have been able to make good progress towards introducing both indexes and the vital training and culture change required, within overall budgets of around £1 million per Trailblazer. We will take decisions on the funding of a national infrastructure in the light of further work on the technical feasibility and an analysis of costs and benefits. We will not move to this phase until we are clear that the processes and systems are deliverable, and that we have secured sufficient funding.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the role of the new Children's Commissioner for England will be in *(a)* setting up and *(b)* monitoring the children's databases established by the Children Act 2004. [222034]

Margaret Hodge: The Children's Commissioner will be able to apply his general powers in relation to the databases or indexes to be established under the Children Act, as for other policy initiatives.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what data she intends to include on the databases of children established by the Children's Act 2004. [222045]

Margaret Hodge: The databases or 'indexes' would contain the following information:

basic details to identify a child and whether they are receiving universal services. These are name, address, date of birth, gender, a unique identifying number, name and contact details of a person with parental responsibility or care of the child, name and contact details for school or other educational setting, and names and contact details of GP practice;

name and contact details for other practitioners involved with a child, so professionals can see who to contact if they wish to discuss a child's additional needs; and

an indicator of whether a practitioner has a cause for concern about a child, so professionals can see who to contact as a matter of priority to discuss a child's additional needs.

The indexes will not hold any case information.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many responses she has received to her consultation on the databases provision of the Children's Act 2004; and if she will publish them. [222046]

Margaret Hodge: We received 317 responses. We are now considering these and will publish a summary of the responses and the Government's decisions on the way forward. We will include in the summary a list of respondents, and will make available copies of individual responses, where the respondent has given permission for this to be done, on request.

Children in Care

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children committed suicide while in care in each year since 1997; what estimate she has made of the number of previously looked-after children who committed suicide after leaving care in each year; and what estimate she has made of the number of looked-after children who had or developed some form of mental illness while in care in each year. [221201]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* Data on children looked after is collected from the SSDA903 return, a statistical return completed by all local authorities with social services responsibilities in England. This return collects information relating to the care a looked after child receives and gives information on children who have died while in care but does not collect data on suicides or the number of looked after children who developed some form of mental illness while in care.

However, information on the cause of deaths of looked after children has been obtained for the first time in 2004 by matching child records from the SSDA903 episode data for 2002–03 and 2003–04 to death registration records held by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to obtain cause of death. This work is still in progress. The outcome will be published in the Statistical Volume "Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March 2004", scheduled to be published on 31 March 2005.

Education Funding (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been made available for computers for schools in Tamworth since 1997. [221940]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold information on funding for ICT in schools at constituency level. However, Tamworth is in Staffordshire LEA and allocations for this authority since 1998 are detailed in "Funding for ICT in Schools in England" which is available in the House Library.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in Tamworth have broadband internet access. [221942]

Derek Twigg: My Department does not hold data on broadband connections at constituency level. As at December 2004, 60 per cent. of schools in Staffordshire LEA had a broadband connection. This includes 99 per cent. of secondary schools and 54 per cent. of primary schools.

The national broadband connectivity rate, as at end December 2004, is 72 per cent., including 99 per cent. of secondary schools and 69 per cent. of primary schools.

Educational Psychologists

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many educational psychologists qualified in each of the last 10 years. [220434]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not held centrally. The Higher Education Statistics Agency produce annual summaries of newly qualified graduates by subject, but educational psychologists are not separately identified.

Inclusive Education Strategy

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what targets were set as part of the Government's strategy to make the education system more inclusive; and whether those targets have been achieved. [221599]

Derek Twigg: All our national targets including the post-16 and higher education targets are inclusive because they will enable more young people to succeed. The Department's school level floor targets are particularly important in promoting inclusion because they define an ambitious minimum standard of performance for every school.

The Department publishes progress against all its outstanding PSA targets in its Annual Departmental Report and Autumn Performance Report. Progress was reported most recently in the 2004 autumn report, published last November, together with commentary where appropriate.

A copy of the Department's 2004 Autumn Performance Report has been placed in the Library.

Out-of-school Clubs (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many out-of-school clubs there are in York; and how many there were in 1997. [222357]

Derek Twigg: The information requested is not available. Along with all local authorities, the City of York receives funding from my Department to provide study support (out of school hours learning) activities as part of the School Development Grant. The majority of this funding is devolved directly to schools. Individual schools and local authorities have the freedom to decide which activities best meet local needs. Study support can range from breakfast, homework and study clubs to special-interest activities including sport, the creative arts, and ICT. Activities can take place before or after school, during the school holidays and at weekends. In addition, the Department will be awarding the City of York £442,575 in 2005–06 to develop their extended schools services, including study support provision.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the projects being undertaken by her Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216628]

Derek Twigg: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to specific element within a project as well as to an entire project. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Post-16 Education (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils continued in post-16 education in Leicester in each year since 1997. [221207]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Participation estimates as at end 2001 (2001/02 academic year) for 16-year-olds in Leicester LEA in full-time education, and in education and Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded work based learning (WBL), are 68 and 79 per cent., respectively.

The information is taken from the Department's Statistical Bulletin entitled, 'Participation in Education and Training by 16 and 17 Year Olds in Each Local Area in England, End 2001'. A consistent historical time series is currently unavailable due to issues with post-census local population estimates for individual ages for earlier years. Local participation estimates for end 2002 and end 2003 (provisional) are due to be published on 31 March 2005 alongside a consistent historic participation time series.

Special Educational Needs

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils with special needs receive two hours of high-quality physical education and school sport each week. [221436]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not collect national data on this. Unless they have been specifically disapplied from this aspect of the national curriculum, we would expect pupils with special educational needs to receive the same amount of physical education and sport as other pupils.

In 2003–04 the Department commissioned a survey of schools in relation to the PSA target of two hours of quality physical education or school sport each week (The School Sports Partnership Programme Evaluation 2004/05). Schools with higher proportions of pupils with statements of SEN were found to be more likely to be fulfilling the PSA than those with lower proportions of SEN.

Teachers

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of qualified primary school teachers at present unable to secure a job in teaching in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* the North West and *(c)* England. [221415]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Secretary of State has made no such estimate.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers in England will reach the age of 60 years in each of the next five academic years. [221895]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The following table shows the number of teachers aged between 55 and 59 in service in maintained sector schools in March 2003, the latest information available. No estimate of the number of teachers in these age groups who will enter or leave service prior to age 60 has been included.

Number of full and part-time teachers in service in the maintained sector in England by age

Age	*Full-time*	*Part-time*	*Total*
55	11,190	2,240	13,430
56	9,020	2,120	11,140
57	5,390	1,390	6,780
58	4,450	1,390	5,840
59	3,200	1,150	4,350
Total	33,240	8,300	41,540

Source:
Database of Teacher Records

It is estimated that between 10 and 20 per cent. of part-time teachers may not be included in the data.

Universities (Funding)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills in what ways public funds contribute to the funding of universities; and what the total contribution was in 2004. [221663]

Dr. Howells: Some 60 per cent. of the total funding universities receive comes from public sources. In 2002/03, the latest year for which data are available, public funding was £7.6 billion, out of a total £12.7 billion.

For 2004–05, the Department's planned funding for the Higher Education Funding Council for England is £6.9 billion. Higher education institutions will also receive public funding from other Government Departments, and the Research Councils, with further income from private sources such as charities, overseas students' fees, other research bodies, and student residences.

Public funding is used by the universities for teaching; research; salaries and other staff related costs; for maintaining and updating their buildings, facilities, and equipment; for making links with local schools in order to actively encourage widening participation; and to develop closer links with local businesses; and for other activities which relate to higher education.

Victims of Abuse

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what her policy is regarding compensation for victims of abuse in residential schools and homes in the Irish Republic who are now British citizens; [220436]

(2) if she will make a statement on how the operation of the Irish Residential Institutions Redress Board will apply to British citizens. [220437]

Margaret Hodge: UK citizens who suffered abuse in residential institutions and childrens homes in the Irish Republic and satisfy the criteria set out in the Irish legislation can claim compensation from the Residential Institutions Redress Board in the Republic in the same way as Irish citizens.

HOME DEPARTMENT

2006 World Cup

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of ticketing arrangements for UK football fans to attend the 2006 World Cup; and if he will make a statement; [221349]

(2) what representations he has received from *(a)* the German Football Association, *(b)* the Football Association, *(c)* the European Commission and *(d)* FIFA on the ticketing arrangements for UK football fans for the 2006 World Cup in Germany. [221350]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Home Office is co-ordinating extensive UK preparations for the 2006 World Cup and is working closely with other Government Departments, police, football authorities and supporter groups. There is very close liaison with the German authorities. All aspects of the preparations, including the potential impact of the ticketing arrangements, are subject to detailed consideration.

Animal Experimentation

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what proportion of the regulated procedures conducted in Scotland in 2003 under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were performed in *(a)* public health laboratories, *(b)* universities and medical schools, *(c)* national health service hospitals, *(d)* Government Departments, *(e)* other public bodies, *(f)* non-profit making organisations and *(g)* commercial organisations; [218764]

(2) what proportion of the regulated procedures conducted in Scotland in 2003 under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 were carried out for *(a)* toxicological purposes and *(b)* non-toxicological purposes; [218765]

(3) how many of the regulated procedures conducted in Scotland in 2003 under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 involved *(a)* cats, *(b)* dogs, *(c)* rabbits, *(d)* horses and other equids, *(e)* New World primates and *(f)* Old World primates; and how many involved (i) genetically modified animals and (ii) animals with a harmful genetic defect; [218777]

(4) what proportion of the project licences granted under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 that were in force in Scotland at the end of 2003 were in *(a)* mild, *(b)* moderate, *(c)* substantial and *(d)* unclassified severity bandings. [218837]

Caroline Flint: The latest statistical information of this kind is in the publication Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals Great Britain 2003 (Command 6291, available in the House Library). Separate figures are produced for Northern Ireland.

However as the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 is administered by the Home Office for England, Wales and Scotland, the comprehensive data produced in Command 6291 relate to Great Britain as a whole, and are not broken down into the constituent geographical areas. The provision of information just relating to Scotland has therefore required a special exercise.

The figures are our best estimate and may be subject to a margin of error because our systems are not normally set up to provide a breakdown on the lines asked for.

In 2003, the percentage of scientific procedures using animals in Scotland, broken down by various types of establishment, are given in the table.

Type of establishment	*Percentage*
Public health laboratories	0.0
Universities and medical schools	37.0
NHS hospitals	0.0
Government Departments	1.5
Other public bodies	37.1
Non-profit making organisations	0.0
Commercial concerns	24.4

In 2003 the procedures carried out in Scotland for toxicological purposes amounted to 16 per cent., and for non-toxicological purposes 84 per cent.

In 2003, the numbers of procedures carried out in Scotland on certain species, or animals with a certain genetic status are shown in the table.

Species of animal, or genetic status	*Number*
Cat	38
Dog	1,269
Rabbit	6,973
Horses and other equids	2,821
New world primate	282
Old world primate	879
Animals with harmful genetic defect	125,527
Genetically modified animals	14,901

In 2003, the numbers of project licences in force in Scotland at the end of the year, in each severity band, were as follows:

	Number
Mild	158
Moderate	239
Substantial	9
Unclassified	15

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in Greater London in each year since 1 April 1999, broken down by borough. [221137]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the tables.

Number of ASBOs, as reported to the Home Office by all courts within Greater London, where restrictions are imposed within local authority areas, by period, up to 30 September 2004

Area	*Total ASBOs 1 April 1999 to 30 September 2004*		*Period 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000*		*Period 1 June 2000 to 31 December 2000*		*Period 1 January 2001 to 31 December*	
	Total issued	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total refused*
Greater London	364	9	9	0	19	2	13	3
Barking and Dagenham	1	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Barnet	10	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
Bexley	16	—	n/a	n/a	2	—	—	—
Brent	10	1	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Bromley	7	—	n/a	n/a	1	—	—	—
Camden	65	—	n/a	n/a	5	—	1	—
City of London	4	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Croydon	14	—	n/a	n/a	1	—	—	—
Ealing	12	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Enfield	4	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Greenwich	11	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	3	—
Hackney	7	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	1	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	8	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
Haringey	9	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Harrow	5	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Havering	5	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Hillingdon	8	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	18	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Islington	8	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough	8	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Kingston-on-Thames	5	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Lambeth	14	—	n/a	n/a	1	—	—	—
Lewisham	13	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	2	—
Merton	10	2	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Newham	5	2	n/a	n/a	—	2	2	—
Richmond upon Thames	8	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Southwark	11	3	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	3
Sutton	7	—	n/a	n/a	3	—	—	—
Tower Hamlets	9	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	7	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Wandsworth	12	—	n/a	n/a	—	—	—	—
Westminster	24	1	n/a	n/a	6	—	—	—

Area	*Period 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002*		*Period 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003*		*Period 1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004*	
	Total issued	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total refused*	*Total issued*	*Total refused*
Greater London	20	2	94	2	209	0
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	1	—
Barnet	—	—	1	—	7	—
Bexley	6	—	4	—	4	—
Brent	—	—	7	1	3	—
Bromley	—	—	5	—	1	—

Area	Period 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002		Period 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003		Period 1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004	
	Total issued	Total refused	Total issued	Total refused	Total issued	Total refused
Camden	10	—	20	—	29	—
City of London	—	—	—	—	4	—
Croydon	1	—	6	—	6	—
Ealing	—	—	1	—	11	—
Enfield	—	—	1	—	3	—
Greenwich	—	—	3	—	5	—
Hackney	1	—	1	—	4	—
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	2	—	4	—
Haringey	—	—	—	—	9	—
Harrow	—	—	—	—	5	—
Havering	—	—	1	—	4	—
Hillingdon	—	—	—	—	8	—
Hounslow	—	—	5	—	13	—
Islington	—	—	7	—	1	—
Kensington and Chelsea Royal Borough	—	—	1	—	7	—
Kingston-on-Thames	—	—	4	—	1	—
Lambeth	—	—	—	—	13	—
Lewisham	—	—	3	—	8	—
Merton	1	2	2	—	7	—
Newham	—	—	—	—	3	—
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	3	—	5	—
Southwark	—	—	5	—	6	—
Sutton	—	—	2	—	2	—
Tower Hamlets	1	—	2	—	6	—
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	7	—
Wandsworth	—	—	3	—	9	—
Westminster	—	—	5	1	13	—

n/a = Not available.

Note:

Between 1 April 1999–31 May 2000 data were collected on aggregate numbers only by police force area (pfa)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he gives to police authorities on the type of behaviour which merits the placing of an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO); and what steps he takes to ensure consistency across different police authorities in their attitude towards ASBOs. [220364]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Section 1 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 defines antisocial behaviour in relation to antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) as behaviour that

> "caused or was likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household".

ASBOs were introduced in April 1999. In 2000 the Home Office issued guidance to relevant agencies (including the police) on setting up local ASBO protocols.

This guidance was superseded by more detailed guidance issued in November 2002 on ASBOs. That guidance offered some advice on the behaviour that might trigger an application for an ASBO. It advised that the most common behaviour tackled by ASBOs is general loutish and unruly conduct such as verbal abuse, harassment, assault, graffiti and excessive noise. The wide range of antisocial behaviour that can be tackled by ASBOs and the ability to tailor the terms of the order to each specific case illustrates their flexibility.

However, ASBOs are just one tool available to tackle antisocial behaviour. Police, local authorities and other agencies need to assess the antisocial behaviour that is occurring and apply the most relevant tool available to them.

Asylum Seekers

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers in Milton Keynes were supported by Government funding in each of the last 10 years. [221872]

Mr. Browne: The information is not available in the precise format requested. The Home Office took responsibility for the budget for adult and family asylum seekers on 1 April 1999. Information for previous years is therefore not available.

The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) was established on 3 April 2000 and is now responsible for supporting the majority of asylum seekers. Local authorities retain responsibility for supporting some asylum seekers who made their claim for asylum before NASS administered support was effective in their area.

Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives.

The following table shows the number of people supported by NASS in Milton Keynes.

	2002	2003	2004
Financial assistance only	165	140	90
Accommodation and financial assistance or accommodation only	—	—	—
Disbenefited[1]	—	—	*
Total	165	140	95

[1] Disbenefited refers to cases previously supported under mainstream benefits system who have been transferred to support by NASS.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Notes:
1. All figures are rounded to the nearest five and * is 1 or 2.
2. Figures are a snapshot as at the end of each year.

Information from Milton Keynes council suggests that they have provided support to asylum seekers as follows:

Financial year	*Adults*	*Families*
1999–2000	185	Average of 50 for the year
2000–01	170	Average of 50 for the year
2001–02	80	Average of 35 for the year
2002–03	30	25 at the end of the financial year
2003–04	15	25 at the end of the financial year

Note:
All figures rounded to the nearest 5

Children on their own in the country who claim asylum are supported in the same way as any other child in need of care. Information from Milton Keynes council suggests it is supporting the following numbers of children who have made a claim for asylum.

Financial year	*Number*
1999–2000	0
2000–01[1]	*
2001–02[2]	10
2002–03[3]	15
2003–04[4]	25

[1] February 2001.
[2] February 2002.
[3] March 2003.
[4] February 2004.
Note:
All figures are rounded to the nearest five and * is 1 or 2.

Avon and Somerset Constabulary

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent *(a)* officers and *(b)* civilian personnel were controlled by the central resource of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary in the last year for which figures are available; and how many of each are based at Portishead. [214422]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 February 2005]:* The latest information on police strength was published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin number 13/04, "Police Service Strength England and Wales, 31 March 2004". A supplementary table giving police officer strength by Basic Command Unit was published online at the same time. This can be found on the website: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

On 31 March 2004, the number of full-time equivalent police officers working in Avon and Somerset Central Services was 1,212 and the number of police staff was 1,546. Information on the numbers based at Portishead is not available centrally.

Biometric Data

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1310W, on Biometric Data, if he will list the identifiers that will be held digitally on the chip in the ePassport. [221370]

Mr. Browne: In compliance with ICAO requirements, the chip will hold a facial image of the passport holder. This facial image will be derived from the applicant's photo submitted at time of application and will be stored in accordance with ICAO and ISO standards.

Additional information will include that which is currently shown on the personal details page of the passport, namely name, nationality, date of birth, sex, place of birth, date of issue/expiry and passport number.

The chip will also contain a digital security signature to authenticate the encoded data and that the passport was issued by UK Passport Service.

Civil Servants

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether an estimate has been made of the potential efficiency savings of merging the Prison and Probation Services headquarters functions. [220393]

Paul Goggins: The new National Offender Management Service headquarters is being redesigned alongside the Prison Service and Probation Service headquarters. As part of this process, all directors are being asked to identify efficiency savings of around 20 per cent. of headcount by March 2007.

Correspondence

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letters from the right hon. Member for North-East Hampshire of 7 September, 11 November and 9 December 2004 regarding Mr. Roger Huxtable, ref M17775/4. [217497]

Ms Blears: A written reply has been issued to the right hon. Member for North-East Hampshire on 24 February.

Crime

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the recent statement by West Midlands police on the force's ability to detect crime. [218376]

Ms Blears: The sanction detections rate for West Midlands police was 25.0 per cent. in March 2004, which compares with a rate of 25.8 per cent. in March 2003. Despite this small decline in the sanction detections rate,, the West Midlands force continues to perform well when compared with their peer group of similar constabularies. The average sanction detections rate of the forces against whom the West Midlands force is compared was 20.5 per cent. in both March 2003 and March 2004.

The Government acknowledges the need to raise sanction detections performance across all police forces. For that reason, a major drive has been under way since last summer with the aim of achieving a significant increase in sanction detection rates. Provisional data for 2004–05 shows that this concerted effort has already resulted in performance improvements and we are hopeful that all forces, including the West Midlands, will benefit from this.

Criminal Justice

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which recommendations of the O'Dowd report remain unimplemented because of a need for *(a)* legislation, *(b)* developments in IT and *(c)* wide-ranging changes in the criminal justice system; and what steps are being taken to adopt these recommendations. [199634]

Ms Blears: The outstanding recommendations that require legislation are as follows:

To remove the bureaucracy concerned with producing documents at a police station.

To pass to local authorities responsibility for dealing with stray dogs and other animals.

To pass to local authorities responsibility for dealing with gaming and betting regulation.

To pass to local authorities responsibility for dealing with abandoned non-stolen vehicles.

The outstanding recommendations that require developments in information technology are as follows:

To rollout NSPIS Custody and Case applications.

To make best use of remote access to information.

To implement biometric facial technology.

The outstanding recommendations that require wide-ranging changes in the criminal justice system are as follows:

To improve the court listing process.

To address blockages in the criminal justice system.

Good progress has already been made and we are working closely with the police and key stakeholders to deliver each of these recommendations as soon as practicable.

Cycling Offences

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions for cycling on the pavement there have been in *(a)* the London borough of Enfield, *(b)* Greater London and *(c)* England and Wales in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [220829]

Ms Blears: The number of convictions for cycling on the footpath (pavement) in the London borough of Enfield, Greater London and England and Wales, 1999–2003 is provided in the table.

Statistics on convictions for 2004 will be published in the autumn.

Number of persons convicted at magistrates courts for riding a bicycle on the footpath (pavement), 1999–2003[1]

Offence description	*Principal statute*		*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Riding on footpath	Highways Act 1835 Sec. 72; (as amended by Local Government Act 1888 S. 85(1) the Statute Law Revision (No. 2) Act 1888, Highways Act 1959 Sch. 25, Criminal Justice Acy 1967, 3rd Sch. and Criminal Justice Act 1982, ss 39 and 46 and Sch. 3); Metropolitan police Act, 1839, Sec. 54(7) and Byelaws	London borough of Enfield	—	—	1	—	—
		Greater London	37	9	9	9	7
		England and Wales	323	171	112	79	82

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Dispersal Orders

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many dispersal orders have been made in the Metropolitan police area; and what assessment he has made of their effects on reducing *(a)* antisocial behaviour and *(b)* criminal offences in each zone. [218518]

Ms Blears: The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police tells me that, between January and December 2004, the Metropolitan police authorised 61 dispersal areas under section 30 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. In these areas 3,312 people were dispersed and 149 young people under the age of 16 were taken home.

It is too early to draw firm conclusions but the Metropolitan police believe them to be an effective tool to tackle instances of antisocial behaviour. The Metropolitan police and local authorities are conducting their own evaluations of the use of the power in their areas and will be reviewing their findings on a case-by-case basis in order to identify good practice.

Fixed Penalty Notices

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 113–14W, on fixed penalty notices, how many of each of the categories of fixed penalty notices have been collected. [220585]

Ms Blears: The table gives the number of notices issued, by offence, by Essex police in 2004, to the end of November, with the proportion of notices notified to the Home Office as being paid.

If penalties are unpaid and a court hearing not requested within 21 days then a fine will be registered against the recipient of the penalty notice. The fine will then be enforced by the courts in the same way as any other fine. The Department for Constitutional Affairs has been taking action to significantly improve the collection of fines. The fine payment rate for the last quarter of 2004 was 80 per cent.

Penalty notices for disorder issued in Essex from January to November 2004[1]*, and percentage paid, by offence*[2]

Offence	*Number issued*	*Percentage paid*
Breach of fireworks curfew	1	100
Causing harassment, alarm or distress	1,651	61
Consume alcohol in designated public place	8	13
Destroying/damaging property (max £500)	31	68
Drunk and disorderly	683	58
Drunk in highway	24	58
Knowingly giving false alarm	1	0

Penalty notices for disorder issued in Essex from January to November 2004[1], and percentage paid, by offence[2]

Offence	Number issued	Percentage paid
Possession by under 18 of adult firework	2	100
Possession of Category 4 firework	1	0
Purchase of alcohol in bar in licensed premises for person under 18	—	—
Sending false messages	10	40
Theft (retail under £200)	54	52
Throwing fireworks	5	60
Throwing stones at a train	2	50
Trespassing on a railway	11	45
Wasting police time	36	56
Total	2,520	60

[1] Figures have risen since 24 January due to receipt of late returns.
[2] Provisional figures.

Knives

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions for offences relating to knives and swords there have been in courts in (i) York, (ii) North Yorkshire police force area and (iii) England in each year since 1995. [220530]

Paul Goggins: The available information contained in the table gives the number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences where a bladed article is mentioned in the offence description, at: York petty sessional area, North Yorkshire police force area and England 1995 to 2003.

Number of defendants proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts for offences related to "bladed articles" 1995 to 2003[1]

	Having an article with a blade or point in a public place		Having an article with a blade or point on school premises		Selling a bladed article to a person under 16 years of age	
Location/Year	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Proceeded against	Found guilty	Proceeded against	Found guilty
York petty sessional area[2]						
1995	13	10	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	20	14	—	—	—	—
1997	23	17	—	—	—	—
1998	17	17	1	1	—	—
1999	17	15	—	—	—	—
2000	22	15	—	—	—	—
2001	27	13	—	—	—	—
2002	29	23	—	—	—	—
2003	28	20	—	—	—	—
North Yorkshire police force area						
1995	26	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	37	25	—	—	—	—
1997	47	37	—	—	—	—
1998	37	32	2	2	—	—
1999	52	45	—	—	—	—
2000	54	33	—	—	—	—
2001	64	45	—	—	—	—
2002	65	52	—	—	—	—
2003	63	50	—	—	3	3
England						
1995	3,338	2,465	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1996	3,429	2,563	17	12	2	2
1997	4,255	3,186	23	19	2	2
1998	4,614	3,595	20	16	2	2
1999[3]	4,297	3,323	9	8	3	2
2000[3]	4,388	3,339	18	17	—	—
2001[3]	5,493	4,104	22	22	9	8
2002[3]	6,539	5,027	20	17	11	10
2003[3]	6,535	5,077	25	29	17	17

n/a = Not applicable (These offences only became identifiable on the Home Office Court Proceedings database in 1996).
[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Includes convictions at the Crown Court where York PSA was the committing court.
[3] Excludes prosecution and conviction data for West Mercia police force area due to coding errors.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many knife-related assaults were recorded in 2004 in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East constituency. [220655]

Ms Blears: The information is not collected centrally. The number of assaults involving the use of a knife cannot be separately identified in the recorded crime statistics.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department is making with the proposed introduction of the National Offender Management Service. [221250]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) became operational on 1 June 2004 with Martin Narey as Chief Executive. Since then a National Offender Manager and 10 Regional Offender Managers have been appointed. Together they are taking forward

the development of offender management in their areas, drawing on emerging good practice and what we have already learnt from the offender management pilots in the north-west. A re-design of NOMS headquarters, to reflect these changes, will be in place by 1 April 2005. Further work is also being taken forward to develop contestability and to determine what organisational design might best suit the service's future needs.

Offences

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were *(a)* arrested, *(b)* charged and *(c)* convicted of offences in the United Kingdom between 11 September 2001 and 31 December 2004. [219457]

Ms Blears: Within England and Wales information on arrests collected centrally is based on persons arrested for 'notifiable' offences. Data are collected for quarterly periods only and the figures in the table are therefore from October 2001.

Statistics on defendants charged in England and Wales are not collected centrally. The available information from the Home Office Court Proceedings database gives the number of defendants proceeded against at the magistrates and convicted at all courts. The figures given in the table are for notifiable offences from October 2001 onwards, for comparability with the arrest figures. Figures for 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

Information for Scotland and Northern Ireland are a matter for, respectively, the Scottish Executive and the Northern Ireland Office.

Persons arrested, prosecuted or convicted for 'notifiable' offences, England and Wales

Period	Number Arrests	Prosecutions[1]	Convictions[1]
October 2001 to December 2003	2,942,900	1,432,511	946,699
October 2001 to March 2004	3,280,600	n/a	n/a

n/a = not available

[1] Information up to December 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

Parliamentary Questions

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the questions tabled by the hon. Member for Meriden on 10 January, references 207956 and 207957. [219541]

Ms Blears: The questions were answered on 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 734–36W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the question, reference 201648, tabled for answer on 1 December 2004. [219727]

Paul Goggins: I replied to the hon. Member on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1483W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the question, reference 202240, tabled for answer on 6 December 2004. [219728]

Paul Goggins: I replied to the hon. Member on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1612W.

Parole

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those eligible for parole were *(a)* granted parole and *(b)* broke the conditions of parole in each year since 1997. [221468]

Paul Goggins: The number of determinate cases considered by the Parole Board and recommended for parole in each year since 1997 has been published in table 10.4 of the publication "Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003". The number of persons recalled from parole from determinate sentences has been published in table 10.8 of the same volume. A copy of the publication is available in the Library.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* England and Wales were eligible for parole in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [221469]

Paul Goggins: The number of determinate sentence parole reviews in *(a)* Essex prisons and *(b)* England and Wales, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system, is provided in the table.

Determinate sentence parole reviews[1], 1997–98 to 2003–04

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
England and Wales							
Eligible	5,895	6,883	7,266	6,662	6,640	7,032	7,005
Existing prisoners	535	271	112	57	34	19	10
DCR prisoners	5,360	6,612	7,154	6,605	6,606	7,013	6,995
Essex prisons							
Eligible	18	23	16	22	19	21	28
Existing prisoners	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
DCR prisoners	18	22	16	22	19	21	28

[1] Including prisoners who declined consideration.

Police

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the change in the rate of stop and searches of people of Asian origin since 2001. [218617]

Ms Blears: For the period 2001–02 to 2003–04 the year on year change in the rate of people of Asian origin stopped and searched in England and Wales per 1,000 population aged 10 and over is as follows.

Percentage

	2001–02 to 2002–03	*2002–03 to 2003–04*
Section 1 PACE 1984	+35.2	-8.6
Section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994	+60.0	-18.6
Section 44 Terrorism Act 2000	+366.7	+21.4

Source:

Research, Development and Statistics—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

The Government are committed to reducing disproportionality and increasing the confidence that the black and minority ethnic community has in the way the police use stop and search. In order to benefit as much as possible from the input of communities an independent Community Panel chaired by Lord Victor Adebowale was established in December 2004. The Community Panel provides advice to SSAT and the Delivery Board on the race and community impact of their work programme, and also acts as a scrutiny for their work.

Police (Child Abuse)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the Government will enforce the Association of Chief Police Officers' guidance on anonymity for individuals accused of child abuse by the media. [219315]

Ms Blears: The Association of Chief Police Officers has issued revised guidance to all police forces making it absolutely clear that anyone under investigation but not charged should not be named, and no details should be provided to the press that might lead to their identification before they are charged. This applies to all offences, not just sexual abuse. It would be a serious disciplinary matter if any police officers were to transgress that guidance.

The Press Complaints Commission also has safeguards in place against the publication of inaccurate or misleading information. The Press Complaints Commission guidance is enforced through complaints to the Commission about press reporting that breaches the Code. The Interdepartmental Ministerial Group on Sexual Offending will examine the impact of the revised guidance after May 2005, when the Sexual Offences Act 2003 will have been in operation for 12 months.

Police Community Consultative Group

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend is of police (i) attendance and (ii) administration of police/community forums in each year since 1997. [220557]

Ms Blears: The Chief Constable of Essex police informs me that the cost of running Police Community Consultative Group (PCCG) meetings in Essex since 1997 is as set out in the table.

Administration costs of Police Consultative Community Groups in Essex

	(£)
1997–98	18,100
1998–99	18,600
1999–2000	18,800
2000–01	19,900
2001–02	21,000
2002–03	21,100
2003–04	22,200
2004–05	21,700

These figures relate to expenditure for room hire and salaries for relevant administrative staff. Records are not kept of the costs of operational officers and staff attending PCCG meetings as part of their normal duties.

Costs are not available at Basic Command Unit level.

Police (Kent)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers and *(b)* police community support officers were employed in the North Kent Division of Kent Police in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [221099]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March for each year. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002 and is set out in the table. The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Mr. Michael Fuller) and within the North Kent Division deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Information on the number of community support officers (CSOs) has been provided by the chief constable. The first CSOs were deployed to North Kent in 2002–03. The information provided for CSOs is also set out in the following table.

North Kent division

As at 31 March	*Number of police officers*[1]	*Number of community support officers*
2002	342	Not applicable
2003	363	2
2004	399	8
2005	Not available	17

Source:

[1] Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate for 2003 onwards. March 2002 data was collected by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary.

The number of police officers deployed to the North Kent division has increased by 57 officers, or by nearly 17 per cent., since March 2002. The increase in the number of police officers for North Kent has significantly exceeded the overall increase in police officer numbers for the Kent police of 7 per cent. for the same period (March 2002 to March 2004).

Police Finance

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total amount held for each police authority in England in reserves or balances for

(a) capital and *(b)* revenue was in (i) 2001–02, (ii) 2002–03 and (iii) 2003–04; and what the figures were as a percentage of annual expenditure. [211450]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 27 January 2005]:* Available information on revenue reserves, which include balances, has been placed in the Library. Details of capital reserves could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he has taken to ensure the accuracy of data used in the calculation of grant entitlements for Derbyshire Police Authority for the financial year 2005–06. [213230]

Ms Blears: The data used in the calculation of grant entitlements come from a variety of different sources and the validation of data varies accordingly.

In many cases, data providers, such as the Office for National Statistics, will undertake validation. The Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) checks data used in the calculation of grant entitlement as part of the wider local government finance settlement calculations by comparing supplied data year on year. Where appropriate, ODPM then queries any anomalies with the Department or body responsible for supplying the data.

All data used is provided as part of the local government finance consultation.

Police Funding

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the level of police funding per head of population has been for *(a)* Greater Manchester and *(b)* Dorset in each year from 1998–99. [205408]

Ms Blears: I refer the right hon. Member to the reply I gave on 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1008W, to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman).

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which police forces in England and Wales are receiving funding *(a)* above the formula funding level, *(b)* at the formula funding level and *(c)* below the formula funding level; and what action he is taking to ensure that all forces receive funding in line with the formula. [220396]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* Government funding for police authorities is chiefly allocated using a funding formula that distributes resources on the basis of relative need and resources. A damping mechanism subsequently applied to protect all authorities against financial instability ensures all authorities receive an increase in grant at least equal to the "floor" level on a like-for-like basis year-on-year. Grant floors are an integral part of the finance system.

In 2005–06, every police authority will receive the amount of grant to which it is entitled under "The Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2005/06", "The Local Government Finance Report (England) 2005/06", and "The Local Government Finance Report No 2 2005/06" for Wales.

In 2004–05, all police authorities received a grant increase around 3.25 per cent. For 2005–06 it has been possible to reintroduce recognition of relative need, and grant increases range from the floor of 3.75 per cent. to 6.81 per cent. Grant provisions before and after damping are given in the following table.

We are currently reviewing the funding formulae and will be consulting local authorities during the summer of 2005 on the formulae for the 2006–07 settlement.

£ million

Police authority	*2005–06 allocation: Before damping*[1]	*After damping*[1]	*Effect of damping*
Surrey	77.2	91.5	14.3
Essex	153.3	167.0	13.6
Sussex	152.1	164.0	11.9
Kent	177.9	189.5	11.5
South Wales[3]	165.1	174.5	9.5
Hampshire	192.7	197.7	4.9
Hertfordshire	104.1	108.8	4.7
Dorset	61.8	66.0	4.2
Thames Valley	216.5	220.6	4.1
North Yorkshire	72.6	75.4	2.9
West Mercia	109.3	111.8	2.5
Staffordshire	111.0	113.3	2.3
Merseyside	255.6	257.7	2.1
North Wales[3]	76.3	78.3	1.9
Devon and Cornwall	171.2	173.0	1.8
South Yorkshire	184.1	185.7	1.6
Derbyshire	103.7	105.0	1.3
Dyfed-Powys[3]	51.0	52.2	1.3
Gloucestershire	59.8	61.1	1.3
Gwent[3]	72.9	74.1	1.2
Wiltshire	61.7	62.9	1.2
Cumbria	61.0	62.1	1.1
Durham	86.9	87.8	0.9
Suffolk	67.6	68.5	0.8
Humberside	118.2	118.9	0.7
Cheshire	110.8	111.3	0.4
Norfolk	86.0	85.9	-0.2
Warwickshire	52.0	51.8	-0.2
Nottinghamshire	133.9	133.3	-0.5
Bedfordshire	65.7	65.1	-0.6
Lincolnshire	64.0	63.4	-0.6
Cleveland	91.9	90.9	-1.0
Lancashire	192.1	190.8	-1.3
Northamptonshire	69.2	67.8	-1.4
Leicestershire	109.8	107.7	-2.1
Avon and Somerset	172.2	170.0	-2.2
Cambridgeshire	80.1	77.9	-2.2
Northumbria	235.4	232.2	-3.2
West Yorkshire	318.3	313.6	-4.6
Greater Manchester	418.3	412.5	-5.8
West Midlands	442.3	426.5	-15.8
GLA—Police	1976.3	1927.8	-48.5

[1] Rounded to the nearest £100,000. Calculated using the Police Funding Formula 2005–06.

[2] Rounded to the nearest £100,000. Calculated under the Police Grant Report (England and Wales), the Local Government Finance Report (England) and The Local Government Finance Report No 2 for Wales. Figures include the effects of floor damping.

[3] Because the Welsh Assembly does not use the grant damping mechanism ('funding floor and ceiling'), the Secretary has for several years provided additional funding to ensure Welsh police authorities receive at least a minimum increase in grant in line with English authorities. A total of £13.9 million will be allocated to Welsh police authorities in 2005–06 to bring their allocations in line with the grant floor level.

[4] Figures for the City of London Police are excluded because these are allocated to the Common Council of the City of London as a whole in respect of all its functions. The City is grouped with Education Authorities for grant damping purposes.

Police Officers' Families (Crime Investigations)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidelines are given to police authorities on conducting investigations into crimes when a member of a police officer's family is being questioned concerning the incident. [219433]

Ms Blears: There are no specific guidelines given to police authorities regarding investigations into crimes involving members of a police officer's family. Police authorities are responsible for ensuring an effective and efficient police service in the UK and any investigation into a criminal offence would be dealt with by the force in question as an operational matter. Each police force is required to act within statute and any deviation from this could result in disciplinary proceedings. If however the member of the police officer's family, who is being questioned, is an officer themselves then there are internal police regulations which would be followed.

Prisons

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are estimated to suffer from mental health problems in prisons in England and Wales. [208839]

Paul Goggins: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) undertook a survey of mental ill health in the prison population of England and Wales in 1997. A copy of the survey is available on the ONS website at www.statistics.gov.uk.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to amend Prison Service Order 1170 in the light of the decision in Regina (on behalf of the Howard League for Penal Reform) *v.* Secretary of State for the Home Department. [218215]

Paul Goggins: I have confirmed that this question relates to Prison Service Order 1700 which deals with the segregation of prisoners for reasons of good order or discipline or at the prisoner's own request, and that the court case is that of 'SP', a female juvenile trainee.

Following the judgment delivered on 23 June 2004 in the case by Mr. Justice Jack, and pending the appeal to the Court of Appeal, the Prison Service issued guidance on 23 September 2004 to Governors requiring them to comply with the Court's decision, that, where circumstances allow, juveniles should be given the opportunity to make representations against segregation before being segregated.

(The Court of Appeal upheld Mr. Justice Jack's judgment. The Prison Service will amend Prison Service Order 1700 to reflect the interim guidance already issued).

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the In Use Certified National Accommodation was changed in January 2005 at *(a)* HMP Edmunds Hill, *(b)* HMP Bullwood Hall, *(c)* HMP Dovegate, *(d)* HMP Dover, *(e)* HMP Foston Hall, *(f)* HMP Highdown, *(g)* HMP Hindley, *(h)* HMP Holloway, *(i)* HMP Liverpool, *(j)* HMP Northallerton, *(k)* HMP Onley, *(l)* HMP Pentonville and *(m)* HMP Wetherby; and if he will make a statement. [220487]

Paul Goggins: Changes to prison capacity occur on a regular basis as, for example, prison wings are taken out of use for maintenance or refurbishment and later brought back into service. In January 2005, action was taken to reduce overcrowding in particular establishments, and we reduced the overall operational capacity of the estate by taking some accommodation due for refurbishment out of use slightly earlier than planned. The changes to In Use certified normal accommodation (CNA[1]) recorded in January at each of the prisons listed were:

[1] In Use CNA is the uncrowded capacity of the estate after adjusting for accommodation that is out of use.

Prison	*Change to In Use CNA and reason for change*
Edmunds Hill	Reduced by 148 places when the function of the prison was changed from female to male. Three of the accommodation units are out of use, but can be brought into use when required.
Bullwood Hall	Reduced by 13 places while E-wing is temporarily used to house the education department.
Dovegate	Reduced by 58 places to correct an error on the cell certificate.
Dover[1]	Reduced by 55 places while the Romney Unit is refurbished.
Foston Hall	Reduced by 44 places as a surplus of capacity in the female estate enabled D-wing to be temporarily taken out of use as an economy measure.
Highdown	Reduced by 16 places for electrical rewiring programme.
Hindley	Reduced by 82 while A-wing is refurbished.
Holloway	Reduced by 20 while the DO unit is refurbished.
Liverpool	Reduced by 18 while general refurbishment takes place.
Northallerton	Reduced by 75 while accommodation is repaired following storm damage.
Onley	Reduced by 60 while B-wing is refurbished as part of a rolling programme.
Pentonville	Reduced by 21 while R-wing is refurbished.
Wetherby	Reduced by 10 for a small rolling refurbishment programme.

[1] Dover is an immigration removal centre managed by the Prison Service on behalf of the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what financial saving will be made by moving control of privately run prisons from Her Majesty's Prison Service to the Correctional Services Unit in the Home Office. [221147]

Paul Goggins: The cost of establishing the Office for Contracted Prisons, part of the Home Office, to oversee the operation of private prisons, was broadly cost neutral. Better contract and operational management have resulted in improved service delivery.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason control of privately run prisons moved from Her Majesty's Prison Service to the Corrections Services Unit within the Home Office. [221148]

Paul Goggins: Responsibility for the control of private prisons transferred to the Office for Contracted Prisons in May 2003 as part of the move to create a single correctional service. By doing so it created increased consistency and transparency of custodial services provided by the public and private sectors.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the cost of moving control of privately run prisons from Her Majesty's Prison Service to the Correction Services Unit within the Home Office. [221149]

Paul Goggins: The transfer of control of private prisons to the Office for Contracted Prisons in May 2003 was broadly cost neutral. Controller costs were transferred without change. Operating costs of OCP HQ were offset by compensatory savings in the public sector Prison Service.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes were made to *(a)* the baseline Certified National Accommodation (CNA), *(b)* in use CNA and *(c)* operational capacity at (i) HMP Wolds, (ii) HMP Altcourse, (iii) HMP Forest Bank and (iv) HMP Lowdham Grange in January; and if he will make a statement. [221156]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* Changes to prison capacity occur on a regular basis as, for example, prison wings are taken out of use for maintenance or refurbishment and later brought back into service. In January 2005, action was taken to reduce overcrowding in particular establishments, and we reduced the overall operational capacity of the estate by taking some accommodation due for refurbishment out of use slightly earlier than planned. Details of the reasons for changes in operational capacity, baseline CNA, and In-use CNA are given in the table.

Establishment	*Reasons for changes in Baseline Certified Normal Accommodation (CNA), In-use CNA, and Operational Capacity*
Wolds	Operational capacity reduced by 10 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels. An increase of 20 in both baseline and in use CNA G wing coming into use.
Altcourse	Operational capacity reduced by 121 places due to temporary reduction in overcrowding levels. No change in baseline or in use CNA.
Forest Bank	Operational capacity reduced by 24 places due to temporary reduction in overcrowding levels. No change in baseline or in use CNA.
Lowdham Grange	Operation capacity reduced by 24 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels. No change in baseline or in use CNA.

Note:
Operational capacity is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold without serious risk to good order, security and the proper running of the planned regime. Baseline CNA is the sum total of all certified accommodation in an establishment except, cells in punishment or segregation units, healthcare cells or rooms in training prisons and YOIs that are not routinely used to accommodate long stay patients. In-use CNA is baseline CNA less those places not available for immediate use, for example: damaged cells, cells affected by building works, and cells taken out of use due to staff shortages

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the operational capacity was changed in January at *(a)* HMP Edmunds Hill, *(b)* HMP Northallerton, *(c)* HMP Altcourse, *(d)* HMP Hindley, *(e)* HMP Rye Hill, *(f)* HMP Onley, *(g)* HMP Dovegate, *(h)* HMP Dover, *(i)* HMP Mount, *(j)* HMP Foston Hall, *(k)* HMP Liverpool, *(l)* HMP Forest Bank, *(m)* HMP Lowdham Grange, *(n)* HMP Holloway, *(o)* HMP Pentonville, *(p)* HMP Bullwood Hall, *(q)* HMP Highdown, *(r)* HMP Wetherby and *(s)* HMP Wolds; and if he will make a statement. [221157]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* Changes to prison capacity occur on a regular basis as, for example, prison wings are taken out of use for maintenance or refurbishment and later brought back into service. In January 2005, action was taken to reduce overcrowding in particular establishments, and we reduced the overall operational capacity of the estate by taking some accommodation due for refurbishment out of use slightly earlier than planned. Details of the reasons for changes in operational capacity are given in the following table.

Establishment	*Reason for change in operational capacity*
Edmunds Hill	Reduced by 150 places when the function of was changed from a female to male prison in January 2005. Accommodation units 1, 2 and 3 will be brought into use as required.
Northallerton	Reduced by 128 places while accommodation is being repaired following storm damage.
Altcourse	Reduced by 121 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Hindley	Reduced by 82 places while A-wing is refurbished.
Rye Hill	Reduced by 64 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Onley	Reduced by 60 places while B-wing is refurbished as part of a rolling programme. A rolling programme of wing refurbishment is in progress.
Dovegate	Reduced by 58 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Dover[1]	Reduced by 55 places while Romney unit is refurbished.
Mount	Reduced by 52 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Foston Hall	Reduced by 51 places as a surplus of capacity in the female estate enabled D-wing has been temporarily taken out of use as an economy measure.
Liverpool	Reduced by 35 places while general refurbishment work takes place.
Forest Bank	Reduced by 24 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Lowdham Grange	Reduced by 24 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.
Holloway	Reduced by 18 places while DO unit is refurbished.
Pentonville	Reduced by 16 places while R-wing is refurbished.
Bullwood Hall	Reduced by 13 places while E-wing is temporarily used to house the education department.

Establishment	*Reason for change in operational capacity*
Highdown	Reduced by 11 places for electrical rewiring programme.
Wetherby	Reduced by 10 places for a small rolling refurbishment programme.
Wolds	Reduced by 10 places due to a temporary reduction in overcrowding levels.

[1] Dover is an immigration removal centre managed by the Prison Service on behalf of the Home Office's Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

Note:
Operational capacity is the total number of prisoners that an establishment can hold without serious risk to good order, security and the proper running of the planned regime.

Probation Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff in the National Probation Service are absent from work through stress or stress-related illness; and from what grades. [221255]

Paul Goggins: Stress-related absence is not currently recorded separately across the 42 employing Boards, but a requirement to record stress-related absence will be introduced in the near future.

The National Probation Directorate, through its National Health and Safety Forum that comprises employers, trade unions and subject experts, has just issued a national policy in reduction of stress that conforms to the Health and Safety Executive standards.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether work being undertaken on the Probation Workload Management Tool in the National Probation Service will be incorporated into the requirements for the National Offender Management Information Systems (NOMIS) programme. [221256]

Paul Goggins: An independent OGC consultant is currently reviewing the business case for the Workload Measurement Tool Project. His conclusions will inform decisions about the future of the project, including if and how the work can be incorporated into the National Offender Management Information System programme.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probation officers were dismissed in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* England and Wales in each year since 1997. [221467]

Paul Goggins: Information on reasons for leaving, including dismissals, is not currently recorded separately across the 42 employing Boards. The content of and process for collecting workforce information centrally is currently under review and will be amended in the near future.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether performance by the National Probation Service against its performance measure on compliance with orders improved *(a)* during 2003–04 and *(b)* between April and September 2004. [203408]

Paul Goggins: The level of compliance with orders was 56 per cent. in April 2003, rising to 58 per cent. in June 2003. Cumulatively for 2003–04 a figure of 56 per cent. was achieved. Compliance improved in the period April to September 2004, reaching 61 per cent. in July 2004 alone and 59 per cent. cumulatively for the six-month period.

The monthly and cumulative figures for the two periods are set out in tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: 2003–04

Month	*Compliance: Orders only (percentage)*
April 2003	56
May 2003	54
June 2003	53
July 2003	58
August 2003	56
September 2003	55
October 2003	57
November 2003	55
December 2003	56
January 2004	56
February 2004	57
March 2004	56
Total	56

Table 2: 2004–05 (April-September)

Month	*Compliance: Orders only (percentage)*
April 2004	57
May 2004	59
June 2004	59
July 2004	61
August 2004	58
September 2004	58
Total	59

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the £300 million that has been allocated centrally to the Probation Service for 2005–06 will be spent. [220351]

Paul Goggins: The £300 million not included in Probation Boards' main resource allocations is being spent as follows:

	£ million
Electronic monitoring	79
Approved premises	54
Training Probation Officers	57
Special allocations to probation boards	39
Information Technology and Estates	36
National Probation Directorate Staffing	15
Other central probation costs (new developments, research, loan charges, etc.)	45
Total	325

Securities Industry Authority

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for accreditation under the Securities Industry Act have

(a) been received and *(b)* processed by the Securities Industry Authority; what estimates have been made of the number of accredited door staff which are required by the leisure industry; and what assessment has been made of whether it will be necessary to extend the final implementation date of the scheme. [219053]

Ms Blears: The total number of applications for Security Industry Authority (SIA) door supervisor licenses to date is 22,729. Of these, 18,893 have been accepted by the SIA and have been or are being processed.

It is difficult to obtain a totally reliable estimate of the number of door supervisors required by the leisure industry; current SIA estimates, based on information supplied by the police and local authorities place the figure at 46,000.

There are currently no plans to extend the final implementation date.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are in place to audit the performance of the Security Industry Authority; and if he will make a statement. [218717]

Ms Blears: The Comptroller and Auditor General was appointed as the external auditor to the Security Industry Authority by virtue of the Private Security Industry Act 2001, schedule 1 16(4).

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers the Security Industry Authority has available to ensure that the 20 March 2006 deadline for the licensing of security personnel is met; what powers it has to assist the police in ensuring that the deadline is met; and what plans he has to grant additional powers to the authority in this respect. [218729]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 28 February 2005]:* The licensing of individuals who work as manned guards in the private security industry is due to commence shortly. Regional Security Industry Authority (SIA) investigators will work collaboratively with police and local authorities, managing and sharing intelligence information to ensure that maximum compliance is met by the 20 March 2006 deadline.

From that date anyone operating as a manned guard in the private security industry in England and Wales without a licence could face a range of penalties from a formal warning to prosecution.

No additional powers will be granted to the SIA in this respect at this time.

Security Expenditure (Islington)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will provide a breakdown of expenditure on *(a)* policing, *(b)* crime prevention and *(c)* local security measures per capita in the borough of Islington for each year since 1996–97; and what contribution was made by the London borough of Islington. [206335]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 December 2004]:* The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis informs me that the policing budget per capita in Islington borough Operational Command Unit (BOCU) was as follows.

	Budget per capita in Islington BOCU[1] (£)
1999–2000[2]	127
2000–01	129
2001–02	134
2002–03	146
2003–04	176
2004–05	188

[1] 2001 Census population estimate of 175,797 people in the London borough of Islington.
[2] No earlier information is available due to a change in the force's financial system.

The figures reflect direct operational costs. In addition, BOCUs are able to call upon all-London units (such as dog sections, Territorial Support Group, Traffic and Air Support Units) when operational priorities dictate.

I understand that expenditure on crime prevention and local security measures per capita and details of the contribution made by London borough of Islington are not available.

Special Constables

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables there were in each London borough on 1 January in each of the last six years. [212376]

Ms Blears: The data requested has been collected centrally only since March 2003. The information is shown in the following table.

MET BCUs	*2002-03*	*2003-04*
Barking and Dagenham	14	14
Barnet	41	38
Bexley	27	74
Brent	28	29
Bromley	14	12
Camden	21	28
Central Services	18	18
City of Westminster	64	85
Croydon	23	17
Ealing	16	21
Enfield	25	20
Greenwich	16	17
Hackney	13	12
Hammersmith and Fulham	18	20
Haringey	12	13
Harrow	16	13
Havering	26	29
Heathrow	9	7
Hillingdon	19	15
Hounslow	20	18
Islington	35	39
Kensington and Chelsea	15	14
Kingston upon Thames	16	15
Lambeth	21	20
Lewisham	14	13
Merton	17	17
Newham	18	16
Redbridge	19	17
Richmond upon Thames	21	19
Southwark	17	18
Sutton	7	6
Tower Hamlets	14	17
Waltham Forest	19	16
Wandsworth	19	15

MET BCUs	2002-03	2003-04
City of London BCUs		
Bishopsgate	20	28
Central Services	1	2
Snowhill	21	24

Stolen Vehicles

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in implementing the recommendation of the Association of Chief Police Officers that all forces introduce a Managed Vehicle Recovery and Storage Scheme to aid the recovery of stolen vehicles. [218241]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 25 February 2005]:* Since 1992 most police forces have developed contract schemes on the lines suggested by a review undertaken by the Association of Chief Police Officers Traffic Committee Working Group in that year. These externally managed police vehicle recovery schemes appear to have been working effectively.

Surrey Police

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many people are employed in the corporate development and human resources department of Surrey police; [208784]

(2) how much was spent on salaries for the corporate development and human resources department of Surrey police in financial year 2003–04. [208785]

Ms Blears: This is a matter for the chief constable of the Surrey police and I have notified him of hon. Members questions.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce domestic burglary by 25 per cent. from 1998–99 levels by 2005 will be met; [219102]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to increase significantly the proportion of time spent by police forces on frontline duties; [219106]

(3) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve the delivery of justice in all Criminal Justice System areas, with a greater increase in the worst performing areas. [219109]

Ms Blears: Performance against the Home Department's targets is published in the annual report and the autumn performance report available at the House Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve the performance of all police forces. [219104]

Ms Blears: Performance against the Department's targets is published in the annual report and the autumn performance report available in the Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to increase the level of confidence in the criminal justice system within ethnic communities; [219112]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to increase the satisfaction of victims and witnesses with the criminal justice system; [219113]

(3) whether the public service agreement target to maintain the current low rate of prisoner escapes, including category A escapes has been met; [219117]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce re-offending by young offenders by 5 per cent; [219114]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce re-offending by adults sentenced to imprisonment by 5 per cent.; [219115]

(6) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce re-offending by adults sentenced to community sentences by 5 per cent. [219116]

Paul Goggins: Performance against the Home Department's targets is published in the annual report and the autumn performance report available in the Library and on the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce the harm caused by drugs; [219118]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce the use of class A drugs; [219119]

(3) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce the frequent use of any illicit drug among all young people under the age of 25 years; [219120]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce the use of illicit drugs by vulnerable young people; [219121]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce drug-related crime. [219122]

Caroline Flint: Performance against my Department's targets is published in the annual report and the autumn performance report available at the House Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Text Message Intercepts

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the security services have the ability to read the content of text messages sent by mobile telecommunications devices belonging to private individuals. [221718]

Ms Blears: It is the long-standing policy of successive governments to neither confirm nor deny the activities of the intelligence and security agencies.

Transsexual Prisoners

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 368–69W, on transsexual prisoners, when his Department will publish guidelines on the treatment of transsexual prisoners. [221975]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service hopes to publish these guidelines in late spring or early summer 2005.

Vehicle Checks

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances the police may stop vehicles for random checks. [220526]

Ms Blears: The police have a general power to stop motorists under section 163, Road Traffic Act 1988. This provides that a person driving a motor vehicle on a road must stop the vehicle on being instructed to do so by a police constable in uniform. The legislation does not require the officer to suspect an offence of any kind and the officer is not under a duty to give a reason for stopping the vehicle.

Once a vehicle has stopped, it is a matter for the police officer concerned to decide what checks are appropriate and, where a specific statutory authority is needed for a particular check, to decide whether he has that authority.

The police also have a power under section 4, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to set up roadblocks for the purposes of detecting crime or finding witnesses to crime. Any inquiries/checks conducted at the roadblock must be carried out in accordance with PACE Code of Practice A.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of China over its treatment of the practitioners of Falun Gong, with particular reference to the treatment of *(a)* Mingli He and *(b)* Xingyan Wei; and if he will make a statement. [221283]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly raise our concerns about the mistreatment of Falun Gong adherents in detention. We put forward our concerns most recently at the last round of the UK/China Human Rights Dialogue, held in Beijing on 22 November 2004. We also included a number of Falun Gong prisoners on our list of individual cases of concern handed over as part of the dialogue.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials also raised concerns about the mistreatment of Falun Gong practitioners in detention with Wang Zuo'an, Deputy Director General of the State Administration for Religious Affairs during his visit to the UK in September 2004.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made representations to China regarding the fate of the people detained in Tiananmen Square at the opening of China's National People's Council. [221318]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave to him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 88W.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his *(a)* Russian and *(b)* Australian counterparts concerning the proposed lifting of the EU arms embargo on China with respect to the effects on (i) Chinese military capabilities, (ii) the political situation with regard to the Taiwan Strait and (iii) observance of human rights by the Chinese Government. [221358]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I have had no recent discussions with my Russian and Australian counterparts on the issue of the embargo.

We take every appropriate opportunity to convey to the Taiwanese authorities, through informal channels, and to the Chinese Government our strong opposition to the use of force or to any action that raises cross-Strait tensions.

We remain deeply concerned about human rights abuses in China and monitor the situation closely. We regularly raise our concerns with the Chinese Government.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Chinese Anti-secession Bill; what discussions he has had with his *(a)* Chinese, *(b)* Taiwanese, *(c)* European and *(d)* US counterparts regarding the Bill and its implications for the region; and if he will make a statement. [221973]

Mr. MacShane: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said today in response to the right hon. and learned Member for Devizes (Mr. Ancram) (UIN 221355), Ministers have taken a close interest in the development of China's Anti-Secession legislation. We have discussed it at both ministerial and official level with the Chinese, the US and other EU member states and institutions. Officials have discussed the issue through informal channels with the Taiwanese authorities.

The legislation enacted on 14 March is largely a codification of China's long-held position regarding Taiwan. The impact of the legislation will depend on the reaction of others and how China seeks to apply it.

Although the legislation refers to China's desire to resolve the issue peacefully, we are concerned that it makes reference to the possibility of the use of "non-peaceful means". We remain strongly opposed to the use of force.

The EU issued a Statement on 14 March appealing to both sides to avoid unilateral measures which might heighten tensions.

Colombia

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the government of Colombia regarding the death of Luis Eduardo Guerra and others at the San José de Apartadó Peace Community in Uraba. [221315]

Mr. Rammell: We are deeply shocked by the brutal killing of eight unarmed civilians. Our Embassy in Bogota has spoken to the judicial authorities and to Colombian Government representatives at the highest level to express our concerns regarding these killings. Luis Eduardo Guerra was a highly respected member of the Colombian NGO community and well known to our Embassy. I met him during my visit to Colombia in 2004. I welcome the Colombian Government's assurances that there will be an impartial, swift and effective investigation into these murders. Officials from the human rights unit in the Attorney-General's office, as well as forensic specialists and other officials, are in the area where the killings happened and are carrying out their investigation. This process includes interviews with members of the Peace Community, as well as all local army units, to try and establish the facts. We have also stressed to the Colombian authorities the need for proper protection to be given to witnesses of the crimes and of human rights defenders following the case. The Colombian authorities have assured us that such protection will be available to anyone who needs it. We continue to closely monitor the situation. Those responsible, whoever they may be, must be brought to justice.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to President Uribe of Colombia on *(a)* human rights issues and *(b)* the conduct of the Colombian Army. [221439]

Mr. Rammell: Human rights lie at the heart of our policy towards Colombia. We regularly raise with the Colombian Government specific human rights cases. Through our Embassy in Bogota, we monitor the human rights situation in Colombia, keeping in close contact with the Colombian authorities. I have highlighted the importance we attach to human rights with President Uribe and other senior Colombian officials during my visits to Colombia in 2003, 2004 and during my most recent visit last month. I reinforced this again when I met Defence Minister Uribe here in London on 11 February. We continue to urge the Colombian Government to implement all outstanding recommendations by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We have also made it plain that the armed forces must act in accordance with human rights and international humanitarian law, and have provided funding for training in these areas. Where members of the armed forces are proven to have committed human rights abuses they must be punished in accordance with the law. Impunity must not be allowed, a message we have also reiterated to the Colombians.

Company Standards

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what role the UN Norms on Business and Human Rights play in the setting of governance standards for UK and EU companies in domestic and global markets; and if he will make a statement on *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU position regarding the UN Norms. [221974]

Mr. MacShane: The recent report from the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) on business and human rights notes that the UN Norms have the status of a "draft proposal". Therefore, the draft Norms have no formal or legal role in setting governance standards for business. However, through the Business Leaders' Initiative on Human Rights (BLIHR), a number of multinational companies have been "road-testing" the draft Norms, using the content to inform their codes of practice. This process will continue until December 2006. In addition, the FTSE4Good benchmark takes the draft Norms into account in its assessment of companies' performance. And some potential investors consider the draft Norms in their requirement for "human rights impact assessments".

The UK continues to play a constructive role in the debate on corporate responsibility and human rights. While we see merit in clarifying minimum standards for business in relation to human rights, we believe, as does the OHCHR, that future action on this agenda should take into account the many codes and initiatives which exist in this field, rather than focussing exclusively on the draft Norms. These include the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, the International Labour Organisation Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the UN Global Compact.

The UK will be active at the forthcoming Commission on Human Rights in seeking to ensure proper follow-up to the OHCHR's report. We firmly believe that this exercise should listen to the views of all stakeholders.

Dependent Territories

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the status of each of the UK's overseas territories and Crown Dependencies will be under the EU Constitution. [221478]

Mr. MacShane: The status of the UK's overseas territories and Crown Dependencies would not change under the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what provisions are made for British overseas territories in the European Union Constitution. [221480]

Mr. MacShane: A number of provisions are made for the overseas countries and territories (OCT) of the UK and other EU member states in the EU Constitutional Treaty. Articles III-286 to III-291 in Title IV Part III of the Constitutional Treaty set out the provisions relative to the association of certain overseas countries and territories with the European Union. These articles closely follow Articles 182 to 188 of the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC). Annex II to the Constitutional Treaty contains the list of overseas countries and territories to which Title IV Part III of the Constitution applies. It is in substance the same as Annex II to the TEC.

The following UK Overseas Territories are listed in Annex II to the Constitutional Treaty: Anguilla, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory, British Indian Ocean Territory, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falklands Islands, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena and Dependencies, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands. Although listed as an OCT in the Annex, Bermuda has been excluded from successive Association instruments at its own request.

The geographical extent of the Union is set out in Article IV-440 of the Constitutional Treaty which corresponds to Article 299 of the TEC, with modifications to take account of successive accessions. Gibraltar is covered by paragraph 4 of Article IV-440, in substance the same as Article 299.4 TEC. Section 1, Title II of Protocol 8 to the Constitutional Treaty sets out the specific provisions relating to Gibraltar. These were originally incorporated in the UK's 1972 Act of Accession.

The Sovereign Base Areas are the subject of provisions set out in paragraph 6 *(b)* of Article IV-440 and Title III of Protocol 9 to the Constitutional Treaty. These provisions were originally set out in Article 299 6 *(b)* of the TEC and Protocol 3 to the 2003 Act of Accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what events he plans to attend during the next three months relating to the EU Constitution; and what meetings are planned during the next three months at which departmental Ministers will speak on the EU Constitution. [221377]

Mr. MacShane: I and ministerial colleagues will be making the case for the EU Constitutional Treaty at various public events over the next few months. As part of my series of UK regional visits as Europe Minister to discuss European matters with local audiences, I will be answering questions on a range of European issues, including the EU Constitutional Treaty.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with the Electoral Commission on the date for the referendum on the European Constitution. [221380]

Mr. MacShane: None.

European Union Bill

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reasons it was decided that a regulatory impact assessment was not needed for the European Union Bill. [221378]

Mr. MacShane: Paragraph 71 of the Explanatory Notes [Bill 45-EN] incorrectly states that no Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the EU Bill was needed. In fact an RIA was undertaken, and placed in the Library of the House and on the internet at www.europe.gov.uk on 25 January when the Bill was introduced. The RIA concluded that—as the Notes state—there will be no direct or indirect regulatory burdens on business, charities or the voluntary sector.

Gibraltar

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what actions his Department has taken to maintain a strong economy in Gibraltar. [221479]

Mr. MacShane: Economic development is a defined domestic matter for which the Government of Gibraltar is responsible.

Middle East

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had at the recent London meeting to support the Palestinian Authority on the impact of the separation barrier on water supplies and arable land. [221382]

Mr. Rammell: The focus of the London Meeting was to help the Palestinian leadership strengthen the institutions of the Palestinian Authority. The meeting saw the Palestinian Authority put forward detailed plans for institutional renewal in the fields of security, governance and economic development. The participants agreed that achievement of the objectives set out in the London Meeting would constitute a major step towards the Palestinian Authority achieving its Roadmap commitments. Participants also urged and expected Israel to deliver on its Roadmap commitments.

While we understand that Israel has a legitimate right to defend itself against terrorist attacks, construction of the barrier on Palestinian land is unlawful, creates a physical obstacle to the two-state solution, and causes unacceptable humanitarian hardship for many Palestinians. My right hon. Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean raised our continuing concerns over the barrier's route with the Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom on 3 March during her visit to Israel.

Nepal

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been made to the Government of Nepal on democratic constitutional government; and if he will make a statement. [221431]

Mr. Alexander: Following the takeover of power by the King on 1 February I summoned the Nepalese ambassador to express our grave concern at developments. I also issued a public statement in which I set out our concern that the King's actions would increase the risk of instability in Nepal and undermine the institutions of democracy and constitutional monarchy in the country. In that statement I called for the immediate restitution of multi-party democracy. A copy of my statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases. Our ambassador in Kathmandu raised these issues directly with the King in an audience on 8 February.

The UK also issued a statement with EU partners highlighting our concerns about restrictions on liberty and calling for human rights to be respected. With other EU member states' ambassadors our ambassador in Kathmandu also raised them with the new Nepalese Foreign Minister on 7 February.

Such is the level of our concern that on 14 February my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary recalled our ambassador in Nepal to London for consultations, following which we decided to withdraw a proposal, laid before Parliament in a minute of 20 January 2005, to gift a further tranche of military assistance to Nepal.

Our ambassador has now returned to Nepal and will be seeking an early audience with the King to encourage him again to restore fundamental rights and release party leaders from detention as a first step towards restoring democracy and democratic process.

Non-proliferation Treaty

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the members of the UK delegation to the Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York in May; and what statement of proposals the UK Government intend to table. [221430]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave him on 13 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 898W and 26 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 428W.

Nuclear Disarmament

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the nuclear weapons in the United Kingdom stockpile which have been *(a)* withdrawn from service and *(b)* dismantled, (i) unilaterally and (ii) as a result of multilateral negotiations pursuant to United Kingdom obligations under Article six of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. [221447]

Mr. MacShane: The UK has unilaterally withdrawn and dismantled all its nuclear weapons except those currently in service. We are the only nuclear weapon state to have reduced our capacity to one nuclear weapon system, Trident, and retain a stockpile of less than 200 operationally available warheads. There have been no multilateral negotiations to withdraw and dismantle nuclear weapons as part of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) process. However, alongside the important unilateral steps already referred to, we have pursued the practical steps agreed by States Parties to the Treaty for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT.

Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what ways gender issues are being incorporated into the work of the tri-departmental Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit. [221827]

Mr. Rammell: The Government recognise the positive and distinct contribution that women can make to post-conflict stabilisation. The new inter-departmental Post-Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) has been asked to develop a capacity to identify best practice in gender-related issues and to consider gender-sensitive approaches in its planning and deployment.

As part of its recent public consultation process, PCRU sought the advice of groups representing gender issues in conflict, including Widows for Peace and Democracy and Women Waging Peace. PCRU will now produce a report drawing together the results of the public consultation which will show how contributions, including those on gender, have shaped the establishment of the unit. The report is likely to propose that permanent consultation mechanisms are established to ensure that PCRU continue to receive external advice and opinions on issues such as gender.

The PCRU will continue to develop its capacity through close consultation with civil society groups and the Women's National Commission—the Government's non- departmental advisory body on women—to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in post-conflict strategies. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office will assist by providing country-specific advice as PCRU plans for deployments and briefing on UK Government work on women and conflict in international fora, such as UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

Taiwan

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the level of tension in the Taiwan Strait following the recent anti-secessionist legislation introduced by China; and if he will make a statement. [221354]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* As the legislation was only passed on 14 March, its impact has scarcely been felt. Much will depend on the reaction of others and how China seeks to apply it.

However, there is a risk that its introduction will slow or reverse the recent signs of progress in the relationship between China and Taiwan. We have made these concerns known to the Chinese and continue to watch developments closely. We continue to call on both sides to avoid unilateral actions which might heighten tensions. Although China has stressed its desire for a peaceful resolution of the issue, we are concerned that the legislation makes reference to the possibility of the use of "non-peaceful means". We strongly oppose the use of force and believe that the Taiwan question should be settled peacefully through negotiation between the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his *(a)* European Union, *(b)* United States, *(c)* Russian, *(d)* Australian and *(e)* Japanese counterparts concerning the recent anti-secessionist legislation to be used by China against Taiwan; when these discussions took place; and what the outcome was. [221355]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I and my Ministers have taken a close interest in the development of China's anti-secession legislation. Of those the right hon. Gentleman mentions, there have been discussions at both ministerial and official level with other EU member states and institutions and with the US this year. There have also been discussions with Japan and Australia between officials. These discussions resulted in a better understanding of the issues and closer positions.

As a direct result of some of these discussions, the EU issued a statement on 14 March urging both sides to avoid unilateral measures which might heighten tensions.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the percentage of Ugandan gross domestic product spent on *(a)* health, *(b)* education, *(c)* agriculture and *(d)* defence; and if he will make a statement. [221274]

Mr. Mullin: Figures from the 2003–04 approved budget are as follows:

	GDP (percentage)
Health	2.9
Education	4.5
Agriculture	0.8
Security (defence)	2.5

Uganda has a well-developed and consultative budgetary process. Donors are involved throughout, and have an opportunity to endorse the budget at the annual Public Expenditure Review. This level of consultation allows partners, including the UK, to ensure Government meets its commitment to prioritise poverty reduction. Budget execution is generally good and closely monitored by Government and donors, including the International Financial Institutions. Our Poverty Reduction Budget Support, and that of other partners such as the World Bank, is conditional on our endorsement of the budget and its subsequent execution.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the strength of the Ugandan Presidential Protection Brigade; whether the UK is offering it technical assistance; and if he will make a statement. [221275]

Mr. Mullin: In our discussions with the Uganda Government concerning implementation of their Defence Review, they have declined to identify separately the Presidential Guard Brigade. We have given it no technical assistance.

We apply strong controls in the management of our development assistance to Uganda to ensure it is used for the purposes for which it is intended. Security is required for sustainable development, but defence spending should be justified and affordable.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Ugandan Constitutional Amendment Bill 2005, with particular reference to the proposal to lift limits on presidential terms; and if he will make a statement. [221971]

Mr. Mullin: Given Uganda's past, it is important that any constitutional changes have the genuine confidence of the people and their representatives. The Constitutional Amendment Bill proposes significant revisions of a Constitution that is only 10 years old. We have urged that the Ugandan Parliament be allowed to vote on proposed amendments individually—including that relating to presidential terms—according to its established rules and in the spirit of provisions for change set out in Uganda's Constitution.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of reports that groups in Uganda are recruiting, training and deploying militia for political purposes; what discussions he has had with Ugandan counterparts about such groups; and if he will make a statement. [221972]

Mr. Mullin: There are reports of the reactivation of the Kalangala Action Plan, a pro-Government militia which was implicated in violence during the 2001 elections. We have raised our concerns with the Ugandan authorities. They have assured us that any illegal activity will bring immediate action by the police.

There are also concerns that ethnic militia recruited to fight against the Lord's Resistance Army in northern Uganda could be deployed in the 2006 elections. We have raised, and continue to raise, our concerns about this with the Government of Uganda and have urged them to bring all militias under the formal control of the army.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 17 March 2005

TRANSPORT

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221117]

Charlotte Atkins: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W, by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Disabled Access

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will increase the penalties against car drivers who park by dropped kerbs intended for use by people with disabilities. [222677]

Charlotte Atkins: We recognise that dropped kerbs are of great benefit to wheelchair users and ambulant disabled people.

The specific prohibition on parking at a dropped kerb currently applies only in London, under section 14 of the London local authorities and Transport for London Act 2003. The penalty charge levels for contravening the prohibition in London are decided by the Mayor for London.

However, section 86 of part 6 to the Traffic Management Act 2004, once commenced, will allow this prohibition to apply in areas of England and Wales where civil enforcement of parking contraventions is exercised by the local traffic authority and appropriate application for these specific provisions has been made to the relevant national authority. The Secretary of State will be responsible for setting the level of penalties in England. The penalty level will be set when section 86 comes into force, which is currently expected to be in 2006.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what targets he sets the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for responding to correspondence; whether the time taken is measured from the date when a letter is *(a)* received and *(b)* opened; and what steps he is taking to improve turn-around times. [222375]

Mr. Jamieson: We have not set the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) a correspondence response target. However, the Agency has been asked continuously to maintain or improve the levels of customer satisfaction. To achieve this DVLA has an internal target of answering 95 per cent. of written correspondence within eight working days from the date of opening.

Entry Ports (Security)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many security staff are employed at each of the 35 main ports of entry to the United Kingdom. [221092]

Mr. Jamieson: All ports handling international traffic must meet Government security standards. However, the number of staff that are employed by a port to carry out security is a decision for the ports themselves. We therefore do not hold this information centrally.

Hauliers

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1334W, on hauliers (working time restrictions), whether the new working time rules will apply to mobile workers employed by non-UK hauliers operating in the UK. [221267]

Mr. Jamieson: The new Regulations will apply to mobile workers employed by any non-UK hauliers operating in Great Britain, provided those hauliers are established in a member state of the European Union. Separate regulations with similar effect will apply in Northern Ireland.

Mobile workers from non-EU member states will be bound by the terms of the Directive, provided they are deemed to be employed by a EU employer under the terms of our Regulations.

Heathrow

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the level of air traffic movements at Heathrow is; and when such movements are expected to reach the cap set for Heathrow of 480,000 movements; [221626]

(2) what action is planned by the Government when the capped level of 480,000 air traffic movements has been reached at Heathrow airport. [221654]

Charlotte Atkins: The number of Heathrow Air Transport Movements (ATMs) in the year ending 28 February 2005 was 469,544. The condition limiting air transport movements to 480,000 a year applies from the date that the core Terminal 5 building opens, which is expected to be 2008. The number of ATMs is forecast to reach the 480,000 limit by the end of 2007. I am advised by BAA that an administrative process for managing the cap has been discussed and agreed in principle with the local planning authority to ensure that the limit is not exceeded.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the final scheme for compensation for blight associated with any future development of Heathrow airport to be published. [221630]

Charlotte Atkins: BAA plc published a consultation paper on 21 September 2004 setting out its proposals for a non-statutory scheme to protect property values around the airport. At the request of local residents BAA extended the consultation by one month to January 2005. BAA is presently considering the responses to the consultation and has advised the local community that it expects to publish its final scheme by the late spring.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what further work is to be undertaken to assess the economic impact of a third runway at Heathrow airport. [221631]

Charlotte Atkins: The economic impact of a third runway at Heathrow was assessed in the work preceding the Air Transport White Paper and is set out in the White Paper and supporting documentation. No further assessment is planned, beyond any that may be necessary to reflect changed circumstances.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what arrangements have been made to ensure the openness and transparency of the workings of Project Heathrow, with particular reference to the dissemination of information on this initiative to *(a)* residents of communities living near Heathrow and *(b)* their elected representatives. [221649]

Charlotte Atkins: We are keen to ensure that the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow (Project Heathrow) is taken forward in an open and transparent manner, and to communicate information about the project to local communities and their representatives. The Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee, whose membership includes locally elected representatives, receives regular updates from DfT officials and BAA. Local authorities are represented on Project Heathrow's air quality technical panels. Information about the project has been on the Department's website www.dft.gov.uk/aviation/projectheathrow since last summer and we endeavour to keep this up to date as the project progresses. In addition, Ministers and officials have meetings from time to time with a variety of interested parties. I am currently seeking to arrange a further such meeting with relevant Members of Parliament.

For their part, BAA Heathrow have been working to ensure that the local community is well informed about Project Heathrow. BAA's work has included updating the Heathrow Local Focus Forum on progress and meeting with local action groups to discuss issues connected with the project. BAA has also published the leaflet "One Year On—How BAA airports are delivering the Future of Air Transport White Paper" which is available from the company's website www.baa.com.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what impact the decision in the case of the judicial review of the Government's proposals for airport expansion has had on the proposals for a third runway at Heathrow. [221651]

Charlotte Atkins: None. The Court upheld the White Paper policy as regards Heathrow, although we are aware that this is the subject of a further appeal.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what process would need to be pursued *(a)* to amend and *(b)* to delete the environmental mitigation measures on airport operations at Heathrow under the Cranford Agreement. [221653]

Charlotte Atkins: Any proposals to amend or abandon the existing noise amelioration operations at Heathrow under the Cranford Agreement would need to be subject to a full environmental appraisal, public consultation and ministerial approval. Any agreed changes would then need to be reflected in operational instructions in the NATS Manual for Air Traffic Services.

New Estates

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many unadopted roads there are on estates built in the last 15 years; and how many unadopted residential streets there are in England. [222717]

Charlotte Atkins: Information is not held centrally on either question.

Private Car Parks

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency is allowed to pass on details it holds on individuals to operators of privately-owned and operated car parks. [221968]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Regulations provide for the release of vehicle keeper details from the register maintained by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency to applicants who can demonstrate 'reasonable cause' for their request. Legal advice is that the enforcement of parking restrictions on private property meets the 'reasonable cause' criterion. If information were not released in these circumstances, landlords would have great difficulty in enforcing their rights to their property. The Information Commissioner is aware that personal data are used in this way and he has issued advice that is available on his website.

Rail Stations

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers have used *(a)* Bramley, *(b)* Burley Park and *(c)* Headingley rail stations in each year since 1987. [221965]

Mr. McNulty: Figures are only held from year 1990–91 and are shown in the following table.

Financial year	*Bramley (W. Yorks)*	*Burley Park*	*Headingley*
1990–91	39,472	106,966	42,970
1991–92	43,519	126,194	49,847
1992–93	56,202	151,673	54,667
1993–94	67,369	164,823	59,383
1994–95	65,357	159,624	54,596
1995–96	70,022	188,047	85,661
1996–97	74,007	206,578	96,307
1997–98	92,765	238,352	117,871
1998–99	112,378	248,143	123,848
1999–2000	116,725	274,135	120,013
2000–01	83,490	215,245	101,472
2001–02	67,505	178,604	95,709
2002–03	86,291	216,208	109,687
2003–04	111,500	250,310	126,021

Railways

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department will be assuming powers previously exercised by the Strategic Rail Authority in respect of *(a)* waiving penalty payments for train operators involved in industrial disputes, *(b)* providing compensation to train operating

companies for loss of revenue arising from industrial disputes and *(c)* authorising pay and conditions agreements in the 12 months of a franchise. [222532]

Mr. McNulty: Penalty payments, train operators' revenue and approval of pay deals for train operators' staff are all aspects of franchising. Under the Railways Bill, responsibility for passenger rail franchising would pass to the Secretary of State for Transport and Scottish Ministers as appropriate. Whether and how these specific powers will be used in the future is an issue we will want to consider in due course.

Registered Car Owners (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many registered car owners there have been in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex in each year since 1997. [222487]

Mr. Jamieson: DVLA is unable to provide information on numbers of car owners as our system cannot cater for multiple vehicles registered to a single owner. In addition DVLA registers vehicle keepers (the person responsible for the use of the vehicles on the road) and not legal owners. However, the numbers of licensed vehicles registered to addresses in the Southend and Essex areas are as follows:

Calendar year	*Southend*	*Excluding Southend*	*Essex Including Southend*
1997	60,675	569,930	630,605
1998	61,668	583,147	644,815
1999	63,297	601,598	664,895
2000	64,428	621,458	685,886
2001	66,510	641,046	707,556
2002	68,436	655,725	724,161
2003[1]	69,988	663,803	733,791

[1] 2003 is the last full year for which information is currently available

Road Accidents/Deaths

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he plans to publish the number of road accidents in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend in 2004. [222471]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport will report accident and casualty figures for Essex and the unitary authority Southend on Sea in "Road Casualties Great Britain: 2004", which is due for publication in September 2005.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps the Government are taking in support of the policy of the European Union to halve the number of road deaths across the EU between 2002 and 2010. [222350]

Mr. Jamieson: We continue to develop and implement our wide-ranging road safety strategy. The provisional 2004 third quarter casualty figures show we are now over halfway towards our 2010 target of a 40 per cent. reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured, and over three-quarters towards our 50 per cent. target for children.

The first review of the road safety strategy identified that, while we are making good progress toward meeting our overall casualty reduction targets, the number of fatal casualties has levelled off. This is a complex issue, affecting other European countries which like us have a good record on road safety, and it is receiving in-depth analysis and special focus as we develop the strategy further.

Seafarers

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to review the operation of race relations legislation in relation to seafarers. [222309]

Mr. Jamieson: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer of 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 675W, given to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael).

Speed Cameras/Humps

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list in descending order the 10 local authority areas in England which have the greatest number of fixed speed cameras. [221719]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Details are in the tables of the safety camera partnerships' sites and casualties which my Department published and placed in the Library in June 2004.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in how many traffic calming schemes introduced in England since 1998 speed humps have been constructed and later withdrawn or modified, broken down by local authority. [222352]

Mr. Jamieson: Local authorities have the power to introduce or modify traffic calming schemes without approval from the Department, so there are no central records which contain this information.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of speed humps, with particular reference to *(a)* air pollution and *(b)* noise pollution; and if he will make a statement. [222353]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has commissioned a number of research projects in recent years to assess the environmental impact of road humps.

The research has indicated that emissions from individual vehicles may increase with the implementation of traffic calming measures, due to increased driver acceleration and deceleration. However, the reduction in the volume of traffic within traffic calming schemes usually means that the overall changes in air quality are roughly neutral.

After the installation of road humps and speed cushions, research has shown that the maximum noise levels from light vehicles (cars) are reduced, as is the

overall traffic noise level when light vehicles form most of the traffic stream. However, the effect on noise from large vehicles is more complex. While there are some decreases in maximum vehicle noise levels from large commercial vehicles due to reductions in their speeds, this can be offset by increases in noise from the bodywork of such vehicles as they pass over the humps and cushions. The net effect of these measures on the overall traffic noise depends on the proportion of large commercial vehicles in the traffic stream, and on the type of road hump installed.

The environmental impact of road humps has to be considered against the need to improve road safety. Around 3,500 people are killed and a further 34,000 are seriously injured on our roads every year. Nearly 2,400 of these casualties are child pedestrians. Compliance with speed limits would reduce these unacceptable numbers, and experience shows that traffic calming measures such as road humps have significant safety benefits.

Stoke Hammond/Linslade Bypass

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reasons an appraisal summary table for a fully worked up lower cost alternative in relation to the Stoke Hammond and Linslade Western Bypass has not been provided since 1994. [222363]

Charlotte Atkins: The Stoke Hammond and Linslade Western Bypass was subject to the Department's appraisal requirements applicable at the time when relevant funding and approval decisions were taken. These requirements have changed over time. Alternative options and routes were considered, but not recommended, by the Public Inquiry into the Compulsory Purchase Orders held in 2003. Once a scheme has completed its statutory processes, the Department does not generally require an assessment of alternative options when the local authority submits a request for Full Approval and release of funding under the Local Transport Programme.

Television Equipment (Cars)

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the policy of the Government is in relation to the legality of *(a)* fitting and *(b)* using television equipment in cars which operate while a vehicle is stationary at traffic lights. [222347]

Mr. Jamieson: It is legal to fit television equipment in a motor vehicle. However, if the screen of the television can be seen by the driver then it is only lawful to display information about the state of the vehicle, or about the location of the vehicle and the road which it is on, or information to assist the driver to see the road adjacent to the vehicle, or to assist the driver to reach his destination.

It is unlawful for the driver to watch screens for entertainment purposes (e.g. TV programmes or DVDs) at any time while driving, including when stopped at traffic lights.

Transport (Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the Highways Agency expenditure was in Hampshire in each of the last five years; and how much was spent on *(a)* new road schemes and *(b)* road maintenance. [221754]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* No major new road schemes have been carried out by the Highways Agency in Hampshire in the last five years.

Delivery of the Highways Agency's road maintenance programme and smaller improvement schemes is carried out through a number of area-based managing agents. The area that includes Hampshire also includes other counties and it is not possible to identify how much has been spent in Hampshire alone.

TREASURY

Correspondence

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Government Actuary's Department will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Yeovil of 20 December 2004 in relation to public sector redundancy packages; what the reasons are for the delay; and if he will make a statement. [221800]

Mr. Timms: In response to the hon. Member's letter of 20 December 2004 the Government Actuary's Department provided advice to the Ministry of Defence in January, on the basis of which Ministry officials, given the unusual nature of the case, were given specific Treasury approval for a redundancy payment to the hon. Member's constituent. Treasury approval was initially given on 18 February but the payment was re-calculated to add interest at a standard rate in order to take full account of delay before payment was actioned on 7 March. Officials have already apologised to the constituent for the excessive time taken to settle this case but I believe that it has now reached a satisfactory conclusion.

First Childbirths

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average age of women at first childbirth was in each of the last 10 years. [222059]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Tim Loughton, dated 17 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the average age of women at first childbirth in each of the last 10 years. (222059)

Figures for England and Wales from 1993 to 2003 are published in Table 1.7 of the annual births reference volume (Birth statistics 2003 FM1 no 32). Table 1.7a contains means calculated from number of births. Table 1.7b contains means calculated from fertility rates, thus controlling for the age distribution of the female population, so providing a better measure of trend. Copies of the publication are available from the House of Commons library and is also available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=5768&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=256

Income Tax

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the estimated effect upon revenue would be if the 10 per cent. band of income tax were increased by *(a)* £1,000, *(b)* £2,000 and *(c)* £3,000; [221727]

(2) what the estimated effect upon revenue would be if the lower threshold for income tax were increased by *(a)* £1,000, *(b)* £2,000 and *(c)* £3,000; and how many taxpayers would no longer pay income tax in each case. [221728]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1405W.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the estimated yield arising from levying income tax at a rate of 50 per cent. on all taxable incomes in excess of £50,000 per annum would be; and how many taxpayers would be affected. [221729]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave him on 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1405W and 1410W.

Migrant Labour

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of migrant labour admitted to the UK was employed *(a)* by outsourcing companies, *(b)* by employment agencies, *(c)* by gangmasters, *(d)* in agriculture, *(e)* in catering and *(f)* in the care system in the last year for which figures are available. [221521]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Dr. John Pugh, dated 17 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about percentages of employed migrant labour in the UK. (221521)

The attached table, using statistics from the ONS Labour Force Survey, gives estimates of numbers of people aged 16 and over who are resident and employed in the UK but whose nationality is other than UK. Estimates, for the three month period ending in November 2004 are given in total and for those employed by employment agencies, in agriculture, in catering and in the care system.

These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Non-UK nationals resident and in employment in the UK

Three months ending November 2004	*Numbers in employment*	*Percentage*[6]
Total non-UK nationals	1,532,000	100
Employment agencies[1]	44,000	2.9
Agriculture[2]	9,000	0.6
Catering[3]	17,000	1.1
The care system[4]	37,000	2.2
Of which those working for employment agencies[5]	3,000	0.2
Other non-UK nationals	1,428,000	93.2

[1] Refers to those respondents whose reason for not having a permanent job was because of agency temping.

[2] Refers to those involved in activities including, growing crops; market gardening; horticulture; farming of animals; growing crops combined with farming of animals (mixed farming); agricultural and animal husbandry service activities, except veterinary activities.

[3] Includes only those working in canteen and catering services.

[4] Refers to those respondents working as care assistants and home carers in the: health and social work, real estate renting and business activity, public administration and defence, other community social and personal and private households with employed persons.

[5] Of those employed in the care system 3,000 working for employment agencies are included also within the total shown in the table for employment agencies.

[6] A percentages of total non-UK nationals.

Note:

LFS estimates for small groups such as non-UK nationals are particularly subject to sampling variability because of the small size of the survey samples. They should therefore be treated with caution.

Source:

ONS-Labour Force Survey

Paddington Hospital

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department has received the outline business case for the Paddington Basin Health Campus from the North West London strategic health authority. [222669]

Mr. Boateng: No.

Perpetual Annuity/Pension Payments

Mr. Mudie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether *(a)* annuities and *(b)* pensions are still paid from public funds to the descendants of any individuals who through particular public service were granted exceptional perpetual annuity or pension payments. [221921]

Mr. Timms: No such payments are made by the Treasury.

Productivity

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what indicators his Department uses to assess the productivity performance of the United Kingdom. [221803]

John Healey: The Government uses two headline measures in its assessment of the UK's productivity performance: HM Treasury estimates of underlying productivity growth in the UK over the economic cycle; and ONS International Comparisons of Productivity estimates.

These headline measures are supported by a set of intermediate indicators to highlight how the UK is performing relative to its major competitors on key dimensions of the drivers of productivity.

Details can be found in the technical note accompanying the Treasury's PSA target on productivity; in "Productivity in the UK 5: Benchmarking UK productivity performance: A consultation on productivity indicators[1]" and "Benchmarking UK productivity performance: The Government's response to the consultation on productivity indicators[2]".

[1] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/EFF/68/iulytechnicalnote300704.pdf

[2] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/consultations and legislation/productivity indicators/consult productivity indicators index.cfm

Tax Relief (Over-65s)

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what powers he has to provide tax relief to the over-65s on savings and earnings for those earning between £18,900 and £23,070. [222364]

Mr. Timms: Those over 65 are entitled to more generous personal allowances than those aged below 65, while those over 75 have a greater entitlement still.

In 2004 the personal allowances for all those aged 65 and over were increased in line with earnings by a provision in the Finance Act. The Chancellor announced his intention at last December's PBR of introducing a similar increase to the personal allowance for all those aged 65 and over in this year's Finance Bill.

This overrides the automatic increase which is made in line with prices for all personal allowances. The higher allowances for those aged 65 and over are reduced where their income is above a certain level. This level, £18,900 for 2004–05, is also increased automatically in line with prices.

In common with everyone else, those over 65 can withdraw funds from any ISAs they have tax free. Consequently, this does not affect their entitlement to age-related personal allowances.

Unemployment (Aberdeenshire)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in Aberdeenshire unitary authority area in each year since 1999 broken down by age group. [222062]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alex Salmond, dated 17 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority. (222062)

Table 1 gives estimates of the levels of unemployed people resident in the Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority analysed by age group and covering twelve-month periods ending February each year from 1999 to 2004.

These estimates from Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

The Office for National Statistics also compiles statistics of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance. Table 2 gives, for each age group, the average number of people resident in the Aberdeenshire Unitary Authority who were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefits in each year from 1999 to 2004.

Table 1: Unemployed people resident in the Aberdeenshire unitary authority area by age

		Age				
12 months ending February	*All 16 and over*	*16–24*	*25–34*	*35–44*	*45–54*	*55 and over*
1999	4,000	1,000	[1]	1,000	1,000	[1]
2000	5,000	2,000	1,000	2,000	[1]	[1]
2001	4,000	2,000	1,000	[1]	1,000	1,000
2002	4,000	3,000	[1]	1,000	[1]	[1]
2003	4,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	[1]
2004	5,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000

[1] Estimates not given in order to protect respondent confidentiality.

Note:
These estimates are based on very small sample sizes and are subject to a high degree of sampling variability. Changes from year to year, especially, should be treated with caution.

Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 2: JSA claimants resident in the Aberdeenshire unitary authority area by age

		Age				
Annual averages	*All 18 and over*	*18–24*	*25–34*	*35–44*	*45–54*	*55 and over*
1999	2,565	625	635	505	555	245
2000	2,565	635	640	490	540	260
2001	1,845	465	445	370	390	175
2002	1,725	465	390	330	365	175
2003	1,865	495	410	360	390	210
2004	1,890	525	410	355	380	220

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

VAT (Electronic Publishing)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been raised through VAT on electronically published materials in each of the past 10 years. [222376]

Dawn Primarolo: VAT revenue figures are published by HM Customs and Excise in the VAT factsheet, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and from Customs' website: http://www.uktradeinfo.com

HM Customs and Excise do not collect data on VAT from individual goods and services.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from *(a)* universities and *(b)* libraries with regard to the level of VAT levied on electronically published materials. [222377]

Dawn Primarolo: I am not aware that any Treasury Minister has received any representations from universities and libraries with regard to the level of VAT levied on electronically published materials in the last year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Pet Fairs

18. **Mr. Randall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has received regarding pet fairs; and if she will make a statement. [222457]

Mr. Bradshaw: I have received a considerable amount of correspondence both for and against the licensing of pet fairs under the proposed Animal Welfare Bill, and I am currently considering how best to take forward work on this issue.

Fallen Stock

19. **Mr. Andrew Turner:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the collection of fallen stock. [222459]

Mr. Bradshaw: The National Fallen Stock Scheme has been operating for just over three months and already has 25,000 members. While acknowledging there have been teething problems with collection of fallen stock in some parts of the country, the National Fallen Stock Company reports that it is pleased with the response and that the scheme is generally working well.

Fisheries

22. **Mr. MacDougall:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she is taking to protect fish stocks in UK waters. [222462]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are a range of policies in European Union and UK legislation to protect fish stocks. The Government will shortly be publishing a response to the "Net Benefits" report which made a wide ranging series of recommendations to secure sustainable fisheries in the waters around the UK.

Commission for Africa

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the Commission for Africa's report for her Department's work. [222444]

Mr. Morley: Along with the rest of Government we are studying the Commission's conclusions carefully and will work up a full response across Government as soon as we can.

Common Agricultural Policy

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what quantity of fruit and vegetables was destroyed under EU arrangements in each of the last three years. [222458]

Alun Michael: Latest data from the European Commission indicate that total produce withdrawn from the market in the EU fell from over 1.1 million tonnes in 2000–01 to 596,000 tonnes in 2001–02, and to 315,000 tonnes in 2002–03.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy. [222447]

Alun Michael: The key priority over the coming year is reform of the sugar regime. Looking further ahead, the review of dairy quotas in 2008 and the review of decoupling in 2009 may provide further opportunities for reform. We are also pushing for a radical outcome to the current WTO round to increase market access and eliminate export subsidies at the earliest opportunity.

Climate Change

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639, to my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Central (Tony Lloyd) on climate change, what the results were of her discussions with newly developing countries, with particular reference to those with substantial and growing energy needs; and if she will make a statement. [222461]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, together with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, jointly hosted a Round Table for the energy and environment Ministers from 20 countries, including the emerging economies, on 15–16 March.

This was an innovative event which enabled us to explore common ground and begin to build a shared agenda to tackle issues of access to energy for development, energy security, and environmental protection.

A summary of proceedings will be placed on the Defra and DTI websites shortly.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Ministers in her Department have issued written instructions to override her Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221109]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Stephen Timms).

Fish Quotas

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of estimated biomass of the 10 most landed fish species under North Sea Total Allowable Catches were landed by vessels from each EU member state in the last period for which figures are available; and what proportion of each catch was made up of recognised market valuable species. [215234]

Mr. Bradshaw: The most recent available information for the most landed North Sea species (on the basis of Total Allowable Catches for 2005) is shown in table 1 as follows:

Table 1

Rank	Species	TAC 2005 in thousand tonnes	Proportion of biomass taken in 2003
1	Sand Eel	660	0.23
2	Herring	535	0.21
3	Sprat	257	[1]—
4	Saithe	[2]145	0.23
5	Blue Whiting	122	0.42
6	Haddock	66	[3]0.46
7	Plaice	59	0.49
8	Horse Mackerel	43	[1]—
9	Whiting	28	[4]0.23
10	Cod	27	[3]0.55

[1] No data
[2] Including the Baltic
[3] Estimates include discards
[4] Estimate from 2002

The proportion of the TAC taken by individual countries for these species is shown in table 2.

Table 2

	Sand Eel	Herring	Sprat	Saithe	Blue Whiting	Haddock	Plaice	Horse Mackerel	Whiting	Cod
UK	0.02	0.25	0.04	0.17	0.02	0.78	0.28	0.10	0.53	0.47
Denmark	0.94	0.28	0.91	0.09	0.98	0.07	0.20	0.68	0.13	0.20
Germany	—	0.18	0.01	0.22	—	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.13
Netherlands	—	0.20	0.01	—	—	—	0.38	0.11	0.08	0.12
France	—	0.07	0.01	0.51	—	0.08	—	—	0.20	0.04
Belgium	—	—	—	—	—	0.01	0.06	—	—	—
Sweden	—	—	—	0.01	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ireland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.04	—	—
Other	0.04	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Information is not available on what proportion of each catch consists of commercially valuable species.

Flooding

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of households in England which are at risk from flooding; and if she will make a statement. [222351]

Mr. Morley: The most recent estimate of households at risk of flooding is based on data from the Environment Agency's 2004 National Flood Risk Assessment which is also used in the FloodMap available from their website. This identified just under 1.9 million households within the Extreme Flood Outline in England (with more than 0.1 per cent. probability of flooding in any year).

More than half of these households are in the low probability band (less than 0.5 per cent. probability of flooding in any year) and the majority of the remainder are in the moderate band (less than 1.3 per cent. probability in any year).

Over-30-month Scheme

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the over-30-month scheme will end. [222652]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not expect any changes to the over-30-month scheme until September 2005 at the earliest.

Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the opportunities available to public sector food buyers and farmers under the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative; and if she will make a statement. [222453]

Alun Michael: Examples of developments which offer greater opportunities for local producers to compete for public sector business include: *(a)* to supply more fruit and vegetables under the expanding 5-A-Day scheme; *(b)* an increased demand for fresh and seasonal produce and *(c)* greater emphasis on quality.

Tobacco

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will urge the withdrawal of EU subsidies to farmers in EU member states to grow tobacco. [221644]

Alun Michael: The decision has already been made. In April 2004 the Agriculture Council decided that direct support for tobacco production in the European Community should cease after 2009.

Waste Management

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the work of the Waste and Resources Action Programme in the East Sussex region. [221517]

Mr. Morley: Defra does not assess the work of the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) on a geographic basis but in relation to its progress towards achieving the targets set out in its business plan.

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the funding of the Waste and Resources Action Programme. [221513]

Mr. Morley: The Waste and Resources Action Programme is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and currently funded by Defra, DTI, the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Executive.

The latest published set of accounts for WRAP (covering the financial year 2003–04) is available for inspection at Companies House.

Water Charges

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she proposes to introduce changes to the system of using rateable values as the basis for domestic water charges. [222460]

Mr. Morley: We have no present plans to require water companies to abandon rateable values as the basis of their unmeasured charges. Rateable values are outdated, and we are open to proposals for better systems, but any change would have to address the issue of winners and losers. We will update the existing analysis in the light of the Lyons inquiry and any consequential changes to council tax.

Water Savings Trust

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the outputs of the Water Savings Trust feasibility study; and what action she proposes to take following the Environment Agency's report to her Department on the outcome of this study. [222520]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency have been delayed in presenting the report on the feasibility of a Water Savings Trust to Defra. I now expect to receive the report from them in the first week of April.

On receipt of the report, I will consider what contribution a Water Savings Trust could make towards securing a sustainable water supply.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Billboards

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the maximum fine is which local authorities can impose on landowners allowing temporary wheeled billboards to be placed next to motorways. [222680]

Keith Hill: Local planning authorities can prosecute the owner or occupier of the land on which the advertisement is displayed. The maximum fine on conviction of an offence is £2,500 and for a continuing offence £250 for each day the unlawful advertisement continues to be displayed.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average fine imposed by local authorities on landowners allowing temporary wheeled billboards to be placed next to motorways was in the last year for which figures are available. [222683]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Business Rate (Chorley)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the business rate for Chorley is forecast to be in 2005–06; and what the rate is in 2004–05. [222439]

Mr. Raynsford: The net business rate yield for Chorley for 2005–06 is forecast to be £18.187 million, compared with £16.840 million that was forecast for 2004–05.

Council Tax

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of council tax receipts raised in England was in each year since 1997–98. [219909]

Mr. Raynsford: The figures requested are tabled as follows. Figures for 2004–05 are not yet available on the same basis.

Council tax receipts

	£ million
1997–98	9,570
1998–99	10,579
1999–2000	11,457
2000–01	12,242
2001–02	13,209
2002–03	14,510
2003–04	16,392

Note:
The amounts shown are total receipts, irrespective of the year to which they relate. They exclude amounts funded from council tax benefit.
Source:
QRC4 returns

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what exemptions from council tax apply for narrow boats away from their moorings; and when guidance was last issued on this matter to local authorities. [221897]

Mr. Raynsford: A mooring occupied by a boat which is somebody's sole or main residence is deemed to be a "dwelling" for council tax purposes and will therefore attract a council tax liability in the same way as other domestic types of property. Under Class R of The Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 (as amended) a dwelling consisting of a mooring which is not occupied by a boat is exempt. This exemption came into force on 1 April 1994. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not issued any guidance on this matter.

Departmental Policies

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Witney constituency, the effects on Rochdale of his Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [217366]

Yvette Cooper: Along with other Government Departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to improving the lives of people across the whole of the UK. For example, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is determined that everyone should have the opportunity to have a decent home, and since 1997 we have reduced the number of non-decent homes nationally by 1 million.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister provides grant funding that benefits the Rochdale constituency through a number of programmes.

For example, over the period 2001–06 Rochdale has been allocated £20.7 million of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources to help the local authority, in collaboration with the Local Strategic Partnership, improve services in the most deprived neighbourhoods in the area.

More broadly, since 1997 we have been able to increase the total amount of Government grant given to local authorities by £22.6 billion. This is a 33 per cent. increase in real terms. Rochdale council has received an average annual increase in formula grant since 1997 of 5.3 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/.

Housing

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* private, *(b)* public sector key worker, *(c)* private sector key worker and *(d)* social housing homes are to be built on each of the redundant NHS sites now controlled by his Department. [222042]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health announced in April 2004 that a portfolio of around 100 surplus NHS sites would be transferred to help deliver the objectives of the sustainable communities plan. It is expected that the first of these sites will transfer to English Partnerships shortly. Many of the sites will be suitable for the provision of affordable homes for sale and will include an element of social housing.

The future use of each site and development proposals where appropriate will be determined in consultation with the relevant local planning authority as part of the normal planning process.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is continuing to develop a First Time Buyers Initiative as recently announced in our 'Five Year Plan—Sustainable Communities: Homes for All'. We plan to deliver 15,000 homes under the initiative by 2010, half of which will be for key public service workers and the other half for individuals and families recommended by Regional Housing Boards. Details about where these houses will be built have not yet been announced.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable housing units were built or procured through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund in London in each year since 1997–98, broken down by *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded general low cost ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovement to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase Homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative. [222371]

Keith Hill: The information requested on the number of dwellings built or procured in London through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund by the various categories listed in each year since 1997–98 is being collated. I will write to my hon. Friend and make a copy available in the Library of the House.

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund funding has been spent on *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovement to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase Homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative in London in each year since 1997–98. [222372]

Keith Hill: The information requested on funding in London through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund by the various categories listed in each year since 1997–98 is being collated. I will write to my hon. Friend and make a copy available in the Library of the House.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when Mrs. Lea Rowles of Wylie Court, Sittingbourne will receive her refund from Swale Housing Association. [222368]

Keith Hill: This is a private matter between Mrs. Lea Rowles of Wylie Court, Sittingbourne and Swale Housing Association. I understand that Swale Housing Association are currently investigating this matter and will be in contact with Mrs. Rowles shortly.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authority properties were sold under the right to buy in each London borough in each year since 1996–97; and what the average discount per dwelling was in each case. [221426]

Keith Hill: The annual number of right to buy sales of council dwellings reported by each London borough and the annual average right to buy discount per sale since 1996–97 have been made available in the Library of the House.

Local Authority Grants (Southend)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will use Department of Health patient registration figures as a measure of population for the purpose of calculating local authority grants for Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. [222346]

Mr. Raynsford: No. When calculating formula grant allocations, we use the best and most up-to-date data that are available on a consistent basis across all authorities. In the case of population, these are the 2003 mid-year estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Data from GP lists are useful for estimating migration, but are not designed to measure population. They are subject to a number of potential flaws. For example, very few international emigrants de-register when leaving the country. GP lists are also prone to duplicate registrations and there can often be a delay in removing names following a death.

Local Government Finance (London)

Ms Buck: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the real terms *(a)* percentage and *(b)* cash changes in total external support to (i) Westminster city council and (ii) the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea were in each year between 1992–93 and 2005–06. [221614]

Mr. Raynsford: It is most appropriate to calculate year-on-year changes against the previous year's grant adjusted for changes in funding and function so as to give a like-for-like comparison. However adjusted grant data is available only from 1997–98 onwards. Please note therefore that the data for the period 1992–93 to 1997–98 is on an unadjusted basis while the data for the period 1998–99 onwards is on an adjusted basis.

Unadjusted year-on-year changes

	Westminster		*Kensington and Chelsea*	
	Change (£ million)	*Percentage change*	*Change (£ million)*	*Percentage change*
1992–93	41.976	16.1	31.557	21.4
1993–94	-53.574	-17.7	-33.365	-18.6
1994–95	-0.848	-0.3	0.129	0.1
1995–96	1.214	0.5	-4.891	-3.4
1996–97	-12.604	-5.1	-5.245	-3.7
1997–98	-0.897	-0.4	-3.648	-2.7

Adjusted year-on-year changes

	Westminster		*Kensington and Chelsea*	
	Change (£ million)	*Percentage change*	*Change (£ million)*	*Percentage change*
1998–99	-11.349	-4.9	-3.562	-2.7
1999–2000	1.071	0.5	0.810	0.6
2000–01	0.742	0.3	1.292	1.0
2001–02	1.405	0.6	4.876	3.9
2002–03	7.554	3.5	4.727	3.7
2003–04	1.496	0.7	0.893	0.7
2004–05	4.499	2.0	2.459	1.8
2005–06	6.290	2.7	1.990	1.4

Local Government Pension Scheme

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations and meetings he has had with Unison regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [222135]

Phil Hope *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 645–46W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Chorley (Mr. Hoyle). Further meetings and discussion have taken place since, the last of which was on 10 March. These have been of a constructive nature, looking into the long-term issues relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Regional Government

Mr. Flook: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the budget of each Regional Assembly was in each of the last three years; what the administrative costs were in each year; and what the costs were of the other functions co-ordinated by the secretariat of each Assembly in each year. [221270]

Mr. Raynsford *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Regional Assemblies are voluntary bodies that have been designated to undertake specific functions on behalf of Government. The total level of Government grant in support of these functions for the period 2002–05 is tabled as follows.

£

	2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
North East	600,000	1,408,000	1,708,000
North West	600,000	1,837,000	2,536,000
Yorkshire and the Humber	600,000	1,655,000	1,923,000
West Midlands	600,000	1,671,000	2,071,000
East Midlands	600,000	1,631,000	2,056,000
East	600,000	1,874,000	2,112,000
South East	600,000	2,186,000	3,280,000
South West	600,000	1,613,000	2,101,000
English Regions Network	200,000	200,000	200,000
	5,000,000	14,075,000	17,987,000

Regional Assemblies may also receive funding support from other organisations including local authorities. Details of 'administrative costs' and the cost of 'other functions co-ordinated by the Secretariat of each Assembly' are not kept centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost has been of financing the South East England Regional Assembly in each of the last five years. [222050]

Mr. Raynsford: The total grant made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to the South East England Regional Assembly in each of the years since 2001–02, when it was first introduced was:

	£
2001–02	500,000
2002–03	600,000
2003–04	2,186,000
2004–05	3,280,000

The increase in funding from 2003–04 was granted in recognition of the Assembly's role as Regional Planning Body for the South East of England within the new planning system. This role involved additional statutory responsibilities that were placed on them by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the statement of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 358WH, if he will publish the evidence he has received from local authorities indicating that the separation of management and strategic function is delivering better services to tenants in social housing. [221629]

Keith Hill: The Government's response to the Select Committee report on Decent Homes set out that the separation of management and strategic functions delivers better services to tenants in social housing. This was based on the findings of the Audit Commission report 'Housing After Transfer: the Local Authority Role', which was published in December 2002.

In addition, the Government's response drew on the quarterly reviews undertaken by the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) and HouseMark, which demonstrate the increasing levels of tenant satisfaction where homes are managed by an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO).

Copies of the Government's response, and the Audit Commission report, are available in the Library of the House. The findings of the NFA/HouseMark reviews are available to subscribers to the HouseMark website.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many accidents occurred at her departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of her Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222571]

Mr. Caborn: Accidents at work are reported by means of accident report books.

	Number of reported accidents
2000	3
2001	2
2002	2
2003	1
2004	3
2005 (To date)	1

No member of the public has been seen to have an accident or has reported an accident. None of the accidents to the Department's staff have required more than a sticking plaster or have led to an absence from work.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether she publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of her Department; and if she will make a statement. [222578]

Mr. Caborn: In 2004 there were three reported accidents, and to date in 2005 there has been one, none of which have required medical attention or resulted in absence from work.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of her Department are in place; and if she will make a statement. [222617]

Mr. Caborn: In accordance with Health and Safety Executive guidance an Accident Report Book is provided in a central point on each floor. Completed pages are detached and forwarded to the Departmental Safety officer for collation and any action needed.

BBC

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department will be represented at the Factual TV Commissioning Conference being held as part of the BBC Charter Review in London on 18 March; and if she will make a statement. [221319]

Estelle Morris: DCMS will not be represented at the Factual TV Commissioning Conference being organised by Broadcast, which has no direct links to Charter review. However I am grateful for all the input we have received from members of the broadcasting industry to BBC Charter review.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether Ministers in her Department have issued written instructions to override her Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221106]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Departmental Estate

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the estimated *(a)* market value and *(b)* annual rental value is of each property owned by her Department; who the occupier is of each property; and if she will make a statement. [221010]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS does not own any property that is able to earn rental income.

Departmental Policies (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Tamworth constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [221929]

Mr. Caborn: The Department's aim is to improve the quality of life for everyone through cultural and sporting activities, to support the pursuit of excellence and to champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries. The Department's policies and actions have had a significant impact on Tamworth since 2 May 1997.

In 2002 we launched the first ever comprehensive national physical education, school sport and club links strategy with an investment of £459 million. To achieve our challenging targets for increased participation in

sport and physical activity, we have invested in thousands of new and refurbished public sports facilities. Sports facilities in Tamworth have benefited from two Sport England Lottery grants totalling £582,152.

We have increased our national funding to the arts in real terms by 60 per cent. from £199 million in 1998–99 to £367 million in 2004–05. Between 1998–99 and 2003–04 Arts Council England, west midlands grants increased from £5.6 million to £32.5 million. In 2005–06 the total Arts Council England investment in regularly funded organisations will be £35.4 million. Tamworth has benefited from grants to arts projects, organisations and individuals, including Black Country Touring and Arts Alive.

Schools in Tamworth also benefit from the Staffordshire Youth Music Action Zone, known as Make Some Noise. Since its establishment in 2001 Make Some Noise has received three grants totalling £804,800 enabling it to reach 6,000 young people through local music projects and events.

Culture Online was launched in 2002 to increase access to, and participation in, arts and culture. Many of its projects are aimed at children of school age and at audiences that might not otherwise participate in arts and culture, including those who do not easily have access to arts and culture, people from deprived communities and people with particular educational or physical needs. People in Tamworth will be among those who benefit from Culture Online. Between 2002 and 2004, £13 million was allocated to fund 20 Culture Online projects.

Renaissance in the regions has funded the appointment of a museums development officer to support museums in the west midlands regional hub. It has provided £90,000 in 2004–05 for additional museums development support through the museums development fund and the hub's regional development fund to the Marches Curators group, of which Staffordshire is a part. This will be increased to £155,000 in 2005–06. Training courses in leadership and conservation have been organised through the hub and a member of Tamworth council's staff has been seconded to Birmingham city council as part of a skills sharing initiative.

Through our commitment to public service broadcasting we have helped to foster an environment in which a creative, commercially successful broadcasting industry provides a wide range of UK-made, high quality original programmes catering for all viewers and listeners. We have ensured a secure funding base for the BBC and Channel 4, while giving them the freedom to develop commercial operations which complement and support their public service remit The Communications Act 2003 includes provisions to ensure that public service broadcasting will continue to have a key role to play in the digital future.

In November 2000 we introduced free television licences for people aged 75 or over. Information on the number of beneficiaries by constituency is not available. However, according to Department for Work and Pensions records, the number of households in Tamworth with at least one person aged 75 or over claiming the winter fuel payment in 2003–04 was 3,865.

We have changed the licensing laws to allow people to hold and attend commercial dances on Sunday, to make it easier for restaurants to open an hour later, and to relax the alcohol licensing hours from 11 pm on new year's eve to 11 am on new year's day in all future years; and we have given the police greater powers to take action against under-age drinking and disorderly and noisy licensed premises. The Licensing Act 2003, when fully implemented, will introduce a streamlined, consistent and fair licensing regime for the provision of alcohol, public entertainment and late night refreshment. It will provide greater choice for consumers, bring regeneration and increased employment opportunities and protect local residents whose lives have been blighted by disturbance and anti-social behaviour.

The Gambling Bill will, when implemented, transfer responsibility for licensing gambling premises to local authorities. Local people and businesses will be able to make representations about applications for licenses and local authorities will be able to decide not to issue licenses for casino premises. These changes will give local communities, including those in Tamworth, a greater say in the regulation of gambling in their area.

Tourism in Tamworth has benefited from Government-funded marketing activity. In April 2003 we established VisitBritain with a new domestic marketing remit for England, and we gave strategic responsibility for tourism development to the regional development agencies, including Advantage West Midlands. These changes, together with VisitBritain's successful marketing activities in promoting Britain abroad as an attractive tourist destination, benefit all parts of the country, including Tamworth .

In common with all those in the United Kingdom, the public library branches in Tamworth are connected to the internet through the People's Network which was funded through a £120 million Lottery grant and which has put all the United Kingdom's public libraries on-line. In addition, the Department is funding the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council with £5 million over three years to implement the Framework for the future action plan and library improvement programme, which is designed to encourage improvement across the public libraries sector in England.

The Department has been an energetic advocate of the community value of public libraries. In 1998–1999 the DCMS/Wolfson public libraries challenge fund allocated funding to the community learning network partnership in Staffordshire. This award of £49,000 was granted in order to assist the provision of "Open for learning" centres in libraries across Staffordshire to support self-study and distance learning. Tamworth Library was one such Centre and received a proportion of the funding.

Information from the National Lottery distributors indicates that since 2 May 1997 Tamworth has benefited from 175 awards totalling just over £4.8 million. Of these, 23 awards worth over £800.000 were made by the

new opportunities fund which was established by the Government in 1999. The new opportunities fund merged with the community fund in June 2004 to form the Big Lottery Fund.

Gambling Bill (Hospice Lotteries)

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to ensure that the provisions contained in the Gambling Bill do not adversely affect weekly lotteries operated by the hospice movement. [221716]

Mr. Caborn: We have already brought forward amendments to the Bill, following representations by a number of hospice charities which now promote "ticketless lotteries", to ensure that they will not have to change current practice. The Bill approved by the Commons on 25 January incorporates these amendments.

ITV Regional News

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions have taken place between her Department, Ofcom and ITV on maintaining regional news and current affairs programmes in the north-west. [222150]

Estelle Morris: My Department has been briefed by Ofcom and ITV on the implications for regional news and current affairs of Ofcom's review of Public Service Broadcasting.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what penalties Ofcom can impose on ITV for failing to maintain Charter undertakings. [222151]

Estelle Morris: ITV is not established by a Royal Charter, but holds broadcasting licences for its channels, including certain of the regional Channel 3 licences which contain public service broadcasting obligations. Under the Communications Act 2003 there is a range of sanctions available to Ofcom for breaches of licence conditions which depend upon the nature of the breach, for example requirements to broadcast statements of findings, to impose more detailed regulation, fines or licence variation or termination.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions have taken place between her Department and Ofcom regarding ITV's performance. [222152]

Estelle Morris: No specific discussion has taken place, but my Department and Ofcom meet regularly to discuss a variety of broadcasting and other matters.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions have taken place between her Department and Ofcom on the *(a)* quantity and *(b)* quality of ITV news and current affairs programming in the North West. [222153]

Estelle Morris: These are matters principally for decision by Ofcom and ITV, who have briefed the Department on them in connection with Ofcom's review of public service broadcasting and as background to the debate on 2 March.

Licences (Sporting Events)

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what arrangements have been put in place for major sporting events to obtain a licence under the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003. [221353]

Mr. Caborn: No special arrangements have been put in place for those organising major sporting events where they wish to conduct licensable activities. They will be subject to the same provisions under the Licensing Act 2003 with regard to applying for permissions as other organisations or individuals. Of course, outdoor sporting events (with the exception of boxing and wrestling entertainment) are not in themselves licensable activities under the 2003 Act.

Museum Grants

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what grants have been paid by her Department to each National Museum in the last eight years; and what grants are planned for 2005–06. [222043]

Estelle Morris: The grant-in-aid provided by DCMS to each of its sponsored museums and galleries since 1997–98, including that planned for 2005–06, is set out in the table.

The amount of grant-in-aid paid to each DCMS-sponsored museums/national museums in the last eight years, and the amount allocated to them for 2005–06

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
British Museum	31.86	33.92	34.72	34.94	36.07
Geffrye Museum	1.12	1.05	1.17	1.18	1.17
Horniman Museum	2.94	3.14	2.96	3.33	2.97
Imperial War Museum	10.97	10.57	12.15	11.74	13.12
Museum of London	4.31	4.21	4.36	4.48	4.95
Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester	2.23	2.18	2.72	2.68	2.74
National Gallery	18.34	18.69	19.48	19.21	19.95
National Maritime Museum	10.48	10.18	10.92	11.66	12.59
National Museums Liverpool	13.13	12.70	13.71	14.01	15.47
National Museum of Science and Industry	21.08	20.28	23.76	24.08	26.68
National Portrait Gallery	4.81	5.00	5.12	5.14	5.46
Natural History Museum	27.66	26.96	29.58	30.41	32.38
Royal Armouries	5.22	3.72	4.81	5.23	5.95
Sir John Soane's Museum	0.59	0.57	0.63	0.59	0.70
Tate Gallery	18.66	19.22	19.73	24.88	26.76
Victoria and Albert Museum	29.90	29.15	30.03	30.45	32.34
Wallace Collection	1.87	1.92	2.46	2.07	2.16

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
British Museum	36.47	37.36	37.89	39.98
Geffrye Museum	1.27	1.26	1.81	1.43
Horniman Museum	3.38	3.28	3.66	3.68
Imperial War Museum	16.35	16.54	17.49	18.54
Museum of London	6.29	6.57	6.51	6.58
Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester	3.41	3.30	3.51	3.74
National Gallery	20.45	20.45	21.23	21.99
National Maritime Museum	13.68	14.01	15.73	15.24
National Museums Liverpool	16.57	17.33	17.33	18.16
National Museum of Science and Industry	31.25	34.75	33.12	34.09
National Portrait Gallery	5.73	5.71	6.11	6.39
Natural History Museum	38.09	39.60	39.65	41.47
Royal Armouries	6.16	6.29	6.89	7.28
Sir John Soane's Museum	0.70	1.05	0.78	0.81
Tate Gallery	27.78	30.28	29.88	32.30
Victoria and Albert Museum	34.77	34.84	36.19	37.73
Wallace Collection	2.61	3.01	2.594	2.58

Nightclubs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research her Department has commissioned regarding a possible link between the incidence of alcohol-related deaths and licensing hours of nightclubs. [221254]

Mr. Caborn: The Government intend to monitor the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 but have not commissioned, and do not intend to commission at this time, any specific research relating to a possible link between the incidence of alcohol-related deaths and the licensing hours of nightclubs. However, the evaluation which we will be conducting into the impact of licensing reform on crime and disorder will seek to establish whether levels of violence and disorder occurring in and around licensed premises have changed as a result of flexible opening hours.

Science Museum

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the Director of the Science Museum on the proposed closure of its library. [222369]

Estelle Morris: Following discussions with DCMS, the Trustees of the Science Museum have informed DCMS that they have decided for the time being, to continue the Science Museum Library's presence in the Imperial College building, South Kensington. This will enable the Trustees to give further consideration to the options, taking into account the feedback received from a wide range of interested parties.

Switchco

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent progress has been made towards the establishment of Switchco. [221158]

Estelle Morris: Good progress has been made on the establishment of Switchco. Stakeholders are now working on the structure and remit of the switchover implementation body, and expect it to be in place in the second quarter of this year.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tsunami

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of steps taken by the Indian Government to ensure tsunami relief aid reaches the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. [221816]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The geographical position of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and related security considerations, meant that the initial Government of India (GoI) response to the relief and rehabilitation requirements of the area took longer than that for affected mainland areas. The GoI has allocated around £100 million pounds in financial assistance to the islands following the tsunami. Considerable support has also been committed in terms of military personnel and logistical support. The GoI has also allowed NGOs (including international NGOs) access to a number of the islands to undertake relief and rehabilitation work. UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme have a presence in the islands, and DFID is providing £476,000 support to the Voluntary Health association of India (VHAI) to undertake relief work and livelihoods rehabilitation in Little Andaman.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) how much aid has been contributed by the UK Government to relief and reconstruction work in the Maldives since the tsunami disaster; [222065]

(2) what *(a)* financial support and *(b)* transport facilities the UK Government have provided to ship relief supplies to the Maldives following the tsunami disaster; [222066]

(3) what funds the UK Government have paid to UK-based aid organisations for relief and reconstruction work in the Maldives since the tsunami disaster. [222692]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID channelled £2 million through the regional appeal of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which are present and meeting needs in the Maldives, though it is not possible at this stage to say how much of our regional support went to a specific country. Likewise, DFID has committed $40 million to

the United Nations Flash Appeal for the region. Part of our Flash Appeal commitment does include support specifically earmarked for the Maldives. £3,305,057 channelled through the World Health Organisation included assistance to the Maldives, as did £4,000,000 channelled through the United Nations Children's Fund. £500,000 channelled through the United Nations Development Programme was entirely for activities in the Maldives, to help restore livelihoods, including assistance to households involved in agriculture, tourism, fishing, light manufacturing and other sectors.

In addition to support to United Nations programmes, DFID also financed a flight for International Health Partners carrying donated drugs from the pharmaceutical industry to the Maldives. This was at a cost of £5,221.

Other in-kind assistance to the Maldives included a flight chartered by DFID at a cost of £81,000, to deliver water donated by Scottish Water. DFID also airlifted two landing craft and plant machinery, along with training support, at a total cost of £550,000. In addition, DFID seconded a water and sanitation engineer to the United Nations Children Fund for three months to support its work in the Maldives, at a cost of £28,000.

Microbicide Development Programme

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support he is giving to the Microbicide Development Programme; what support he expects to give to the Programme after 2006; what steps he is taking to encourage other countries to offer similar levels of support; and if he will make a statement. [221813]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The UK Government are a strong supporter of microbicide development. From October 2001 to 31 September 2006, DFID is providing a grant of £16 million to the Microbicide Development Programme (MDP) co-ordinated by the Medical Research Councils Clinical Trials Unit and Imperial College. A proposal for a Phase III trial (where Microbicides are tested on women) to be undertaken by MDP is currently being considered.

Tackling HIV and AIDS will be a priority for the UK G8 and EU presidencies, particularly maintaining momentum on prevention through existing and new technologies.

We are currently engaged with the EC on the development of its new revised "Programme of Action to Confront HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria through External Action (PfA) 2007–11" which is its framework for tackling AIDS outside the EU. A key aspect of this will be to encourage the EU 's role in development of effective new technologies including Microbicides as part of comprehensive prevention strategies.

Small Grants Scheme

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many organisations benefit from his Department's Small Grants Scheme; and in which countries. [221759]

Mr. Gareth Thomas *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The countries in which the Small Grants Scheme has operated over the past five-years are detailed as follows. We do not hold the information centrally on which organisations have benefited from the Small Grants Scheme and this information could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Expenditure on Small Grants Scheme

£000

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	* 2003–04
Africa					
Africa: South of Sahara	5,541	3,931	3,457	3,219	3,357
Angola	—	4	—	—	52
Botswana	85	80	71	87	128
Burkina Faso	18	—	11	—	30
Burundi	56	31	19	59	83
Cameroon	270	284	224	69	252
Cape Verde	15	13	—	—	—
Comoros Islands	21	—	—	—	—
Congo, Dem. Rep.	15	38	48	83	112
Cote d'Ivoire	158	102	71	207	150
Djibouti	—	—	—	14	—
Eritrea	270	152	34	126	40
Ethiopia	273	264	152	260	229
Gambia	108	121	436	52	47
Ghana	152	34	17	9	21
Guinea	27	—	—	—	10
Kenya	135	91	266	146	173
Lesotho	84	130	91	39	46
Liberia	8	—	—	—	—
Madagascar	289	241	203	131	294
Malawi	62	12	67	—	—
Mali	15	20	—	—	—
Mauritania	1	—	—	—	—
Mauritius	44	133	59	16	89
Mozambique	95	187	116	196	129
Namibia	44	55	37	56	1
Niger	4	15	20	—	—

Expenditure on Small Grants Scheme

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	£000 2003–04
Nigeria	693	130	7	15	6
Rwanda	166	264	218	169	210
Sao Tome and Principe	1	—	—	—	—
Senegal	197	207	177	36	23
Seychelles	241	—	23	—	—
Sierra Leone	1	25	46	70	83
Somalia	35	10	5	—	—
South Africa	558	677	462	423	252
Sudan	107	83	88	221	263
Swaziland	454	85	63	69	105
Tanzania	251	73	8	225	106
Uganda	259	65	111	181	119
Zambia	126	139	139	135	118
Zimbabwe	204	166	168	123	196
Africa: North of Sahara	385	237	20	63	62
Egypt	59	52	20	63	62
Morocco	155	148	—	—	—
Tunisia	171	37	—	—	—
Total Africa	5,927	4,168	3,477	3,281	3,419
Asia					
Asia: Far East	1,176	1,307	1,018	1,024	1,352
Cambodia	120	120	90	97	95
China	180	124	96	124	113
East Timor	—	—	45	97	165
Indonesia	86	131	164	199	224
Laos	203	176	111	142	185
Malaysia	2	—	—	—	—
Mongolia	255	230	214	97	192
Philippines	130	340	149	122	263
Thailand	44	43	53	24	45
Vietnam	156	143	96	121	70
Asia: South	1,333	941	584	1,177	975
Afghanistan	40	60	20	130	88
Bangladesh	144	139	27	188	88
Bhutan	11	—	—	—	—
Burma	16	—	—	—	—
India	206	84	211	219	212
Maldives	248	217	66	180	179
Nepal	212	145	79	153	202
Pakistan	210	90	97	141	44
Sri Lanka	248	206	84	165	163
Asia: Central Asian Republics	198	184	105	169	94
Kazakhstan	77	33	24	28	21
Kyrgyzstan	40	54	20	33	30
Tajikistan	7	2	17	30	9
Turkmenistan	26	41	15	43	36
Uzbekistan	48	53	29	36	2
Asia: Middle East	694	455	566	735	382
Jordan	212	165	201	179	83
Lebanon	106	177	65	179	102
Oman	13	—	—	—	—
Syria	75	80	—	89	51
West Bank and Gaza	25	—	—	—	—
Yemen	263	33	301	289	145
Total Asia	3,401	2,887	2,273	3,105	2,803
Europe					
Albania	21	45	54	91	63
Armenia	69	30	23	21	37
Azerbaijan	53	10	5	13	48
Belarus	48	51	18	17	16
Bosnia	210	66	228	70	232
Bulgaria	152	131	63	176	157
Croatia	206	82	1	16	17
Czech Republic	235	165	103	126	28
Estonia	75	33	40	77	—
Georgia	34	3	20	5	50
Hungary	126	122	63	94	74
Latvia	86	73	33	60	—
Lithuania	72	4	54	25	19
Macedonia	50	88	61	76	105
Moldova	25	39	2	3	49
Poland	254	246	206	169	3
Romania	248	175	93	232	130
Russian Federation	229	152	134	98	50

Expenditure on Small Grants Scheme

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	£000 2003–04
Serbia and Montenegro	—	—	441	348	427
Slovak Republic	182	132	113	201	—
Slovenia	26	77	75	119	35
Ukraine	182	156	215	184	137
Total Europe	2,587	1,881	2,045	2,223	1,677
Americas					
Americas: Caribbean	706	507	367	549	285
Anguilla	—	1	—	—	—
Antigua and Barbuda	20	1	18	29	—
Barbados	54	95	38	87	30
Belize	96	56	60	75	72
British Virgin Islands	27	—	—	—	—
Dominica	19	1	—	—	—
Dominican Republic	108	48	31	49	—
Grenada	19	25	23	—	3
Guyana	52	67	19	115	79
Jamaica	106	95	103	76	77
Montserrat	130	76	70	83	14
St. Lucia	20	5	2	8	7
St. Vincent and Grenadines	24	23	2	25	4
Trinidad and Tobago	30	1	—	—	—
Turks and Caicos Islands	1	12	—	—	—
Americas: Central	1,217	1,285	767	770	461
Costa Rica	111	182	114	53	117
Cuba	170	85	49	220	87
El Salvador	135	132	84	67	—
Guatemala	171	141	86	132	116
Haiti	16	18	21	—	17
Honduras	267	251	204	155	76
Mexico	91	248	7	—	—
Nicaragua	197	204	191	143	47
Panama	59	24	24	—	—
Americas: South	1,946	1,273	905	971	564
Argentine Republic	99	—	—	—	—
Bolivia	281	250	216	165	146
Brazil	276	237	151	176	195
Colombia	249	226	174	166	19
Ecuador	229	235	114	222	117
Paraguay	133	100	59	56	—
Peru	263	189	191	186	87
Uruguay	247	—	—	—	—
Venezuela	168	35	—	—	—
Total Americas	3,869	3,065	2,039	2,290	1,310
Pacific					
Pacific	333	347	226	414	350
Total Pacific	333	347	226	414	350
Total Small Grants Scheme	16,116	12,348	10,060	11,313	9,558

Uganda

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the Lord's Resistance Army operating in Sudan and Uganda on *(a)* the human rights of the Ugandan population and *(b)* the stability of Uganda's government; and if he will make a statement. [222023]

Hilary Benn: The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has seriously undermined the human rights of the people of northern Uganda. Its abuses include murder, mutilation, abduction, sexual violence and torture. Many of the victims are women, children and the elderly.

LRA activity has had minimal effect on the stability of Uganda's central Government but it has disrupted local government in the North and seriously hindered poverty reduction efforts and the delivery of basic services to the population.

HOME DEPARTMENT

2 Marsham Street

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the expected opening date of the new Home Office buildings in 2 Marsham street is. [205343]

Mr. Charles Clarke: A date for the official opening of 2 Marsham street has not yet been set. The Home Office took possession of the building on 26 January 2005. Staff began moving in on 7 February 2005. The occupation of the building will be phased over a period of three months.

Anti-terrorist Legislation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his policy to allow

information obtained under torture from British citizens held by another country in prosecutions carried out under anti-terrorist legislation. [205899]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Government unreservedly condemns the use of torture and has made it an important part of its foreign policy to pursue its eradication worldwide.

The Government are not aware of any proceedings in a United Kingdom court in which any statement which is established to have been made as a result of torture has been invoked as evidence, except against a person accused of torture.

Asylum Seekers

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Department plans to undertake further research on the situation in the countries of origin of lesbian and gay people making asylum claims. [221804]

Mr. Browne: The country information material produced by the Home Office, for use by officials in the asylum determination process, is compiled from up to date information from a wide range of well recognised sources about the situation in the country of origin.

These sources include intergovernmental bodies (such as UN agencies), governmental sources (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development as well as other Governments) and human rights organisations (such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and International Crisis Group). Country reports, which are produced biannually on the top 20 asylum intake countries, include a section on the treatment of homosexuals and lesbians, which usually draws upon material produced by organisations focusing on gay issues such as the International Lesbian and Gay Association.

In addition, case-specific research is undertaken as required where additional detailed information is needed to decide an individual asylum or human rights application.

There are no plans at present to undertake further specific research regarding the treatment of gays and lesbians.

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided to officials dealing with asylum applications regarding the grounds for granting refugee status to applicants who have fled persecution because of their homosexuality. [221806]

Mr. Browne: Training is given to asylum caseworkers on making decisions based upon the criteria set out in the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Homosexuality is not specifically mentioned under the 1951 Convention, but in the training of asylum caseworkers it is advised that homosexuality in certain limited circumstances may constitute a significant factor in the recognition of a particular social group under the terms of the Convention

Under the terms of the Convention a refugee is a person who can demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution in his country of origin for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what circumstances homosexual people from Jamaica applying for asylum in the UK would be returned to their country of origin. [221815]

Mr. Browne: Asylum and human rights claims by Jamaican homosexuals are, like those of all claimants, from all countries, considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). If the claimant meets the definition of a refugee in the 1951 Refugee Convention, they are granted asylum. If they do not qualify for asylum, but there are other circumstances that make them particularly vulnerable and engage our obligations under the ECHR, they are granted humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. If an application is refused, and any appeal is unsuccessful, then we expect the individual concerned to leave the UK voluntarily. If they do not, we consider that it is entirely reasonable for us to enforce the return of that individual.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are applied in granting humanitarian protection to individuals refused asylum; and by what means applications for such grant may be made. [222349]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* Humanitarian Protection (HP) is granted to individuals who would, if removed, face in the country of return a serious risk to life or person arising from:

the death penalty

unlawful killing

torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Asylum claimants are automatically considered for HP if they fail to qualify for refugee status. They will be granted leave under the HP policy if they meet the criteria set out above and are not excluded on the basis that there are serious reasons for considering that they:

fall within Articles 1 F*(a)* or 1 F*(c)* of the Refugee Convention

have committed a serious crime in the UK or overseas

are a danger to national security.

Individuals may also be excluded from HP where this is considered appropriate in light of their character, conduct or associations.

There is further information on the HP policy and detailed guidance on its application in the Asylum Policy Instruction on Humanitarian Protection which is published on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1959W, how *(a)* e-Borders and *(b)* identity cards will enable more precise monitoring of the whereabouts of failed Iranian asylum seekers in the future. [222360]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The five-year Immigration Strategy that we announced on 7 February contained details of our plans through e-Borders to introduce an electronic system of counting in and out visitors to the UK. Automated electronic checks will record people's movements to provide a greatly enhanced passenger movement audit with significantly more reliable inbound and outbound data information than any of the border agencies have been able to obtain in the past.

The Immigration Service is taking forward a number of projects under the umbrella of the e-Borders programme. Advance passenger information combined with new technology will allow passenger information to be collected on departure from the UK. The departure information will provide vital management and intelligence information, which may then be reconciled against information held on failed asylum seekers (FAS). A number of other Government agencies, such as the Department of Health, Department of Work and Pensions and the Inland Revenue have also expressed an interest in the potential benefits of a comprehensive passenger movement record.

The benefits of introducing a system for reconciling a passenger's departure from the UK against his/her arrival works only with a fully integrated comprehensive system covering all passengers and routes (including air, sea and rail). Such a system is planned as part of the full e-Borders solution. It is not intended to issue identity cards to failed asylum seekers. However, by reducing the opportunity for failed asylum seekers to work illegally, ID cards will make it less practical to remain in the UK as a failed asylum seeker.

Burglary (Sentencing)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what proportion of burglars convicted for a third offence received a custodial sentence in the most recent year for which information is available; and what the average length of sentence for those sentenced to custody was. [216331]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 21 February 2005]:* The table gives the numbers sentenced for their third burglary offence. The numbers are for a four week period in 2001, derived from the Offenders Index. The figures include attempted burglaries, as it is not possible to distinguish between an actual and attempted burglary on the Offenders Index.

Burglars convicted for their third offence (by type of burglary)

	Burglary in a dwelling[1]	*Burglary not in a dwelling*[2]
Number sentenced (for the third offence)	99	89
Number sentenced to custody	75	42
Proportion sentenced to custody (percentage)	76	47
Average sentence length (months)	17.7	10.0

[1] Includes only previous convictions for burglary in a dwelling. Please note that definition and coverage is different from s111 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000.

[2] Includes only previous convictions for burglary not in a dwelling

Civil Service

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civil service staff have failed security vetting procedures in each year since 1997. [204531]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Separate figures are not kept to differentiate between civil servants and non-civil servants who have been refused security vetting by the Home Office.

Community Sentences

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* community service and *(b)* restorative justice sentences were imposed in (i) Redbridge, (ii) Waltham Forest, (iii) London and (iv) England in each of the last three years; what proportion of all sentences in each area each represented in each year; what plans he has to encourage increased use of each type of sentence; and if he will make a statement. [221247]

Paul Goggins: Information on community sentences for the years 2000 to 2003 is contained in table A. Statistics for 2004 will be published in the latter part of this year.

Restorative justice can form part of referral orders and reparation orders, which are disposals for juveniles. The Youth Justice Board has set a key performance indicator (KPI) for Youth Offending Teams (YOTS) which seeks to ensure that at least 75 per cent. of victims of youth crime referred to YOTS are offered the opportunity to participate in restorative processes by 2005. Table B gives performance against this KPI.

The Government are keen to encourage the use of restorative justice throughout the adult criminal justice system. The Criminal Justice Act 2003 allows for restorative justice to be part of an offender's sentence, permitting sentencers to include it in activity requirements imposed as part of a Community Order. This will be piloted in due course. The Act also allows for the use of restorative justice in the new Conditional Caution. We are about to issue implementation guidance on restorative justice for Local Criminal Justice Boards and their constituent agencies.

As part of the reform of the sentencing structure in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, current community sentences for adults, including the community punishment order, will be replaced by a single generic community order with a range of possible requirements. Courts will then be able to choose different elements to make up a bespoke community order. Technological advances, such as electronic monitoring provide innovative ways to monitor compliance, reduce offending and ensure community sentences are not a soft option. The new community order will be available from 4 April 2005 and will apply only to offences committed on or after that date.

Table A: Persons sentenced to community sentences in Redbridge, Waltham Forest, London and England and as a proportion of all persons sentenced, 2000–03

Area and year	Community rehabilitation order		Supervision order		Community punishment order	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2001						
Redbridge	169	5	39	1	136	4
Waltham Forest	170	4	38	1	141	3
Total London	7,322	4	1,660	1	5,609	3
Total England	55,182	4	10,103	1	46,374	4
2002						
Redbridge	204	5	35	1	145	3
Waltham Forest	207	4	49	1	164	3
Total London	7,389	4	1,452	1	6,787	3
Total England	59,805	5	9,695	1	47,285	4
2003						
Redbridge	175	5	36	1	154	4
Waltham Forest	188	5	45	1	172	4
Total London	6,286	3	1,313	1	7,013	4
Total England	58,882	4	9,174	1	46,926	3

Area and year	Attendance centre order		Community punishment and rehabilitation order		Curfew order	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2001						
Redbridge	11	0	99	3	3	0
Waltham Forest	25	1	69	2	9	0
Total London	597	0	2,051	1	286	0
Total England	5,656	0	13,610	1	3,688	0
2002						
Redbridge	10	0	65	1	5	0
Waltham Forest	14	0	56	1	9	0
Total London	402	0	1,959	1	590	0
Total England	3,834	0	14,463	1	5,933	0
2003						
Redbridge	13	0	64	2	9	0
Waltham Forest	10	0	59	1	4	0
Total London	261	0	1,932	1	758	0
Total England	3,102	0	14,169	1	9,097	1

Area and year	Reparation order		Action plan order		Drug treatment and testing order	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2001						
Redbridge	17	1	34	1	21	1
Waltham Forest	16	0	54	1	12	0
Total London	697	0	1,331	1	712	0
Total England	7,435	1	8,188	1	4,053	0
2002						
Redbridge	13	0	20	0	17	0
Waltham Forest	9	0	31	1	26	0
Total London	412	0	789	0	791	0
Total England	4,619	0	5,783	0	4,943	0
2003						
Redbridge	2	0	9	0	20	1
Waltham Forest	4	0	9	0	34	1
Total London	229	0	482	0	1,008	1
Total England	2,876	0	4,009	0	6,531	0

Area and year	Referral order[1]		Total community sentences		Total persons sentenced
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
2001					
Redbridge	..	..	529	16	3,273
Waltham Forest	..	..	534	13	4,204
Total London	..	..	20,265	12	174,754
Total England	..	..	154,289	12	1,252,396
2002					
Redbridge	81	2	595	13	4,432
Waltham Forest	83	2	648	12	5,221
Total London	3,016	2	23,587	12	200,855
Total England	18,161	1	174,521	13	1,317,643

Area and year	Referral order[1] Number	Referral order[1] Percentage	Total community sentences Number	Total community sentences Percentage	Total persons sentenced
	120	3	602	16	3,866
2003					
Redbridge	108	3	633	15	4,126
Waltham Forest	3,617	2	22,899	12	197,069
Total London	24,220	2	178,986	13	1,347,753
Total England	108	3	633	15	4,126

[1] Referral orders were introduced nationally on 1 April 2002.

Table B: Performance against the YJB Restorative Justice KPI

	2002[1]	2003–04	Percentage April to December 2004[2]
Redbridge	98.30	96.50	84.90
Waltham Forest	18.70	47.70	90.60
London	54.70	68.20	73.40
England	54.80	65.50	79.90

[1] Due to limitations in information systems, KPI performance data before 2003–04 were collected in calendar years.
[2] These are provisional and subject to change.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reconviction rates were for community-based sentences in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* type of sentence and *(b)* offence committed. [217732]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The probability that an offender will be reconvicted is strongly associated with a number of factors such as age and previous criminal history. It is not appropriate to compare reconviction rates over time as allowances need to be made for any change in the characteristics of offenders being given community-based sentences. For instance, if young offenders were proportionally more numerous in some years than they were in others, we would predict an increase in the actual rate as younger offenders are more likely to be reconvicted.

Home Office Online Report 59/04 controlled for such changes in characteristics, and also excluded the impact of more rigorous enforcement of breaches by the Probation Service. It found that, when compared to the reconviction rate that is predicted given their characteristics, there was a reduction of 2 per cent. in the reconviction rate between 1997 and 2001 for adult offenders given community sentences, although this reduction was not statistically significant

The tables give unadjusted reconviction rates for those receiving community based sentences in each year since 1997, broken down by type of sentence and offence committed. The figures given are for those aged 16 and over and show the percentage reconvicted within two years. Figures broken down by offence are not readily available for the years 1997 and 1998.

Reconviction rates within 2 years of commencing a community sentence under supervision of the Probation Service, since 1997, by type of order given

	Community rehabilitation order	Community punishment and rehabilitation order	Community punishment order	Percentage reconvicted All community penalties
1997	60	59	48	55
1998	61	59	50	56
1999	61	60	48	56
2000	64	63	51	59
2001	65	62	50	59

Reconviction rates within 2 years of commencing a community sentence under supervision of the Probation Service, since 1997, by original offence

	Violence against the person	Sexual Offences	Robbery	Burglary	Percentage reconvicted Theft
1997[1]	—	—	—	—	—
1998[1]	—	—	—	—	—
1999	46	21	58	71	69
2000	48	30	63	74	73
2001	49	25	69	74	73

	Fraud and forgery	Drugs offences	Motoring offences	Criminal damage	Other Indictable offences	Other summary offences
1997[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999	43	56	42	61	55	72
2000	48	59	45	62	56	61
2001	48	61	45	66	58	60

[1] Figures not readily available
Notes:
1. Only reconvictions for standard list offences are counted as reconvictions.
2. The original offence is the principal offence at conviction. This is the conviction that incurs the most severe sentence at each court appearance.

Counter-terrorism

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the update provided at the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 19 November by the EU Counter Terrorist Co-ordinator on the EU's role in the fight against terrorism; and what documents were referred to during that update. [207091]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Minister with responsibility for Europe (Caroline Flint) attended the lunch on 19 November at which the EU Counter Terrorist Co-ordinator Mr. Gijs De Vries gave a brief oral update on work under way. He underlined the importance implementing the agreed measures and legislation and in this context welcomed: the Revised EU Action Plan to Combat Terrorism; working to combat terrorist financing through the new EU strategy; an EU solidarity programme for management of the consequences of terrorist attacks; a strategy for integrating CT issues into EU external relations policy.

All of these papers were subsequently agreed at the JHA Council on 2 December and then at the European Council on 17 December.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many delegates registered for his Department's conference on 18 January on protection against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorist threats have indicated on the application questionnaire a background in each relevant discipline; what guidance has been given by the security services in the selection of delegates to the conference; and what the role of the conference is in respect of tenders for work on countering CBRN threats. [208240]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All applicants inquiring about the UK CBRN Science and Technology Bidders Conference were asked to give brief details of their main areas of expertise or interest. The responses given were varied and it was not possible to categorise applicants clearly by a particular discipline. The applications were checked by a small cross-government scientific panel that judged whether the areas of scientific or technological interest given on each application indicated an ability to contribute to Government requirements.

In general when deciding which applicants should be invited, the panel showed a greater bias towards applicants indicating experience or an obvious interest in chemical and biological issues, given the nature of the conference agenda.

It has been the established policy of successive Governments neither to confirm nor to deny questions concerning the activities of the intelligence and security agencies.

Delegates are being asked to submit outline technical proposals in the appropriate areas following the conference and the most promising of these will lead to invitations to work them up into formal, costed projects that we hope could begin during 2005–06.

Country Information and Policy Unit Reports

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what mechanisms organisations outside the Government may challenge the accuracy of information in his Department's Country Information and Policy Unit reports. [221805]

Mr. Browne: Any organisations or individuals wishing to challenge or comment on the country information material produced by the Home Office may contact the independent Advisory Panel on Country Information. The Advisory Panel was established under the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 to provide expert external scrutiny of the Home Office's country information material and advice to help ensure that this is as accurate and balanced as possible.

The Advisory Panel welcomes feedback from all sources. Information about the work of the Panel and contact details are provided on its website at www.apci.co.uk

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps have been taken to ensure the quality and accuracy of information in the Country Information and Policy Unit's report on Algeria. [221807]

Mr. Browne: Standard instructions are given to the Country Information and Policy Unit (CIPU) staff about ensuring that the Reports are as accurate, balanced, impartial and up to date as possible. All Country Reports by CIPU go through a quality assurance procedure that includes internal scrutiny, and consultation with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, before issue. In addition the independent Advisory Panel on Country Information provides rigorous external scrutiny of country information material produced by the Home Office and makes recommendations to help ensure that it is of the highest quality. The Advisory Panel rightly considered it essential that the Home Office's country information material should not only be objective in fact, but should also be perceived as being objective and have the confidence of all its users. That is why I announced on 8 September 2004 that in future, the production of country information material used by the Home Office will be undertaken by a country information unit dedicated solely to that function.

The Home Office Country Report on Algeria was last updated in April 2004. No further update was issued in October 2004 because Algeria does not currently come within the criteria we use when determining for which countries we produce regular reports.

Home Detention Curfew

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners have been released on the home detention curfew scheme since January 1999; what the categories of offences were for which they had been sentenced; how many such prisoners were released in each category; and what the average sentence received was in relation to each category. [218989]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested, as recorded on the Prison Service IT system for the period 28 January 1999 to 31 January 2005, is provided in the table.

Investigations suggest that offence codes are recorded incorrectly for around 5 per cent. of all home detention curfew (HDC) discharges. This is due to the way the Prison Service IT system deals with a prisoner's record if he/she is returned to custody for committing further offences prior to the licence expiry date of the original sentence. The new offence code overrides the original offence code under which the prisoner was released on HDC.

The table includes releases relating to sexual offenders. These were eligible to be considered for release under HDC until March 2001. Since then, prisoners subject to the registration requirements of part 1 of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 (now replaced by part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003) are statutorily excluded from the scheme and all other prisoners convicted of a sexual offence are presumed unsuitable for release on HDC. In addition, since 14 July 2003 prisoners convicted of certain serious offences, including offences involving the death of the victim, attempted murder, threats to kill and racially aggravated offences, are presumed unsuitable for release unless there are exceptional circumstances.

HDC discharges by offence type[1]—28 January 1999 to 31 January 2005

	Number	*Average sentence (months)*
Total	106,356	14.5
Violence against the person	19,077	14.8
Sexual offences	78	12.0
Burglary	9,731	19.7
Robbery	5,133	27.9
Theft and handling	14,212	11.0
Fraud and forgery	7,409	13.4
Drugs offences	15,139	22.6
Motoring offences	17,148	5.5
Other[2]	18,409	12.8

1 Offence recorded on Prison Service IT system.
Investigations suggest that around 5 per cent. of offence types recorded on this system do not relate to the offence prisoners were released on HDC for, but relate to offences committed after release from prison and before their licence expiry date.
2 Includes the offence of bigamy.

Immigration

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the 35 main ports of entry to the United Kingdom, as defined by the Immigration Act 1971. [221091]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Statutory Instrument 1987/177 designated 35 ports of entry for the purposes of the Immigration Act 1971. These are as follows:

Seaports and Hoverports

Dover, Felixstowe, Folkestone, Harwich, Hull, London, Newhaven, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Ramsgate, Sheerness, Southampton and Tyne.

Airports

Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Bournemouth (Hurn), Bristol, Cardiff (Wales), East Midlands, Edinburgh, Gatwick London, Glasgow, Heathrow London, Leeds/Bradford, Liverpool, Luton, Manchester, Newcastle, Norwich, Prestwick, Southampton, Southend, Stansted London and Teesside.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which of the 35 main ports of entry to the United Kingdom are staffed 24 hours a day. [221093]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Of the 35 ports of entry designated in Statutory Instrument (SI)1987/177 (which designated ports of entry for the purposes of the 1971 Act), 11 are currently staffed 24 hours a day.

These are:

Airports

Birmingham, East Midlands, Gatwick, Glasgow, Heathrow, Liverpool, Luton, Manchester and Stansted.

Seaports

Harwich and Portsmouth.

Other ports are staffed to provide coverage in line with passenger services requiring immigration control.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants were found at each of the 35 main ports of entry to the United Kingdom in each year since 1997; and how many were found in total in each year. [221094]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Data are not available for 1997. Locally collated management information for 1998 to 2004 is provided in Table 1. These data may be subject to change and do not represent National Statistics. These figures relate predominately to clandestine entrants but may also include other categories of illegal entry.

Table 1: Illegal immigrants found at UK ports, 1997 to 2004

Location	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Aberdeen	n/a	0	0	0	1	0	40	4
Belfast	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Birmingham	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bournemouth (Hurn)	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bristol	n/a	0	0	0	1	0	8	12
Cardiff	n/a	0	0	0	1	0	2	13
Dover	n/a	3,212	8,898	12,677	9,220	8,030	1,651	804
East Midlands	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Edinburgh	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	10	1
Felixstowe	n/a	261	459	367	107	39	5	20
Folkestone	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Gatwick	n/a		0	0	0	0	0	0
Glasgow	n/a	0	8	0	0	0	10	0
Harwich	n/a	250	286	108	90	8	10	6
Heathrow	n/a	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
Hull	n/a	83	67	0	60	0	19	30
Leeds/ Bradford	n/a	23	6	88	0	0	1	1

Table 1: Illegal immigrants found at UK ports, 1997 to 2004[1]

Location	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Liverpool	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
London	n/a	0	0	0	28	9	0	0
Luton	n/a	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manchester	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newcastle	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Newhaven	n/a	40	4	2	0	21	10	21
Norwich	n/a	5	3	0	0	0	6	1
Plymouth	n/a	7	6	0	0	3	4	6
Portsmouth	n/a	255	177	60	106	41	160	192
Prestwick	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ramsgate	n/a	102	0	0	0	0	1	0
Sheerness	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Southampton	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	2	7
Southend	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stansted	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teesside	n/a	0	0	125	115	5	1	1
Tyne ports	n/a	22	35	46	11	9	4	7
Total[2]	n/a	4,262	9,939	13,473	9,740	8,171	1,946	1,143

[1] The data provided are based on locally collated management information, which may be subject to change.
[2] The total is only for the ports listed.

Table 2 shows published data on the total number of persons against whom illegal entry action was initiated since 1997. Illegal entry action is initiated against those people who are detected having entered or attempted to enter the country clandestinely or by means of deception, either verbal or documentary. These figures include those illegal entrants detected both at ports of entry and inland.

Table 2: Persons against whom illegal entry action was initiated, 1997 to 2004[1]

	Number
1997	14,390
1998	16,500
1999	21,165
2000	47,325
2001	69,875
2002	48,050
2003[2]	22,950
2004[3]	Not available

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[2] Data were not of sufficient quality for publication in 2003, however it is estimated that 22,950 persons had illegal entry action initiated against them in this year. Due to poor data quality this is not an official statistic.
[3] Data for 2004 are not yet available. These will be published in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin "Control of Immigration Statistics: United Kingdom, 2004" in summer 2005.

Official statistics on immigration matters are available from the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants were picked up each year by patrol boats in UK waters in each year since 1997. [221163]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Although the UK Immigration Service mounts joint operations with other agencies on an intelligence led basis they do not routinely patrol UK waters.

The local port deals with any illegal immigrants detected in UK waters but statistics on these detections are not collated separately.

IND Training

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training is provided to senior caseworkers in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to help them provide support and advice to junior officials. [221781]

Mr. Browne: Senior caseworkers will normally have had significant experience as asylum caseworkers and will have received the same training as caseworkers earlier in their careers.

In addition, all senior caseworkers have direct access to policy experts in the Asylum Policy Unit, country information specialists in the Country Information Policy Unit and, in appropriate cases, to legal advice from the Home Office Legal Advisers Branch.

Senior Caseworkers also have the opportunity to meet regularly with a wide range of external stakeholders to further augment their understanding of asylum policy and process.

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the nature is of the training in the assessment of asylum claims which is provided to asylum caseworkers. [221782]

Mr. Browne: Asylum caseworkers are trained to make asylum decisions without discrimination and on their individual merits in accordance with the criteria set out in the 1951 UN convention relating to the status of refugees.

Training focuses on the skills, knowledge and ability required to make effective decisions based on the law. Caseworkers are instructed on how to identify an asylum claim and to then apply the salient facts to the legislation.

Infectious Diseases (UK Entrants)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals have been deported for carrying tuberculosis in each year since 1997. [217743]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Figures for the number of people removed or deported from the United Kingdom are published regularly and are available from the Home Office website www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

However, it is not possible to identify from the data how many are refused entry or deported because of health reasons.

John Lennon Airport

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many individuals entering the country with questionable identification have been detained at John Lennon airport but have subsequently absconded from the airport in the last 12 months; [207335]

(2) what the minimum number of Custom and Immigration officers on duty at John Lennon airport was in the last period for which figures are available; [207318]

(3) what representations have been made to his Department on detention arrangements for passengers believed to be trying to enter the country illegally at John Lennon airport; [207319]

(4) what discussions have taken place with *(a)* Peel Holdings and *(b)* operators of no frills airlines with regard to improving security at John Lennon airport. [207321]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration Service provides a 24-hour service at John Lennon airport. Two immigration officers are scheduled for duty throughout the period, except from 07.30 to 10.00 hours when there is one. This shift coverage takes into account the schedule of incoming flights.

There are no customs officers permanently based at Liverpool John Lennon airport. Customs attendance is determined on the basis of risk. Customs officers deploy to the airport in accordance with flight or passenger profiles or more specific intelligence. Mobile staff are deployed from the local area, or from the regional or national strike forces on a flexible basis in order to be able to respond to any identified risk. They attend selected arrivals for class 'A' drugs, revenue goods and other prohibited or restricted items, and selected departures for work in connection with the Proceeds of Crime Act. Therefore, there will be no customs staff on duty for some arrivals/departures, but a much larger number of mobile staff for others, where a risk has been identified.

The Immigration Service is working to identify and implement cost-effective improvements to ensure appropriate access to detention and escort facilities when required.

Peel Holdings, as the airport operator, has overall responsibility for the security of John Lennon airport. A representative from the Immigration Service attends regular meetings with Peel Holdings, the police, HM Customs and Excise and other control authority partners, to discuss new airline routes and airport development. The Immigration Service also attend a monthly multi-agency threat and risk assessment meeting with other security stakeholders to make accurate assessments of any threats to John Lennon airport.

Between April 2004 and January 2005 there have been three occasions where passengers whose identity was in doubt have absconded from the immigration control at John Lennon airport. To reduce the risk of this happening again, the Immigration Service are in negotiations to improve security at the immigration control there. Records of such absconders prior to April 2004 are not available.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the parliamentary question reference 205820 tabled by the hon. Member for North Cornwall on 20 December 2004. [215856]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 10 February 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 20 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 368W.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will answer the question from the hon. Member for Portsmouth South, reference 200027. [216514]

Caroline Flint: I replied to the hon. Member on 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 65W.

Police (Convictions)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many serving police officers were convicted of an offence in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Essex in each year since 1997, broken down by type of offence; and what the average sentence was in each case. [221249]

Ms Blears: It is not possible to identify the occupation of defendants on the Home Office Court Proceedings database, as the individual circumstances of the offence are not collected.

Police Funding

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the funding per head of population for each police authority in England and Wales is in 2004–05. [204799]

Ms Blears: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Meriden (Mrs. Spelman) on 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1008W.

Police Surveillance

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the time taken to receive authorisation to enable police officers to undertake *(a)* covert and *(b)* directed surveillance of (i) named and (ii) as yet unidentified criminal associates of individuals under Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [221128]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The time taken by a police officer to make a written application for authorisation for covert directed surveillance and by an authorising officer to consider that application and, if appropriate to do so, grant the authorisation will depend on the circumstances of the specific investigation or operation. No estimate or assessment has been made by the Home Office of the average time involved.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his policy to require a police officer to obtain a new authorisation to undertake *(a)* covert and *(b)* directed surveillance of (i) named

and (ii) as yet unidentified criminal associates of individuals if they were not originally named in authorisation of surveillance, under Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [221129]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Guidance on authorisation procedures is contained in the statutory code of practice on the use of covert surveillance, adopted by Parliament pursuant to section 71 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Paragraph 2.8 provides guidance on circumstances when an investigation or operation unexpectedly interferes with the privacy of individuals not covered by the authorisation. The Code states

> "When the original authorisation may not be sufficient, consideration should be given to whether the authorisation needs to be amended and reauthorised or a new authorisation is required."

When the identities of previously unknown subjects or their associates become known they should be identified in a renewal authorisation, so long as it is consistent with the original authorisation. If the scope of the investigation or operation is to be broadened a new authorisation will be required.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what process of authorisation he requires a police officer to complete to undertake *(a)* covert and *(b)* directed surveillance of (i) named and (ii) as yet unidentified criminal associates, of individuals, under Part II of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [221131]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Guidance on the use of covert direct surveillance by public authorities, and the authorisation procedures involved, is contained in the code of practice on covert surveillance adopted by Parliament pursuant to section 71 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. The code of practice is available from TSO (The Stationery Office) (ISBN 0113412843) or on the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimpol/crimreduc/regulation/codeofpractice/surveillance/index.html

Prison Programmes

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budgets for *(a)* offending behaviour programmes, *(b)* drug treatment and *(c)* basic skills education in prisons were in 2003–04; and what the budgets are for (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii) 2006–07. [201847]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We are unable to give a full answer as not all of the budgets for 2005–06, and 2006–07, have yet been fully delegated.

The Offending Behaviour Programmes include Sex Offender Programmes. We expect the final expenditure for 2003–04 to be in the region of £25 million, including private prisons. The budget for 2004–05 is £20.5 million.

Expenditure on Drug Treatment in 2003–04 was £38.250 million. The budget for 2004–05 is £51.436 million. The budget for 2005–06 is £61.216 million. These figures are for public prisons only. We do not have the figures for private prisons.

The expected final expenditure for Basic Skills Education in Prisons is £70 million in 2003–04 (or £82 million including Work Skills). The budget for 2004–05 is £85.3 million including Work Skills. These figures are for public prisons only. We do not have the figures for private prisons.

Queenborough Fisheries Trust

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when the Charity Commission last examined the membership of the Queenborough Fisheries Trust; [221123]

(2) when the Charity Commission last examined the criteria for appointments to the board of trustees of the Queenborough Fisheries Trust. [221187]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Charity Commission has not had grounds for examining the membership or the criteria for trustee appointments of the Queenborough Fishery Trust. The Commission does not, and cannot routinely, involve itself in the internal administration of a charity unless a significant regulatory issue arises; internal administration is the responsibility of the charity trustees. The hon. Member is invited to contact the Chief Executive of the Charity Commission if he has any specific concerns regarding this charity or for further information.

Race Relations (Sikhs)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with Sikh representatives to discuss the problems of racist attacks; when he next intends to meet Sikh representatives; and if he will make a statement. [205946]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Although I have had no meetings with the Sikh community to discuss the issue of racist attacks specifically, it has been raised in various discussions I have had with the community.

Although I have no plans to meet Sikh representatives at present, a meeting is being arranged between the Faith Communities Unit and the British Sikh Consultative Forum. I have further indicated my willingness to meet delegates representing the wide range of interests and opinions of the Sikh community.

The Government acknowledges and values the important contribution which the Sikh community makes to the economic and cultural life of this country. The Government race equality and community cohesion strategy, which will shortly be published, includes specific proposals to improve reporting and handling of racially motivated crime.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received on the separate monitoring of Sikhs under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. [206002]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 20 December 2004]:* Since May 2002 the Government have received representations regarding the separate monitoring of Sikhs from the Oxbridge Sikh Alumni Association, the British Sikh Federation, and from various Sikh Gurdwaras.

The Government acknowledges that Sikhs have the same status as all other ethnic and racial groups within the Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to promote Race Equality published under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act.

The Statutory Code of Practice encourages authorities to use the same ethnic classification system as used in the 2001 census or categories that match them very closely. However, the statutory code also recognises that authorities may choose to collect more detailed information to reflect local circumstances. Public authorities with significant Sikh populations in their area may opt to do so.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he has taken to counter racism against Sikh and Muslim communities. [206003]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 20 December 2004]:* We are committed to tackling racist behaviour wherever it occurs and in whatever form. The Government introduced in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 nine new racially aggravated offences which carry higher maximum penalties where there is evidence of a racist motive or racial hostility in connection with the offence. The offences include assaults, verbal abuse and harassment and criminal damage. For these purposes Sikhs and Jews have been deemed by the courts to be racial groups.

The Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 expanded these provisions to cover religiously—as well as racially—aggravated offences, thereby affording the same protection against attacks to religious groups such as Muslims and Christians.

Under the same Act the maximum penalty for incitement to racial hatred, an offence under Part III of the Public Order Act 1986, was increased from two to seven years' imprisonment. This offence makes it unlawful to use threatening, abusive or insulting language with the intention or likelihood that racial hatred would be stirred up.

The Home Secretary has announced that as part of its Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill, the Government are proposing extending this offence to afford the same protection against incitement to hatred to faith communities including Muslims.

The Association of Chief Police Officers is updating its guidance to forces on dealing with hate crime and the Crown Prosecution Service has made clear in its published policy its determination to deal robustly with racial and religious hate crime.

Regional Offender Managers

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated annual cost is for the operation of each of the regional offender managers' offices; and if he will make a statement. [221582]

Paul Goggins: The final location and composition of the regional offender managers' offices has yet to be finalised and the budgets for the offices are yet to be set. However, an indicative budget for 2005–06 for regional offender managers offices has been set at £1:7 million resource.

Research Documents

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many documents have been published by the Research, Development and Statistics section of his Department on each day of the last six months, broken down by subject area. [221176]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information requested on publications published by the Home Office over the last six months is shown in the table. Please note we have classified the research according to the business area leads although some publications will be on more cross-cutting topics that cover more than one business area.

Publications released by Home Office Research and Statistics—September 2004 to March 2005

Publication date	*Title*	*Series*	*RDS Business area*
13 September 2004	Drugs seizure and offender statistics	SB	Drugs
17 September 2004	Piloting 'on the spot penalties' for disorder: final results from a one-year pilot	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
21 September 2004	Prisoner-on-prisoner homicide in England and Wales	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
21 September 2004	Prisoner-on-prisoner homicide in England and Wales	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
23 September 2004	Meeting parents' needs for information: evidence from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey	OLR	Communities
29 September 2004	Community Support Officer (Detention Power) Pilot: evaluation results	Other	Crime and Policing
29 September 2004	Police service strength—England and Wales 31 March 2004	SB	Crime and Policing
5 October 2004	Employer-supported volunteering and giving: findings from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey	HORS	Communities
6 October 2004	Black and Asian offenders pathfinder: implementation report	DPR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
7 October 2004	Understanding voluntary return	OLR	Immigration and Asylum
13 October 2004	What works in community involvement in area-based initiatives? A systematic review of the literature	OLR	Communities
13 October 2004	Facilitating community involvement: practical guidance for practitioners and policy makers	DPR	Communities
20 October 2004	Tackling domestic violence: exploring the health service contribution	OLR	Crime and Policing
20 October 2004	Tackling domestic violence: the role of health professionals	DPR	Crime and Policing
21 October 2004	Crime stats—quarterly bulletin	SB	Crime and Policing
21 October 2004	Short report on distraction burglary	Online supplement to SB 1404	Crime and Policing

Publications released by Home Office Research and Statistics—September 2004 to March 2005

Publication date	*Title*	*Series*	*RDS Business area*
28 October 2004	Perceptions and experience of antisocial behaviour: findings from the 2003/2004 British Crime Survey	OLR	Crime and Policing
28 October 2004	Perceptions and experience of antisocial behaviour	Findings	Crime and Policing
28 October 2004	Indicators of integration	DPR	Immigration and Asylum
28 October 2004	The experience of integration: a qualitative study of refugee integration in the local communities of Pollokshaws and Islington	OLR	Immigration and Asylum
1 November 2004	Intelligence led vehicle crime reduction: an evaluation of Operation Gallant	OLR	Crime and Policing
1 November 2004	Approaches to intelligence-led vehicle crime reduction	DPR	Crime and Policing
1 November 2004	Emerging methods of car theft—theft of keys	Findings	Crime and Policing
1 November 2004	Decision-making by house burglars: offenders' perspectives	Findings	Crime and Policing
4 November 2004	Reassurance policing: an evaluation of the local management of community safety	HORS	Crime and Policing
4 November 2004	Reassuring the public; a review of international policing interventions	HORS	Crime and Policing
4 November 2004	Reassuring the public; a review of international policing interventions	Findings	Crime and Policing
15 November 2004	An evaluation of the impact of restorative cautioning: findings from a reconviction study	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
15 November 2004	Two-year resanctioning study: a comparison of restorative and traditional cautions	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
16 November 2004	Sizing the illegally resident population in the UK	OLR	Immigration and Asylum
16 November 2004	Asylum statistics 3rd quarter 2004	Online	Immigration and Asylum
17 November 2004	Central Government funding of voluntary and community organisations, 1982/83 to 2001/02	Misc	Communities
17 November 2004	State of the Sector Panel—Conference newsletter	Other	Communities
26 November 2004	Tackling Crimes Against Small Businesses—Lessons from the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas Initiative'	DPR	Crime and Policing
26 November 2004	Crime against retail and manufacturing premises: findings from the 2002 Commercial Victimisation Survey	Findings	Crime and Policing
30 November 2004	Problem-solving street crime: practical lessons from the Street Crime Initiative	Other	Crime and Policing
30 November 2004	Police complaints and discipline 2004 England and Wales	SB	Crime and Policing
1 December 2004	University student safety in the East Midlands	OLR	Crime and Policing
2 December 2004	Statistics on mentally disordered offenders 2003	SB	Criminal Justice and Corrections
2 December 2004	The impact of corrections on re-offending: a review of 'what works'	HORS	Criminal Justice and Corrections
2 December 2004	Adult reconviction: results from the 2001 cohort	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
2 December 2004	Juvenile reconviction: results from the 2001 and 2002 cohorts	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
3 December 2004	The police recording of computer crime	DPR	Crime and Policing
6 December 2004	Drink driving: prevalence and attitudes in England and Wales 2002	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
6 December 2004	Tackling domestic violence: providing support for children who have witnessed domestic violence	DPR	Crime and Policing
8 December 2004	The future of netcrime now: Part 1 : threats and challenges	OLR	Crime and Policing
8 December 2004	The future of netcrime now: Part 2: responses	OLR	Crime and Policing
9 December 2004	Offender management statistics 2003	SB	Criminal Justice and Corrections
9 December 2004	Domestic violence and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships: findings from a self-completion questionnaire	OLR	Crime and Policing
15 December 2004	Public attitudes to the criminal justice system: the impact of providing information to British Crime Survey respondents	OLR	Crime and Policing
16 December 2004	Drug offenders in England and Wales 2003	Findings	Drugs
16 December 2004	Arrests for notifiable offences and the creation of certain police powers under PACE, England and Wales 2003/2004	SB	Criminal Justice and Corrections
21 December 2004	Approved premises: the results of a snapshot survey, 2003	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
21 December 2004	Factors associated with effective practice in bail and probation hostels	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
21 December 2004	Pathfinder programmes in the Probation Service: a retrospective analysis	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
30 December 2004	2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey: people, families and communities	HORS	Communities
19 January 2005	Diversity, trust and community participation in England	Findings	Communities
20 January 2005	The impact of mandatory drug testing in prisons	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
20 January 2005	The impact and effectiveness of mandatory drug testing in prisons	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 January 2005	Prison population projections 2005–2011	SB	Criminal Justice and Corrections
25 January 2005	Offending in England and Wales: first results from the 2003 Crime and Justice Survey	HORS	Crime and Policing
25 January 2005	Offending in England and Wales: first results from the 2003 Crime and Justice Survey	Findings	Crime and Policing
25 January 2005	Young people and antisocial behaviour: findings from the 2003 Crime and Justice Survey	Findings	Crime and Policing
25 January 2005	The victimisation of young people: findings from the Crime and Justice Survey 2003	Findings	Crime and Policing
25 January 2005	Crime and Justice Survey: General Population Feasibility Study	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
25 January 2005	Crime and Justice Survey: Communal Establishments Feasibility Study	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
25 January 2005	Crime in England and Wales, Quarterly update to September 2004	SB (web only)	Crime and Policing

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Publications released by Home Office Research and Statistics—September 2004 to March 2005

Publication date	*Title*	*Series*	*RDS Business area*
25 January 2005	Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004 Supplementary volume 1: homicide and gun crime	SB	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	Throughcare and aftercare: approaches and promising practice in service delivery for clients released from prison or leaving residential rehabilitation	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
27 January 2005	Making it happen from the centre: managing for the regional delivery of local crime reduction outcomes	OLR	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	Investing to deliver: reviewing the implementation of the UK Crime Reduction Programme	HORS	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	The Reducing Burglary Initiative: design, development and delivery	HORS	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	The role of early legal advice in asylum applications	OLR	Immigration and Asylum
27 January 2005	The paradox of Compacts: monitoring the impact of Compacts	OLR	Communities
27 January 2005	Rapid assessment of powers to close 'crack houses'	DPR	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	The nature of rape of females in the Metropolitan Police District	Findings	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	Children, risk and crime: the On Track Youth Lifestyles Survey	HORS	Crime and Policing
27 January 2005	A further study of the effects of alternative education initiatives	OLR	Crime and Policing
17 February 2005	Juvenile reconviction: results from the 2003 cohort	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
22 February 2005	Asylum statistics: 4th quarter 2004	Online	Immigration and Asylum
23 February 2005	Sentencing statistics 2003 England and Wales	SB	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Statistics on race and the Criminal Justice system, Section 95	Online only	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Resettlement outcomes on release from prison in 2003	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Tackling domestic violence: effective interventions and approaches	HORS	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Tackling domestic violence: providing advocacy and support to survivors of domestic violence	DPR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Tackling domestic violence: providing advocacy and support to survivors from Black and other minority ethnic communities	DPR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Providing counselling, support and information to survivors of rape: an evaluation of the 'STAR' Young Persons' Project	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	A gap or a chasm: attrition in reported rape cases	HORS	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Police attitudes to and use of CCTV	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Public attitudes towards CCTV: results from the Pre-intervention Public Attitude Survey carried out in areas implementing CCTV	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Assessing the impact of CCTV	HORS	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Control room operation: findings from control room observations	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	National evaluation of CCTV project summary South City	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	National evaluation of CCTV project summary Hawkeye	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	National evaluation of CCTV project summary Northern Estate	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	The impact of CCTV: fourteen case studies	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	A good practice guide for the implementation of deployable CCTV	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	Technical Annex: methods used in assessing the impact of CCTV	OLR	Crime and Policing
24 February 2005	A survey of the illegally resident population in detention in the UK	OLR	Immigration and Asylum
24 February 2005	A survey of the illegally resident population in detention in the UK	Findings	Immigration and Asylum
24 February 2005	An evaluation of basic skills training for prisoners	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Understanding electronic monitoring of juveniles on bail or remand to local authority accommodation	OLR	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Confidence in the criminal justice system: explaining area variation in public confidence	Findings	Criminal Justice and Corrections
24 February 2005	Literature review on upper level drug trafficking	OLR	Drugs
24 February 2005	Police Service strength, England and Wales 30 Sept 2004	OLR	Crime and Policing
1 March 2005	Drug offenders in England and Wales 2003	Findings	Drugs

Key:

OLR—Online report

DPR—Development and practice report

SB—Statistical bulletin

Findings—Brief summary of research findings

HORS—Home Office Research Study

Other/Misc—publications that do not appear in a standard RDS series

CRCSG—Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group

OCJR—Office for Criminal Justice Reform

CG—Communities Group

IRSS—Immigration Research and Statistics Service

Romanian Entrants

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent investigations have been carried out by the Immigration Service into whether Romanians have illegally entered the EU through the Republic of Ireland and then travelled on to Northern Ireland. [221786]

Mr. Browne: The United Kingdom Immigration Service and the Garda National Immigration Bureau work in close co-operation to restrict the abuse of foreign nationals seeking to enter the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. This co-operation has included a joint operation to assess the traffic of foreign nationals travelling between both countries. A number of Romanians were encountered during this exercise but not in significant numbers.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the contracts signed by his special advisers differ from the Model Contract for Special Advisers. [207242]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 753W.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase voluntary and community sector activity, including increasing community participation, by 5 per cent. by 2006 will be met; [219130]

(2) whether the public service agreement target to increase value for money from the criminal justice system by 3 per cent. was met in 2004; [219132]

(3) whether the public service agreement target to increase value for money from the Home Office by 3 per cent. was met in 2004; [219133]

(4) whether the public service agreement target to ensure annual efficiency gains by the police of at least 2 per cent. was met in 2004. [219134]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to bring about measurable improvements in race equality and community cohesion. [219131]

Fiona Mactaggart: Performance against my Department's targets is published in the annual report and the autumn performance report available in the House Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

UK Passports

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether changes are planned to the format of *(a)* the UK passport and *(b)* the passport application form; and if he will make a statement. [222354]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* With the introduction of the e-passport by the end of 2005, UKPS plan to make changes to the current format of the UK passport. These changes include enhanced security features and aesthetic changes that will distinguish the new book from the current passport. These changes will be ICAO compliant and will contribute to maintaining the UK Passport as one of the most secure passport documents in the world.

The UK Passport Service regularly reviews the passport application form and associated guidance. The last update was in August 2004. No further changes to the passport application form are planned in the immediate future.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK passports have been issued in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [222673]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The number of passports issued by the UK Passport Service for each calendar year is as follows:

	Number of passports issued
1997	4,729,467
1998	4,851,215
1999	5,614,360
2000	5,492,141
2001	5,668,272
2002	5,397,050
2003	5,532,350
2004	6,070,626

Note:
These figures do not include British passports issued abroad by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Violent Crime (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of all recorded violence against the person in Leicester involved no injury in each year since 1999–2000. [221206]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The available information relates to the Leicester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership area and is only available from 2002–03. 67 per cent. of recorded offences of violence against the person in Leicester in 2002–03 involved no injury. The equivalent figure for 2003–04 was 63 per cent.

It is important to remember that recorded crime data are, however, affected by changes in reporting and recording. In particular, the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002 led to an increase to the number of offences of violence recorded by the police.

SCOTLAND

Departmental Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how much has been spent on *(a)* entertainment lunches involving civil servants and guests and *(b)* working lunches, in each year since 1997. [215042]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. The Office provides a number of services to the Office of the Advocate-General for Scotland (OAG) that are managed centrally and it is not possible to separate all expenditure between both Offices.

Neither the Scotland Office nor the OAG hold entertainment lunches. Since 1 July 1999, the Scotland Office and OAG have spent the following on working lunches:

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	4,281
2001–02	1,287
2002–03	5,073
2003–04	3,267

Economic Growth

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the longest period of continuous quarterly economic growth in Scotland was in the last 30 years; and if he will make a statement. [221493]

Mr. Darling: Quarterly GDP data from the Scottish Executive show that the Scottish economy has been expanding for 10 consecutive quarters. Quarterly statistics for Scotland are only available from 1995; however, there were also 10 quarters of consecutive growth recorded between 1999 Q3 and 2001 Q4.

Looking ahead, the prospects for the Scottish economy are strong. Business surveys now report continuing growth into 2005 and independent forecasters anticipate above or at trend growth for this year.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland in which quarters Scotland has been in negative growth since 1997. [221492]

Mr. Darling: Of the 31 quarters since (and including) 1997 Q1, 26 were periods of expansion, four were contractionary and there was only one instance of no movement. The four separate quarters of negative growth were 1997 Q1, 1998 Q3, 1999 Q2 and 2002 Q1. There have been no consecutive periods of quarterly negative growth.

St. Andrew's Day

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to mark St. Andrew's Day in 2005. [220344]

Mrs. McGuire: From 2005, the celebration of St. Andrew's Day in Scotland will centre on an annual theme, responsibility for which lies with Scottish Executive Ministers. This year's celebration will focus on the theme of 'One Scotland, Many Cultures', fully recognising Scotland's history and traditions while celebrating our cultural, religious and ethnic diversity.

DEFENCE

Aerospace Industry

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on trade between UK and US companies in the defence section of the aerospace industry. [220363]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The aerospace sector continues to form the largest element in UK/US defence trade. This trade is highly important to both nations, helping to ensure that the armed forces of both are supplied with the best available equipment as cost-effectively as possible.

Burgaled Breiz Trawler

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what steps were taken by *(a)* the Royal Navy and *(b)* other nations' military involved to broadcast a warning about (i) anti-submarine and (ii) other warfare training exercises in the vicinity at the time of the sinking of the Burgaled Breiz on 15 January 2004; and on which days between 14 and 31 January 2004 military exercises took place in this part of the English Channel; [221496]

(2) whether *(a)* UK and *(b)* other nations' submarines returned to (i) Plymouth and (ii) other ports (A) for technical reasons and (B) due to damage sustained to the vessel in the days after the sinking of the Burgaled Breiz on 15 January 2004; [221497]

(3) whether the Department has satellite records of the area of the sinking of the Burgaled Breiz at 12.33 GMT on 15 January 2004; [221498]

(4) what the itinerary was of each *(a)* UK and *(b)* other nations' submarine within UK territorial waters south of the Cornish coast on 15 January 2004; [221499]

(5) how many *(a)* UK and *(b)* other EU nations' military helicopters were (i) flying as part of an international military exercise and (ii) prepared for action in the sea area south of the Cornish coast on 15 January 2004; [221458]

(6) who the owner was of each of the life rafts found by aircrew from RNAS Culdrose based at 771 Search and Rescue Squadron when responding to the foundering of the Cap Burgaled Breiz on 15 January 2004; [221459]

(7) if he will list the *(a)* UK and *(b)* other nations' submarines which took part in military exercises in the English channel during January 2004; and on which days during that month each took part in the exercises; [221460]

(8) on how many occasions during the period from 1 January 2003 to 31 January 2004 UK naval vessels were involved in a Thursday war military exercise in the English Channel. [221461]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Submarine Exercise Area Warnings are published in the Admiralty Notice to Mariners and on Admiralty charts. SUBFACTS (submarine activity in the area), which included the vicinity where the Burgaled Breiz was lost, were broadcast by the Coastguard every four hours from 150140 GMT. Other warnings of warfare training

exercises are broadcast only if gunnery firings are to take place. The exercises taking place in this area on 15 January 2004 did not include any gunnery firings.

The German submarine (FGS) U26 arrived alongside in Plymouth on the day of the sinking at 0748 GMT on 15 January 2004 and sailed at 1600 GMT the same day. She returned to Plymouth on 22 January for a Port Visit before providing planned support to Flag Officer Sea Training from 26–29 January. HMS Turbulent sailed from Plymouth on 16 January for surfaced trials off Rame Head and returned alongside that evening, having suffered damage to a towed cable, while conducting those trials. No other submarines went alongside in Plymouth or other ports on the day of or in the days following the loss of the fishing vessel, either for technical reasons or for damage sustained by any cause.

We have no record of contemporary satellite images of the area where the Burgaled Breiz sank for any time period on the 15 January 2004. Such images may, however, be available from commercial sources.

Submarine activity in the English Channel and UK territorial waters during January 2004 was as follows:

Submarine	*Dates*	*Itinery*	*Position*	*Comments*
HMS Torbay	15 January 2004	UK led exercise	At 151253 GMT: 49 deg 32.33 min North, 007 deg 55 min West	
HMS Torbay	16–26 January 2004	UK led exercise	SW of Cornwall	
HNLMS Dolfijn	15 January 2004	On surface in transit to UK led exercise	At 151253 GMT: 49 deg 32.33 min North, 005 deg 16.16 min West	Responded to relay of Mayday at 1300 GMT from FV reporting position some 11 nautical miles NE of her location.
HNLMS Dolfijn	16–26 January 2004	UK led exercise	SW of Cornwall	
FGS U22	15 January 2004	On dived passage to Mediterranean Sea	At 151253 GMT: 49deg 30.05 min North, 004 deg 07.09 min West	Continued her transit through French waters
FGS U26	15 January 2004		Alongside in Devonport from150748 GMT until 151600 GMT	
FGS U26	16–22 January 2004	UK led exercise	SW of Cornwall	
HMS Turbulent	15 January 2004		Alongside in Devonport	
HMS Turbulent	16 January 2004	Surfaced trials off Rame Head	Off Rame Head (entrance to Plymouth Harbour)	Returned to Devonport that evening having suffered damage to a towed cable.

The French submarine (FS) RUBIS was routed by French Navy authorities from French exercise areas off Brest and in the Bay of Biscay into the ASW exercise area for the start of the exercise. Her route brought her in from the South, however, and she did not enter the Channel areas controlled by the UK. On completion of the exercise she was due to visit Plymouth (from 30 January until 2 February), but the weather conditions were too poor to enable a safe recovery of her towed sonar and she made a surfaced passage to Brest.

The ASW exercise did not commence until 16 January 2004. Helicopters may have been embarked on the vessels with helicopter capability which were alongside at Devonport on 15 January 2004 (four UK, two Dutch, one French) but this cannot be confirmed.

On 15 January 2004, two Dauphin helicopters from POST were flying in the area; one from approximately 0920 and the other from approximately 1310. The duration of these flights was not recorded but it is not thought that either would have exceeded two hours.

Helicopters from RNAS Culdrose were conducting training in the local area on 15 January 2004. Between 0830 and 1700 up to five Merlin, three Sea King Mk 5 and two Sea King Mk 7 took part in this training. The duty Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopters from Culdrose and Chivenor responded to the Burgaled Breiz incident, covering the time from 1249 to 1700.

The crew of the RNAS Culdrose SAR helicopter who responded to the emergency reports of the foundering of the Burgaled Breiz found one life raft in the area. This life raft contained a package of papers, which were not opened by the crew of the SAR helicopter, but were passed to the police via the Falmouth Coastguard. A second life raft was found by a French fishing vessel. It is not known if either life raft has been positively identified as belonging to the Burgaled Breiz.

UK naval vessels were involved in 44 elements of "Thursday War" military exercises in the English Channel in the period from 1 January 2003 to 31 January 2004.

Clothing Contracts

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the contract delivery schedule is for battle dress under the cut and sew contract; and what the penalties are for late delivery. [221040]

Mr. Ingram: Under this Enabling Arrangement, the contract delivery schedule is agreed on each Warrant as it is issued. To date over 100,000 items have now been delivered under the cut and sew contract, including combat clothing items, which were received in advance of the agreed delivery date.

Penalties are not enforceable under English Law. The prime contractor has the incentive to perform properly under this contract, as the full five-year duration is subject to continued satisfactory performance. The company is required to make alternative arrangements if there is a risk of delivery failure. However, should they still fail to deliver on time, remedies under the contract include the right to claim damages commensurate with any consequent loss suffered by the Department.

Contract Prices

Rachel Squire: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what grounds his Department determines whether a contracted price is achievable without subsidy and without additional payments from the Department. [219456]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The Department does not subsidise defence contractors or pay for work that is not covered by a contract. Decisions on contract prices and amendments to contract prices are based on long term Value for Money and take account of factors such as equipment performance, timeliness of delivery, risks and their management, sustainability and support of equipment and, where appropriate, wider factors described in the Defence Industrial Policy, which is in Defence Policy Paper No 5, published in October 2002.

Departmental Efficiency

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the February 2005 estimates of his Department's efficiency delivery position mentioned in the Efficiency Technical Note. [221889]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Work on revising the figures, to take account of the outcome of the Department's planning and budgeting process for the next financial year, is not yet complete.

Military Uniform

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the stock levels of uniforms for *(a)* jungle use, *(b)* winter warfare, *(c)* general use and *(d)* desert deployment are. [221642]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence currently holds sufficient stocks of uniforms to meet current operational requirements, as identified by the Front Line Commands, for at least the next six months. Information down to individual items of clothing, as requested, could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Sufficient uniforms are also being procured to meet future operational needs for personnel covering the various climates referred to.

Royal Navy

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the level of naval spares. [221584]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Naval spares are carried on board each unit at levels that support operational commitments. Onboard holdings on deployed units are supplemented by spares carried afloat on Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels, and by shore stocks. The level of spares held ashore is a balance between ensuring normal commitments can be met and minimising the value and volume of stockholdings. These levels are adequate to meet operational commitments under the normal support/reduced support regime currently in place.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence from which naval vessels spares are being taken. [221585]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* I will write shortly with a full list of the ships that have had ships' fitted equipment removed from them over the last year. With regard to onboard stores items, these are transferred from one ship's storeroom to another under local arrangements. Such transactions are not normally recorded centrally.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer, 25 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 51W, on the Royal Navy, what decisions have been made about the future of naval tasks *(a)* Standing Naval Force Mediterranean, *(b)* Atlantic Patrol South, *(c)* Atlantic Patrol North, *(d)* Armilla Patrol, *(e)* Indian Ocean Patrol and *(f)* Fleet Ready Escort around the United Kingdom. [222132]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what equipment has been taken from Royal Navy warships in port in the last year to make up for deficiencies on ships that are on operational deployment; how many ships have been involved; and if he will make a statement. [221345]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Ships are prioritised by readiness for the Joint Rapid Reaction Force rather than being either 'deployed' or 'in port'.

The removal of ships' fitted equipment (or parts of it) is known as STOROB. This is a formal process, but is normally used as last resort to meet high readiness operational commitments in cases where the demanded items are not available from other sources. Because of the impact on the donor ship's capability, this is only considered when the donor ship is either reducing in readiness towards upkeep or disposal, or is already in upkeep.

I will write to you shortly with a full list of the ships and equipment that have been involved in the STOROB process over the last year, and I will place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Royal Navy ships are on the list for disposal. [221397]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Presently there are a number of ships on the list for disposal, some vessels are being disposed of in the normal course whereas others have been declared surplus following the Government's announcement in July 2004, as a supplement to the Defence White Paper 2003—Delivering Security in a Changing World Future Capabilities.

Three Type 23 Frigates (HMS Norfolk, HMS Marlborough, and HMS Grafton).

Three Sandown Single Role Minehunters (HMS Bridport, HMS Inverness, and HMS Sandown).

Two Landing Ships Logistics (RFAs Sir Percivale and Sir Galahad).

Three Northern Patrol Vessels (HMS Dulverton, HMS Brecon, and HMS Cottesmore).

Three Type 42 Destroyers (HMS Glasgow, HMS Newcastle and HMS Cardiff).

Two Landing Platform Docks (HMS Fearless and HMS Intrepid) Two Castle Class OPVs (HMS Leeds Castle and HMS Dumbarton Castle).

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what efficiency savings have been made against fleet activity in the Royal Navy for each of the last seven years. [221398]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Prior to financial year 2000–01, there was no requirement to record efficiency savings. With effect from FY 2004–05 the requirement to record such measures will once again cease. The following year-on-year efficiency savings for those FYs in which records were mandatory, were achieved in the Fleet TLB:

Financial year	*£ million*
2000–01	8.233
2001–02	5.206
2002–03	15.786
2003–04	22.485

Efficiency savings resulting from the Fleet TLB restructuring (Fleet First) in March 2002 constitute the major element of the savings achieved in the latter two FYs.

Tornado Aircraft

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has for providing a deep maintenance facility at RAF Leuchars for the Tornado F3. [220837]

Mr. Ingram: As far as is practicable it is intended to consolidate Tornado F3 Main Operating Base maintenance facilities at RAF Leuchars, in line with the recommendations of the End to End Logistics Review.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accelerate Programme

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the 16 companies in the Birmingham, Hodge Hill constituency that are participating in Advantage West Midland's Accelerate Programme. [209373]

Nigel Griffiths: The following are the 16 companies that have had/have support from the Accelerate Programme and are in the Hodge Hill constituency.

Delcam Plc, B100HJ

Modular Auto International Ltd., BIO OHJ

Alstain Metal Services, BIO OHR

Hi-Vol (CNC) Productions Ltd., B10 OQJ

Illston and Robson, BI0 OQQ

Delcam Ltd., B10 0HJ

Redfern Stevens Ltd., B25 SHE

CJD Mayers, B25 8HT

Ionic Engineering , B25 8LD

Tocco Ltd., B33 OLG

A C Coatings, B33 OSL

Brydon Pressing, B33 OSL

Micron Engineering, B33 OSL

ABL (Aluminium Components) Ltd., B33 OTD

JJ Engineering Ltd., B33 OTJ

RPL Productions, B33 9BE

Credit Card Borrowing

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to issue guidance on the consequences of unsustainable borrowing on credit cards. [222197]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Credit is an integral part of our daily lives and in the majority of cases consumers are using credit successfully—confident in their ability to repay due to the underlying economic stability.

We have been particularly concerned to ensure that consumers are made aware of the cost of their borrowing. To this end, the Consumer Credit (Agreements) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 laid before Parliament on 9 June 2004 include provisions to ensure that consumers are made aware of the dangers of failing to repay their borrowing, including the fact that missing payments can have severe consequences for the consumer.

We have also worked closely with the credit industry in developing the voluntary warnings they have introduced on monthly statements about the dangers of making only minimum payments.

Emissions Trading

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of the Emissions Trading Scheme on electricity prices in the UK. [222600]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Assessments on the impact of the Emissions Trading Scheme should be treated with caution. The impact on electricity prices is difficult to assess and is dependent on the carbon price, so for example at a carbon price of €5 per tonne of carbon dioxide the Department estimates that electricity prices to industry might increase by around 6 per cent. and prices to the domestic consumer by around 3 per cent. An analysis of the implications of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme for electricity prices is available at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/ilexetsfinal.pdf

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect on the number of households in fuel poverty of rises in retail prices of gas and electricity since 2003. [221330]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The number of people in fuel poverty fell from 5.4 million in 1996 to about 2¼ million in 2002. Analysis of the overall effects of changes in fuel prices and incomes suggests that the total number of vulnerable households in fuel poverty is likely to rise by a limited amount in 2004 and 2005—perhaps by up to 200,000 households in England, where vulnerable households are defined as those containing children, the elderly, the disabled or someone with long term sickness.

Gas Prices

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of the recent price shock on the spot market for gas in the UK; and if she will make a statement; [221554]

(2) what assessment she has made of the impact that the large sudden rise in gas spot prices will have on the UK's manufacturing base; and if she will make a statement. [221556]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The high spot gas prices at the end of February and beginning of March appear to have been caused by high demand and market concerns over supply tightness during cold weather across Europe. There were also technical problems reducing supplies from the North Sea and issues around the levels in short and medium term storage. Temperatures have now returned to at or above the seasonal average, and supply concerns have lessened. Spot prices have reduced accordingly, and we still have supplies in storage to meet another cold snap. The impact on manufacturing companies will vary extensively and depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas individual companies use and the exposure of a particular company to the spot price.

Newspaper Distribution

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when the Government will respond to the Office of Fair Trading's announcement of provisional conclusions on newspaper and magazine distribution; [221903]

(2) when the Office of Fair Trading will publish its draft advisory opinion on its provisional conclusions on newspaper and magazine distribution. [221904]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I understand the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) plans to publish its draft advisory opinion for public consultation around end of March 2005 with a view to publishing a final opinion by 1 May 2005. The OFT's provisional opinion does not include anything that requires a response from the Government.

Departmental Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much the Department spent on *(a)* stationery and *(b)* office supplies in each year since 1997. [213841]

Ms Hewitt: Expenditure for stationery and office supplies can be provided only from 1998–99, the first year for which resource information was produced; any earlier figures would not be meaningful. The following figures show the total expenditure between 1998–99 and 2003–04.

£ million

	Stationery	*Office supplies*
1998–99	2.07	0.13
1999–2000	1.92	0.14
2000–01	2.04	0.15
2001–02	1.68	0.09
2002–03	2.41	0.13
2003–04	1.83	0.08

The purchasing of stationery and office supplies is the responsibility of individual management units.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent on postage by the Department in each year since 1997. [215016]

Ms Hewitt: Expenditure on postage can be provided only from 1998–99, the first year for which resource information was produced; any earlier figures would not be meaningful.

The following figures show the total expenditure on postage between 1998–99 and 2003–04.

	£ million
1998–99	1.23
1999–2000	1.12
2000–01	1.18
2001–02	1.01
2002–03	1.12
2003–04	1.34

Departmental policy is that all Royal Mail will be sent second class unless Directorates specify first class on the envelope and are prepared to pay the difference in cost from their own budgets.

Online Company Registration

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the latest figures are for online company registration; and what steps she has taken to evaluate consumer satisfaction with the process. [208645]

Mr. Sutcliffe: At the end of February of the financial year 2004–05 Companies House had incorporated a total of 297,368 companies, of which 219,570 were incorporated electronically. This represents 73.8 per cent. of the total number of incorporations for that period. Companies House has regular contact with the customers for this service via an electronic filing focus group which meets in April and November each year. Customers can also provide feedback through our customer services team at any other time if they wish.

To evaluate consumer satisfaction with the service, Companies House carries out regular Customer Satisfaction Surveys. The following table gives results from the last two quarters' surveys in areas relevant to online company registration.

The table gives the results of the latest customer satisfaction survey and the figures given indicate the percentage of people satisfied when questioned about the services provided. Figures are given for the previous and most recent quarterly survey.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

	Percentage	
	2004	
	Quarter 2	*Quarter 3*
Customer care attitude	83.6	83.5
How reliable do you find the service?	80.8	82.8
Contact centre staff attitude	83.7	82.7
New companies attitude	83.5	81.6
How easy did you find the electronic filing service to use?	76.5	80.8
IT support attitude	81.7	79.2
New companies knowledge	80.9	79.2
If you had to call the helpdesk (0845 3333636) how quickly did we resolve the problem?	73.6	74.4
If there was a problem with the service how quickly did we make it known?	71.4	71.2

Renewable Energy

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures she is taking to co-operate with those in the microgeneration industry on the removal of *(a)* network connection requirements, *(b)* metering requirements, *(c)* impediments to access to renewables obligation certificates and *(d)* other regulatory barriers for domestic consumers wishing to install microgeneration. [222097]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Energy Act 2004 commits the Government to producing a strategy for the promotion of microgeneration in the UK. As part of the process of developing the strategy we are consulting on an informal basis with key stakeholders in the industry and other interested parties on a wide variety of issues including connection and metering requirements, access to renewable obligation certificates and other regulatory barriers. There will also be a formal public consultation before the final strategy is published.

Sub-contractors

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the letters of comfort issued by the holding company immediately prior to liquidation of Ballast plc to sub-contractors and suppliers gave a fair and reasonable view of that company's financial position; and if she will make a statement. [203737]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Ballast plc went into administration in October 2003 following withdrawal of support from its Dutch parent. It did not go into liquidation until October 2004.

Supermarkets

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 13 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 630W, on supermarkets, what discussions she has had with the chairman of the Office of Fair Trading concerning the timetable for the publication of its report into the auditing of supermarket-supplier contracts announced in its report into the supermarket code of practice in February 2004. [221659]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In the context of considering the publication of the audit of the supermarket code, both the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and DTI officials have been involved in a number of discussions, including requests for updates on timing. The audit was also raised briefly during a regular meeting between my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and the Board of the OFT that took place in mid-January. The OFT intend their audit will be published before Easter.

Women's Employment

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of factors affecting *(a)* entry to the labour market, *(b)* progression within the labour market and *(c)* re-entry into the labour market after pregnancy by women from ethnic minority groups. [220857]

Ms Hewitt: DTI is working with the Ethnic Minority Employment Task Force, led by the Department for Work and Pensions, to tackle the barriers to labour market participation faced by ethnic minorities, including those faced by ethnic minority women and ethnic minority women returners. This work stems from the Strategy Unit report "Ethnic minorities in the labour market" published in March 2003. DTI's specific contribution is around working with business to promote race equality and diversity in the workplace and promoting enterprise.

The taskforce has published an interim report on its first year's activities. That report and further information about the taskforce's activities are available from the taskforce website at www.emetaskforce.gov.uk, and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House. The final report is due by autumn 2006.

PRIME MINISTER

Civil Service Bill

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what response he has made to the Civil Service Commissioners following the Commissioners' response to the consultation on the draft Civil Service Bill on management relationships between Mr. Jonathan Powell and civil servants. [221812]

The Prime Minister: The deadline for comments on the Government's proposals for civil service legislation was 28 February 2005. The Government are considering responses from the Civil Service Commissioners and others. They will make a statement when they have given the responses full and proper consideration.

Iraq (Attorney-General's Advice)

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his oral answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1516, to the hon. Member for Meirionnydd Nant Conwy (Mr. Llwyd), to whom he was referring in his reference to others. [221811]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him at Prime Minister's questions on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1514.

Royal Meetings

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Prime Minister which of his meetings with HRH the Prince of Wales during the period 1 to 10 February were not published in the official Court Circular; and if he will make a statement. [222342]

The Prime Minister: Details of meetings published in the Court Circular are a matter for the Royal Household. Discussions with the Royal Household are not disclosed.

Terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister for what reasons alleged known terrorists at large in the United Kingdom, to whom he referred in his interview on Woman's Hour on 28 February, have not yet been detained. [221185]

The Prime Minister: Wherever possible, those alleged to have committed terrorist offences are prosecuted and committed for trial as soon as all the available admissible evidence has been gathered. However, in some cases the intelligence available may suggest that the person poses a potential terrorist threat but there is insufficient admissible evidence to bring a criminal charge. It is for that reason that the Government introduced the control order provisions in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

Correspondence

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Prime Minister when he will answer the letter of 2 March from the hon. Member for Faversham and Mid-Kent referring to his answer of the same day— 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 954, about the effect of the new Licensing Act 2003 on sports clubs. [222721]

The Prime Minister: I shall reply to the hon. Member's letter shortly.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Albert Fisher Group Pension Scheme

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assistance will be available to members of the Albert Fisher Group Pension Scheme under the recently announced financial assistance scheme; and what assistance is available to members not covered by these provisions. [221588]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer to the written statement I gave on the Financial Assistance Scheme, on 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 16WS.

In addition, a range of state provision is available, depending on individual circumstances, for pensioners and others more generally.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many local authority benefit fraud investigators have *(a)* commenced and *(b)* completed the Professionalism in Security Accredited Counter Fraud Officer Scheme. [200116]

Mr. Pond *[pursuant to the reply, 6 December 2004, Official Report, c. 368W]:* Up until April 2004, 283 local authority benefit fraud investigators had commenced but not completed the Professionalism in Security (PINS) training scheme and 1,557 had completed it.

DLA

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Disability Living Allowance applications for adults were rejected and then subsequently approved after review in each of the past three years, broken down by *(a)* county and *(b)* region. [216939]

Maria Eagle: The information is not available in the format requested. Such information that is available is set out in the following tables.

Table 1: DLA first awards on initial claims and reviews for working age adults in Great Britain by Government Office Region in 2002, 2003, 2004.

Thousand

	2002		2003		2004	
	Initial claim	*Reviews*	*Initial claim*	*Reviews*	*Initial claim*	*Reviews*
North-east	49.2	6.4	50.3	5.7	50.8	5.3
North-west	129.7	18.0	138.2	17.7	143.9	17.7
Yorkshire and Humber	80.8	9.9	85.4	9.8	89.9	9.8
East Midlands	60.9	6.9	64.4	7.2	67.4	7.3
West Midlands	80.0	9.3	85.1	9.4	87.7	8.9
East	58.6	6.5	64.6	6.1	66.9	6.2
London	88.1	10.0	95.4	10.2	102.3	9.9
South-east	67.0	8.0	72.4	8.5	79.1	8.3
South-west	53.5	6.2	58.4	6.3	63.5	6.4
Wales	66.8	9.2	69.9	9.3	72.5	9.0
Scotland	85.8	12.2	94.1	11.4	98.5	10.6
Total	820.3	102.6	878.2	101.6	922.6	99.4

Notes:
1. Datasets derived from the 5 per cent. sample do not include information on successful claims.
2. County information is not available because the data is not fully populated and therefore would provide unreliable results.
3. Initial claims include new claims, duplicate claims and renewal claims.

Source:
DWP Information Division 5 per cent. sample of first awards in the 12 months to 31 August of each year. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred. Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Table 2: Disability living allowance: numbers of new claims (i) decided and (ii) refused in Great Britain in each calendar year from 2002 to 2004.

	Number of decisions on new claims	*Number of claims refused*	*Claim refusal rate (percentage)*
2002	420,840	194,605	46
2003	436,510	215,135	49
2004	444,275	234,180	53

Note:
Figures broken down by age or by Government Office Regions and counties are not available.

Source:
DWP Disability and Carers Service Management Information System (MIS) 100 per cent. data. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and are not comparable from those derived from the 5 per cent. sample data given in table 1.

Table 3: Disability living allowance: numbers of reviews (i) registered and (ii) decided; and (iii) numbers of successful reviews in Great Britain in each calendar year from 2002 to 2004.

	Number of reviews registered	*Reviews decided*	*Successful reviews*
2002	266,695	267,655	122,450
2003	258,930	258,030	117,375
2004	[1]237,155	251,845	[1]107,165

[1] Figures for the number of reviews registered and successful reviews are for the period 1 January 2004 to 30 November 2004. Figures are not yet available for December 2004.

Notes:
1. Figures broken down by age or by Government Office Regions and counties are not available.
2. Reviews may not be decided in the year they are registered. Hence, the figures shown for reviews decided and successful in each year are not comparable with the number of reviews registered in each year, and the number of unsuccessful reviews cannot be derived from those figures.

Source:
DWP Disability and carers service management information system (MIS) 100 per cent. data. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and are not comparable from those derived from the 5 per cent. sample data given in table 1.

Maternity Pay

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the statistics relating to maternity pay, which, since 1997 *(a)* are no longer collected by his Department and *(b)* have had the way in which the figures are compiled changed. [221797]

Maria Eagle: The Department produces data on Maternity Allowance payments.

We have not produced annual figures for Maternity Allowance since 2000–01. However, we continue to produce figures on a quarterly basis.

Since we ceased to produce annual data we no longer have a record of the reason for non-payment of Statutory Maternity Pay.

From the May 2000 quarter data is available on the number of jobs the claimant is recorded as having.

The employment status of the claimant is shown in figures from the August 2000 quarter.

Pensions

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been paid to pensioners in Leeds, West as a result of increases in the state pension since 1997. [221964]

Malcolm Wicks: The total extra basic state pension paid to pensioners in Leeds, West as a result of above inflation increases in the state pension since 1997 (covering the years 1997–98 to 2004–05 inclusive) is £12.7 million, in 2004–05 prices.

Notes:

1. Figures are calculated by comparing what would have happened if basic state pension had been increased in line with the Retail Prices Index since 1997 with what actually happened.

2. Figures for Leeds, West are derived using the overall share of Great Britain expenditure paid to pensioners living in Leeds, West constituency, based on a 5 per cent. sample of retirement pension recipients, and subject to a degree of sampling error.

3. Expenditure on state pensions will have risen for other reasons including a growing population, improved contributions records and the gradual maturing of past policy changes. These effects are not included in the figures as they would have occurred had 1997 policies been continued.

4. Additional spending on the State Second Pension over the period, other than due to factors given under note 3 above, is negligible.

5. The figures do not include additional spending on minimum income guarantee/pension credit, housing benefit, council tax benefit, winter fuel payments and other age-related payments, or Over 75 TV licences, that has also been paid to pensioners since 1997.

Mr. Jim Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* men and *(b)* women receiving the basic state pension did not receive (i) a full basic state pension and (ii) a basic state pension of 75 per cent. or more of the value of the basic state pension in 2004, (A) in total and (B) broken down by age groups (1) 60–64 years, (2) 65–69 years, (3) 70–74 years, (4) 75–79 years and (5) 80 years plus. [216483]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table.

Percentage

	Basic state pension recipients in Great Britain receiving less than the full basic state pension		*Basic state pension recipients in Great Britain not receiving more than 75 per cent, or more of the full basic state pension*	
	Men	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
All	10.2	50.9	2.9	42.7
60–64 years of age	—	74.0	—	54.4
65–69 years of age	15.3	68.9	4.0	58.7
70–74 years of age	11.8	57.1	3.6	51.3
75–79 years of age	6.9	42.0	2.3	38.1
80 years of age and over	3.7	20.2	1.2	17.5

Notes:

1. Numbers are taken from a five per cent., sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Percentages are given as a proportion of the relevant gender and age group receiving a basic state pension.
4. A basic state pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a Category A or Category B basic state pension, either in their own right or, where applicable, on the basis of their late or former spouse's national insurance contributions.
5. Numbers do not include people entitled to a basic state pension which is then increased when they meet the conditions for a Category D pension.
6. Full rate means the standard rate of a Category A or B basic state pension based on a person's own or late spouse's national insurance contributions—£77.45 for a Category A basic state pension in 2003–04.

7.75 per cent., of a Category A basic state pension in 2003–04 was £58.09.

Source:

IAD Information Centre five per cent., sample as at 31 March 2004

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women were in receipt of state retirement pension in the Tamworth constituency in (i) 1999 and (ii) 2004; what each is as a percentage of the Tamworth population; and what percentage of the population of England are in receipt of state retirement pension. [221925]

Malcolm Wicks: The information which is available shows that, as at September 1999, there were 13,400 recipients of the state pension in the Tamworth constituency, of whom 5,200 were males and 8,200 were females. As at September 2004, there were 14,700 state pension recipients in the Tamworth constituency, of whom 5,600 were males and 9,100 were females.

It is not possible to express the number of recipients as a percentage of the population in the Tamworth constituency, because the relevant population estimates are not held at constituency level. However, as at September 2004 the percentage of the population of England in receipt of a state pension was 18 per cent.

Notes:

1. Figures are taken from a five per cent., sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. State pension means Category A, B, C or D state pension or graduated retirement benefit.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and are expressed in thousands.
4. Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant postcode directory.
5. Population figures are estimates as at mid-2003 as provided by the Office for National Statistics.

Source:

IAD five per. cent sample as at 30 September for the years shown.

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to include the Roxby pension scheme in the indicative list of schemes potentially eligible for the Financial Assistance Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [222408]

Malcolm Wicks: The provisional list published on 22 February contains those pension schemes on which we received information in our latest data collection exercise and that appear potentially eligible under the scheme entry criteria we have outlined. Presence on this list does not guarantee individuals will receive support from the FAS.

Schemes may not have been included on the provisional list either because they did not appear to meet the eligibility criteria or because the information provided was not sufficient to assess potential eligibility. After the FAS regulations have come into force, there will be a six-month period during which we shall accept formal notification from the representatives of other under-funded pension schemes, which may in due course be added to the list, so absence from this list does not preclude eligibility.

Savings

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of the population has estimated savings in excess of *(a)* £5,000, *(b)* £10,000, *(c)* £15,000, *(d)* £20,000, *(e)* £25,000, *(f)* 50,000 and *(g)* £100,000. [222440]

Mr. Pond: Information on individual accounts and savings outside of the range £1,500 to £20,000 is not available.

The Family Resources Survey can provide estimates for Great Britain of adult savings held within benefit units. This information is presented in the following table:

Percentage of benefit units

Limit (£)	*Benefit units with savings above certain limits*
Above 5000	30
Above 10,000	20
Above 15,000	15
Above 20,000	12

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates and are taken from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). 2002–03 is the latest year for which data is available.
2. Questions on assets are a sensitive part of the FRS questionnaire and have relatively low level of response. Evidence suggests some under reporting of capital by respondents.

3. A benefit unit is a single adult or couple living as married and any dependent children.
4. The estimates are based on sample counts that have been adjusted for non-response using multi-purpose grossing factors which align the FRS to Government Office Region populations by age and sex. Estimates are subject to sampling error and remaining response bias.
Source:
2002–03 Family Resources Survey, Great Britain

HEALTH

Alcohol-related Deaths

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the number of deaths caused by alcohol in each year since 1997, broken down by age and gender. [222138]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Paul Burstow, dated 17 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what estimate has been made of the number of deaths caused by alcohol in each year since 1997, broken down by age and gender. I am replying in his absence.

The information requested is given in the reply to David Ameas MP, Official Report 53, column 78W.

Broomfield Hospital

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were performed at Broomfield hospital, Chelmsford, Essex in each year from 1990 to 2004. [221952]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected by individual hospital. All operations for Mid Essex hospitals national health service trust, of which Broomfield hospital is a part, are shown in the table. Information prior to 1992–93 is not held centrally.

	Mid Essex hospital services trust	*Mid Essex hospitals NHS trust*
1992–93	23,695	—
1993–94	21,804	—
1994–95	26,127	—
1995–96	—	30,766
1996–97	—	37,055
1997–98	—	38,420
1998–99	—	37,662
1999–2000	—	36,733
2000–01	—	36,781
2001–02	—	39,459
2002–03	—	42,888
2003–04	—	43,219

Notes:
1. All operations count of episodes—these figures represent a count of all finished consultant episodes (FCEs) where the procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a hospital episode statistics (HES) record. A record is only included once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record.
2. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the HES data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.
3. Secondary procedure—as well as the main operative procedure, there are up to 11 (13 prior to 2002–03) secondary operation fields in HES that show secondary or additional procedures performed on the patient during the episode of care.
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
HES, Department of Health.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many in-patients were treated at Broomfield hospital, Chelmsford, Essex in each year from 1990 to 2004. [221953]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected by individual hospital. The number of finished admission episodes for Mid Essex hospitals national health service trust, of which Broomfield hospital is a part, is shown in the table. Information prior to 1992–93 is not held centrally.

	Mid Essex hospital services trust	*Mid Essex hospitals NHS trust*
1992–93	37,482	—
1993–94	35,899	—
1994–95	41,504	—
1995–96	—	48,496
1996–97	—	53,346
1997–98	—	54,553
1998–99	—	53,806
1999–2000	—	52,605
2000–01	—	53,999
2001–02	—	57,569
2002–03	—	61,131
2003–04	—	64,447

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the "first" period of on in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
Hospital episode statistics, Department of Health.

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times for patients undergoing cataract operations at Broomfield hospital, Chelmsford, Essex were in each year from 1990 to 2004. [221954]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected by individual hospital. The number of days patients wait for cataract operations at Mid Essex hospitals national health service trust, of which Broomfield hospital is a part, for each year from 1992–93 to 2003–04 are shown in the table. Data prior to 1992 is not held centrally.

	Median waiting time (days)
1992–93	277
1993–94	262
1994–95	257
1995–96	201
1996–97	273
1997–98	293
1998–99	371
1999–2000	349

	Median waiting time (days)
2000–01	332
2001–02	328
2002–03	333
2003–04	218

Notes:

1. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation. Cataracts operations defined as 071,072,074,075 (OPCS4 Procedure).
2. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data-year. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
3. Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period, whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed)

Source:
HES, Department of Health.

Cancer Care (North Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time for those diagnosed with suspected cancer within the North Somerset primary care trust area to see a specialist following an initial GP referral was in the last period for which figures are available; [221874]

(2) how many people have been diagnosed with suspected cancer within the North Somerset primary care trust area in each of the last two years; and how many were able to see a specialist within two weeks of a GP referral. [221875]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested on average waiting times is not collected centrally.

Information on the number of patients referred to a specialist following a referral from their general practitioner is available on a provider rather than commissioner, such as North Somerset primary care trust, basis. Information for Western area health national health service trust, including the percentage seen within two weeks, is shown in the table.

Urgent referrals received within 24 hours and within two weeks: all suspected cancers—Weston Area NHS Trust (RA3)

				Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist after 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP			
Quarter/year	Percentage compliance with the two week standard	Total referrals seen during the quarter	Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist within 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP	15 to 16 days	17 to 21 days	22 to 28 days	after 28 days
Q3/2004–05	100.00	577	577	0	0	0	0
Q2/2004–05	100.00	317	317	0	0	0	0
Q1/2004–05	100.00	434	434	0	0	0	0
Q4/2003–04	100.00	157	157	0	0	0	0
Q3/2003–04	100.00	21	21	0	0	0	0
Q2/2003–04	100.00	26	26	0	0	0	0
Q1/2003–04	94.12	17	16	0	0	0	0

Source:
CWT-DB provider based

Carers

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) who the official responsible for the National Carers Strategy is; [222496]

(2) who is responsible for the Department's carers website. [222498]

Dr. Ladyman: The policy management unit in the Department's older people's and disability division, which is part of the care services directorate, has ongoing responsibility for policy on carers. The Government actively supported the private members Bill last year that has now become the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004. Departmental officials are currently working on the implementation of the Act and guidance. Young carers are the responsibility of the Department for Education and Skills.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely impact of the Social Care Institute of Excellence on carers. [222497]

Dr. Ladyman: The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) works with people throughout the social care sector to identify useful information, research and examples of best practice. The SCIE works closely with people receiving services, their carers and their representative organisations. The SCIE will be taking forward the development of practice guidance to accompany the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004. The exact format of that guidance is yet to be decided, but, subject to stakeholder agreement, it is likely to build on the current SCIE knowledge review for carers and follow the format taken for other SCIE practice guides. An outline of the work programme and how people can become involved in the development of the guide will be communicated in due course through carers' networks as well as SCIE's website at www.scie.org.uk and the Department's carers website at www.carers.gov.uk.

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for the inspection of the implementation of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004. [222499]

Dr. Ladyman: The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) has the responsibility for bringing about improvements in services for those that use them, including carers. It is the responsibility of CSCI to assess services for carers, including the implementation of the new Act, as part of its responsibility to monitor council performance in social services.

The Government are assessing, also through the CSCI, councils' performance in supporting carers through a new carers' performance indicator. This demonstrates that support for carers continues to be a priority for the Government. The new carers' performance indicator will be published in autumn 2005.

Dentistry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1469W, on NHS dentists, how many of the extra 1,000 full-time dentists to be recruited into the NHS by October have so far been recruited. [218298]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 25 February 2005]:* The Department is gathering information on progress with the recruitment of 1,000 whole-time equivalent dentists since April 2004. This will include local national health service recruitment activity and departmental central recruitment, including the 28 Polish dentists who began work in England in January and the further 41 starting work during March and early April.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221111]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Diabetes

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if his Department will take steps to provide access for patients to the new treatment for diabetes on the NHS. [221801]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Research into islet cell transplant, a possible new treatment for people with diabetes, is still at an early stage. Decisions regarding the funding of this treatment by the national health service will be taken when the results of further clinical trials have been considered.

GP List Sizes

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average general practitioner list size was in Greater London, broken down by primary care trust or health authority, in each of the last 10 years. [221947]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Hatfield (New Hospital)

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the cost of the new hospital planned to be built at Hatfield. [222433]

Dr. Ladyman: I am informed by Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire strategic health authority that East and North Hertfordshire national health service trust currently estimate that the cost of the new hospital planned to be built at Hatfield is £550 million.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what provision he is making for the construction of homes for key workers and in-patients' relatives at the new hospital in Hatfield; and what the cost is of each. [222434]

Dr. Ladyman: The local national health service have planned for 450 units of accommodation on the Hatfield site and 200 units of accommodation on the Queen Elizabeth II site at Welwyn Garden City and are developing this with a housing association. The cost of each has not yet been calculated.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost to his Department will be of providing cancer treatment facilities at the new planned hospital at Hatfield; and what estimate he has made of the cost of provision of such facilities to an equivalent standard at Mount Vernon hospital Northwood. [222435]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has not made an estimate of these costs.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to move the in-patient facilities of the cancer centre at Mount Vernon hospital to a new hospital at Hatfield. [222436]

Dr. Ladyman: The local national health service has plans to move the in-patient facilities of the cancer centre to a new hospital at Hatfield. It is understood that this will take place at the end of December 2011.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his estimate is of the number of *(a)* cancer in-patients who could be referred to the new hospital in Hatfield from within a 15 mile radius of it and *(b)* cancer in-patients who can be referred to the Cancer Centre at Mount Vernon hospital, Northwood, from within a 15 mile radius of it. [222437]

Dr. Ladyman: Within Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire as part of an approved strategic outline case a new hospital at Hatfield is planned providing a specialist cancer centre in Hertfordshire.

At this stage, the local national health service has not undertaken this level of analysis.

IT Projects

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the capital and revenue costs of Patient Archiving and Communications systems will be met by *(a)* the Department of Health and *(b)* the National Programme for IT. [220756]

Mr. Hutton: Both the capital and revenue cost of picture archiving and communications systems will be met by a combination of Departmental and national health service funding.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the trusts listed in the National Programme for IT deployment plans as intending to deploy hospital and clinical administration systems by the end of March have fully implemented basic Patient Archiving and Communication systems for all users throughout each trust. [220757]

Mr. Hutton: Picture archiving and communications systems (PACS) deployment is not dependent on wider national programme for information technology deployments of hospital and clinical administration systems. PACS implementation work has started at 12 early adopter sites, which are expected to go live before the summer.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimates his Department has made of the capital and revenue costs of Patient Archiving and Communication systems for each NHS Trust in England and Wales over the next 10 years. [220769]

Mr. Hutton: Trust-specific estimates are not made centrally. Overall estimates of picture archiving and communications systems work contracted by the national programme for information technology (NPfIT) over the next 10 years are based on the three out of five NPfIT cluster areas in England where contracts have now been signed. The work is estimated to have associated capital and revenue costs of £861 million over the next 10 years.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department will pay to fund the capital and revenue costs of the cluster data stores to be provided by local service providers as part of their picture archiving and communications contract with the Department. [220861]

Mr. Hutton: The Department's total planned contribution, via the national programme for information technology, is £61 million capital and £225 million revenue.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many changes there have been to the original specifications of the NHS data spine. [220862]

Mr. Hutton: None. However, there have been seven additions to the specification as a result of new or revised business processes and requirements that have arisen since the development of the original specification.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many trusts in each of the clusters of the NHS National Programme for IT have signed off full trust business cases to take picture archiving and communications systems from their local service provider. [220864]

Mr. Hutton: Two trusts have signed off full business cases to implement picture archiving and communications systems (PACS). Governance arrangements are being adhered to at other sites where PACS implementation work has commenced, to ensure appropriate due diligence, while they await final sign-off of their business cases.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government is still working towards the target that picture archiving and communications systems should be *(a)* 80 per cent. implemented across the NHS in England by the end of 2006 and *(b)* 100 per cent. implemented by the end of 2007. [220867]

Mr. Hutton: The target for picture archiving and communications systems roll-out is 80 per cent. completion by the end of March 2006 and 100 per cent. completion by the end of March 2007.

Mental Health

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to improve the detection of mental illness in older people. [216171]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) for older people, launched in March 2001, sets out a model for the development of services for older people with mental health needs. The NSF makes it clear that early detection and diagnosis of mental health problems should be an integral part of the development of services for older people.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children and young people aged under 18 years are suffering from a mental disorder, broken down by type of disorder. [216172]

Dr. Ladyman: In a survey of 10,000 children and adolescents by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)—"Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in Great Britain, ONS 2000—among five to 10-year-olds, 10 per cent. of boys and 6 per cent. of girls had a mental disorder. In the 11 to 15-year-old age group, the proportion of children with any type of mental disorder was 13 per cent. for boys and 10 per cent. for girls. Another report by the ONS—"Psychiatric Morbidity Among Adults in Private Households, ONS 2000"—gives prevalence rates for mental disorders among the 16 to 19 years age group.

Prevalence rates for individual disorders are shown in the reports, which are available in the Library.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1229W, on mental health care, if his Department will contact all NHS trusts to ask whether they *(a)* supplement the income of and *(b)* provide goods in kind for people in hospital for more than a year. [221717]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has no plans to contact all national health service trusts to ask whether they supplement the income of and provide goods in kind for people in hospital for more than a year.

Myasthenia Gravis

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average waiting time is for patients diagnosed with myasthenia gravis in *(a)* the East Midlands and *(b)* England; [222128]

(2) what steps he will take to increase awareness of myasthenia gravis among NHS health professionals.[222129]

Dr. Ladyman: Figures on waiting times for the treatment of neurological conditions are published, but myasthenia gravis is not separately identified.

We have no specific plans to raise awareness of the condition among the medical profession. The Department is not responsible for setting curricula for health professional training; that is rightly the responsibility of the statutory and professional bodies. However, we do share a commitment with those bodies that all health professionals are trained so that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver a high quality health service to all groups of the population with whom they deal.

The national service framework for long-term conditions focuses on improving services for people with neurological conditions. While the framework does not cover myasthenia gravis specifically, it does recommend improvements in standards, care and support that will benefit everyone with a neurological condition.

Neonatal Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding he made available to support *(a)* all neonatal care services and *(b)* neonatal intensive care services in each year since 1999–2000; and what funding will be made available in 2005–06. [218111]

Dr. Ladyman: Neonatal care services are provided through national health service general funding allocations. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health recently announced an increase in the level of NHS general funding allocation to £135 billion for the financial years 2006–07 and 2007–08. The table shows additional funding for neonatal intensive care services. The additional revenue funding in 2004–05 is recurrent in 2005–06.

Additional funding to improve neonatal intensive care services

£ million

	Funding	
	Capital	*Revenue*
2000–01	6.5	5
2001–02	—	5
2002–03	—	5
2003–04	20	12
2004–05	—	20

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many managed clinical networks providing neonatal care there are in England; what the ratio is of nurses to infants in *(a)* neonatal special care units, *(b)* neonatal high dependency care units and *(c)* neonatal intensive care units for each clinical network; and if he will make a statement. [218113]

Dr. Ladyman: There are 25 neonatal managed clinical networks. Information on the ratio of nurses to infants within units is not collected centrally. The ratio is not constant, but relative to the criticality of the infants. This varies according to demand both within and between units providing a range of special, high dependency and intensive care. Research suggests that, in practice, the ratio of nurses to infants in special care is between one nurse to three and one nurse to four infants. In high dependency care, the ratio is in the order of one to two. In intensive care the ratio is one to one, and with some more specialised procedures, such as extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, the ratio increases further.

NHS Direct

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to make changes in the status of NHS Direct. [222533]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Direct special health authority is due to change its status as part of the Department's review of its arm's-length bodies.

NHS Prescriptions

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* NHS prescriptions and *(b)* NHS prescription items were issued in each of the last 10 years broken down by (i) those attracting a charge and (ii) those receiving an exemption; [221416]

(2) how many *(a)* NHS prescriptions and *(b)* NHS prescription items were issued under an exemption in each of the last 10 years, broken down by reason for exemption. [221417]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested about national health service prescriptions and prescription items has been placed in the Library.

Peter Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost per item prescribed was of prescriptions issued by *(a)* dispensing and *(b)* non-dispensing general practitioners in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [221967]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The average net ingredient cost per item of prescriptions issued by dispensing and non-dispensing doctors that were dispensed in the community in England in each year since 1998, is shown in the table.

Average net ingredient cost per item

£

	Dispensing doctors	*Non-dispensing doctors*
1998	9.19	9.19
1999	9.91	10.04
2000	9.96	10.18
2001	10.24	10.46
2002	10.76	11.14
2003	11.09	11.60

Note:
Data for 1997 is unavailable.

Patient Transfers

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he will take to ensure that cardiac patients awaiting transfer from the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother hospital in Margate to London hospitals for surgery are able to travel expeditiously by ambulance. [222356]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is for acute trusts together with primary care trusts to ensure that when patients need to be transferred to another hospital; this is done in a timely and clinically safe manner. The Department

recently announced the allocation of £14 million to Kent cardiac services to enable more patients to be treated locally, with fewer patients having to travel to London.

Patients (Learning Disabilities)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to improve the provision of health services for those with learning disabilities; and when he expects the targets for service improvements for adults with learning disabilities set out in the White Paper, "Valuing People", to be achieved. [218115]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government's objective is to enable people with learning disabilities to access a health service designed around their individual needs. The "Valuing People" (March 2001) White Paper included key actions on health and steps taken to achieve these; including the appointment of expert health advisers by the "Valuing People" support team.

The health of people with learning disabilities should be part of mainstream health plans to ensure that all national health service services are accessible to everyone. The Public Health White Paper will address the issue of health inequalities. We are supporting the Disability Rights Commission's investigation into inequalities in access to health care services for people with learning disabilities and mental health service users. We are also discussing with the National Patient Safety Agency a scoping project into the confidential inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities. There will be an announcement shortly.

We are improving access to primary care services through a new performance indicator in 2005–06 to monitor registration of people with learning disabilities by primary care trusts. In addition, the Healthcare Commission is raising the profile of services for people with learning disabilities through the appointment of a learning disability specialist. We are further supporting the health needs of learning disabled people through funding given to the voluntary sector.

The "Valuing People" White Paper did not define targets; instead, it set out various actions and objectives. Many of the actions have been taken and the objectives achieved. Where work is in progress and the associated aims and objectives have not yet been achieved, we are working with the "Valuing People" support team to take remedial action to ensure their achievement in the near future.

Practice Closures

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on the quality of the consultation undertaken by the local primary care trust concerning the closure of the Finchley Road Surgery in Camden. [218166]

Dr. Ladyman: There have been no representations concerning this matter.

Residential Homes (Drugs)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the percentage of patients in residential homes for the elderly who are receiving neuroleptic drugs; and which homes prescribe neuroleptic to 90 per cent. or more of their residents. [220700]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* This information is not held centrally.

Scans (Private Sector)

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment was made, before the decision to commission Alliance Medical Ltd. to conduct CT and MRI scans on behalf of the County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust of existing capacity of the Trust's own CT and MRI scanners; [220788]

(2) how many MRI and CT scans have been carried out by Alliance Medical Ltd. on behalf of the County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust; and at what cost. [220789]

Mr. Hutton: Additional diagnostic capacity was procured from Alliance Medical Ltd. as part of a national procurement exercise to serve all parts of England. Alliance Medical's mobile scanning units travel and visit areas according to their needs, as determined by strategic health authority cluster leads. These units only visit areas with long waiting times, following local negotiation.

Alliance Medical's units have carried out 389 scans to date in Durham. Cost is assessed on an average per scan over the life of a five year contract and the total value of the contract is a matter of confidentiality, which cannot be disclosed without prejudicing the commercial interests of the company. However, the cost of scans provided by Alliance Medical is significantly less than the national health service direct access tariff. This represents good value for money, in addition to boosting NHS capacity.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the contract between the NHS and Alliance Medical Ltd. for CT and MRI scans was signed; and who undertook negotiations on behalf of the NHS; [220831]

(2) for how long the NHS contract with Alliance Medical Ltd. will run; and what the total value of the contract is. [220833]

Mr. Hutton: The contract between the national health service and Alliance Medical Ltd. was signed on 29 June 2004. The negotiations were undertaken by the Department's national implementation team.

The contract with Alliance Medical is for five years. The total value of the contract is a matter of commercial confidentiality, and cannot be disclosed without prejudicing the commercial interests of the company. However, the cost of the scans provided by Alliance Medical is significantly less than the national health service direct access tariff. This represents good value for money, in addition to boosting NHS capacity.

Self-harm

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what definition of self-harm is used by NHS Direct; how many calls NHS Direct received in the last year for which figures are available relating to self-harm; what

advice is given by NHS Direct to callers deemed to be self-harming; and whether NHS Direct holds a database of local self-help groups to provide to callers. [221577]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Direct classifies as self-harm all calls relating to self-poisoning or injury, irrespective of the purpose of the act.

NHS Direct is unable to report specifically on the number of call it handles relating to self-harm, as these will categorised under a number of presenting symptoms.

All staff receive training in the handling of calls relating to self-harm against an agreed set of principles.

NHS Direct staff answering calls have access to a detailed database of local and national self help groups.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* training and *(b)* resources are available to NHS staff dealing with young people with experience of self-harm. [221578]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence's guideline on self-harm, published in 2004, which includes children and young people, has recommended that national health service trusts should provide appropriate training for staff who come into contact with people who self harm.

In addition to trust-based training, NHS staff have access to a variety of university-based education and training courses to equip them to work with young people who self harm. The number of resources available for staff working with young people who self harm is increasing. The National Inquiry into Self-Harm and Young People, run jointly by the Camelot Foundation and the Mental Health Foundation, on which the Department is represented, has been recently launched. It aims to educate and raise awareness about self-harm, and provide training and practical guidelines for individuals and organisations who work with young people who self-harm.

Young Minds, a national charity for children's mental health has also compiled an extensive web-based catalogue of reading material and resources for staff who work with young people who self-harm.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221670]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department values the diversity of all its staff and has a policy to ensure that no member of staff will be discriminated against on the grounds of their faith. Subject to health and safety considerations, Sikh employees of the Department can wear the Kirpan.

Visually Impaired People

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will provide CCTV readers for visually impaired people through the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [222359]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service hospital eye service provides optical devices and loans low vision aids, such as high-powered reading lenses, hand-held and stand magnifiers and telescopes, to people with visual impairment. In addition, some primary care trusts have local arrangements for the provision of low vision aids through community-based opticians.

Electronic magnifiers are classed as aids to daily living and as such providing them is the responsibility of local authority social services departments. Social service departments assess individuals' needs and arrange services to meet those needs. This can include the provision of closed circuit television (CCTV). However, hand-held, stand and spectacle-mounted magnifiers are generally easier to use, more widely available and more accessible.

In keeping with the principle of flexibility in meeting local needs, NHS hospital trusts, primary care trusts and social service departments are being encouraged to work more closely together, including the possibility of establishing joint budgets for equipment which could allow for the provision of a wider range of services and equipment than has hitherto been available.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Deaf People (Public Service Delivery)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken in the last three years to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing people have equality of access to Government services. [218848]

Mr. Spellar: Over the past three years significant work has been initiated or completed to improve communication between staff in Government Departments in Northern Ireland and people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.

Examples of steps taken across Departments are as follows:

The formation of a partnership group whereby Departments, led by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, are working in partnership with representatives of the deaf community to develop ideas for improving access to public services by users of sign language;

Sign language interpreters are provided at public events;

The issue of guidance in 2004 from the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service to all Departments to ensure external events are fully accessible to people with disabilities;

Departments have been delivering training in deaf awareness, sign language and in the use of text phones;

The Department of Finance and Personnel is implementing a programme to ensure people with disabilities can have physical access and communication access to Government buildings. This includes the installation of Deaf Loop systems (at counter points, reception areas and designated rooms in all buildings with a public interface), Deaf Alerter systems for evacuation purposes, Beacons in toilet areas, Quematic systems in public offices, Signage and Text Phones;

The Promoting Social Inclusion Working Group on Disability was established in 2004. This comprises members of Government Departments and those representing people with disabilities and is examining how services can be improved to better address the needs and rights of disabled people including

those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. This work includes conducting a major survey of people with disabilities across Northern Ireland during 2005.

Examples of good practice within Departments are as follows:

The Social Security Agency (SSA) is working in partnership with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) on a pilot scheme which will identify possible improvements on services for customers with hearing impairments. Furthermore the SSA has given a commitment to work towards the RNID's "Louder than Words" Charter Mark of best practice;

The Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency of the Department of the Environment makes extra time available to theory test candidates, if required;

Trainees with a disability, including those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment, who enter Jobskills, are entitled to additional training time and funding to assist them in achieving their qualifications;

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has provided support under the PEACE II programme for a project which will provide training, support and networking for people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment;

The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise identifies students who are deaf or have a hearing impairment when they enrol. Each student with such a disability is assigned a personal tutor;

The Department of Education in co-operation with the National Deaf Children's Society has issued two booklets, "Deaf Friendly Schools" and "Deaf Friendly Nurseries and Pre-schools", which provide a clear and friendly view of the context in which young deaf people's education takes place.

All of the above are examples of the standards which Government have set and will continue to review and improve by working in partnership with organisations representing people who are deaf or hearing impaired and from disabled people themselves via consultation and the gathering of information.

Locum Doctors

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether locum doctors in Northern Ireland are able to join the Health and Personal Social Services superannuation scheme; and if he will make a statement. [221518]

Angela Smith: The National Health Service (NHS) Pension regulations were amended in England, Wales and Scotland in 2002 and 2003 respectively to permit access to the NHS Pension Schemes in England, Wales and Scotland to freelance locums on a new supplementary list. Those regulations had to be further amended to permit access to GP locums. The regulations in England and Wales are now being amended again to take account of the new medical performers list, which incorporates the supplementary list.

In Northern Ireland, the prior approval of the Department of Finance and Personnel will be required before the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety can proceed to amend the HPSS Superannuation Regulations to cover both backdated and future scheme membership for freelance and GP locums who are registered on the performers list. This approval is currently being sought.

Railways

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Government have for the old Comber railway line between Belfast and Comber; and if he will make a statement. [222124]

Mr. Spellar: The Old Comber railway line has been identified as a proposed cycle route in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015. This cycle route will form part of the National Cycle Network, which has been promoted by Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity as part of approximately 155 miles of cycle route proposed in the County Down area.

The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan has also proposed the use of part of the former railway line for a pilot Rapid Transit scheme (known as Eway) on the portion of the line between Holywood Arches and Graham's Bridge Dundonald subject to economic appraisal, budgetary processes and the completion of statutory processes. It is proposed that cycle route facilities are provided in conjunction with the rapid transit scheme.

DRD Roads Service has already provided lengths of cycle route along stretches of the old Comber railway line between King's Road and Holy wood Arches and has drawn up proposals to extend this route towards Dundonald during 2005–06.

Roads

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans the Government have to improve *(a)* the Portaferry Road between Newtownards and Portaferry over the next two years and *(b)* traffic management in Newtownards to alleviate traffic congestion at peak times. [222123]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the right hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. David Trimble, dated 16 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question asking what plans the Government has to improve *(a)* the Portaferry Road between Newtownards and Portaferry over the next two years and *(b)* traffic management in Newtownards to alleviate traffic congestion at peak times (222123). I have been asked to reply as the issue raised falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I am pleased to be able to advise you that we are planning an improvement scheme during the 2005/6 financial year, costing approximately £30,000 along the A20 Portaferry to Newtownards road at the Rowreagh Road/Gransha Road junction, subject to agreement on land acquisition. We are also starting work shortly on the reconstruction of Main Street, Kircubbin, from the junction with Blackhall Street to the junction with Roden Street, at an estimated cost of £300,000. Unfortunately, a scheme to resurface approximately one kilometre of the stretch of Rowreagh Road south of Loughdoo Road to Abbacy Road at a cost of approximately £120,000 has been postponed due to an impending major works scheme by Water Service.

With regard to traffic management schemes planned for Newtownards, you will be aware a number of road improvement schemes have been identified in the Draft Ards/Down Area Plan. I understand the Public Inquiry for the Plan is due to commence in early May. The schemes identified in the Area Plan include the:

Bowtown Road link—from Portaferry Road to Bowtown Road;

Southern Relief Road—from Portaferry Road to Scrabo Road via the Comber Road;

Frederick Street Link—from Nursery Road to Frederick Street Roundabout; and

Talbot Street/North Road upgrade—improvements to junction layout.

In addition, the construction of the Bowtown Road link extension to the Donaghadee Road via the Movilla Road, to the east of Newtownards, has been identified to be undertaken with the proposed development to the east of the town. All of these schemes will contribute significantly to the improvement of traffic movements in the town of Newtownards, although no definite timescale can be given for the delivery of most of these schemes at this time.

It is likely that the proposed Southern Relief Road, which will greatly benefit traffic movement in the area, may well be provided over the next two years. Planning permission has already been granted for a section of this road and work is currently ongoing to progress the Direction Order on the remainder of the scheme.

The Zion Place roundabouts on the Bangor Road have also been identified within the Draft Ards/Down Area Plan as requiring improvements and modelling work is ongoing for this junction. As the provision of the Southern Relief Road will alter the traffic movements at the New Road/Portaferry Road junction, this site is also being examined. Unfortunately, it is not possible at this time to be precise on when these junctions may be improved as any proposed schemes will be dependant on the findings of the Area Plan Public Inquiry.

I hope this information is helpful.

Ulster Hospital

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to reduce waiting lists for surgery at the Ulster Hospital. [222077]

Mr. Spellar: The Ulster Community and Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust is treating more than 95 per cent. of inpatients and daycases within 12 months of being placed on the waiting list.

Data provided by the Trust for 7 March 2005 indicate that there are 126 patients waiting more than 18 months for inpatient or daycase treatment at the Trust, a reduction of 66 per cent. compared to the position in April 2004. Plans are in place to treat as many of these patients as possible by the end of March 2005 and those patients remaining will be provided with a treatment plan containing an anticipated date for treatment.

The Trust has a comprehensive waiting list management plan in place and is working towards additional service improvements that will ultimately improve the timeliness, effectiveness and appropriateness of services provided to patients.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to reduce waiting times for category three patients at the accident and emergency unit at the Ulster hospital. [222078]

Mr. Spellar: The Ulster Community and Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust is taking a number of steps to improve the clinical environment in accident and emergency and to shorten waiting times for patients at the Ulster hospital. These steps include:

The appointment of additional nursing staff;

An extension to the existing accident and emergency department;

The refurbishment of the reception and waiting areas; and

The introduction of a new rapid assessment and treatment unit, which will include the provision of additional cubicle space.

At a regional level the Department is taking forward a comprehensive Emergency Pressures Programme, requiring the Ulster Community and Hospitals Health and Social Services Trust and other Trusts to implement a number of compulsory actions and good practice measures to improve the flow of emergency admissions and reduce trolley waits.

Unsolved Killings

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what he expects the likely outcome of the review of the unsolved killings to be in respect of the prosecution of individuals found to have been responsible for murder since 1969. [221383]

Mr. Pearson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced, on 8 March, the provision of additional funding to enable the Chief Constable to expand the work of the Serious Crime Review Team (SCRT) in a way that will command the confidence of relatives and the wider community.

The objective of the new unit will be to try and achieve closure where concerns remain from families and to allow the PSNI as an organisation to close inquiries with confidence in the integrity of the investigative process and satisfied that no further investigative opportunities exist.

Where evidential opportunities exist these cases will be reinvestigated with the possibility of evidence being provided to the DPP. Of course, those convicted may be eligible to apply to the Independent Sentence Review Commissioners for early release under the Northern Ireland (Sentences) Act 1998.

Where a judicial outcome is not possible, the unit will consider ways through which as much information as possible might be made available to the relatives of victims, if that is what they want.

CABINET OFFICE

Cameras

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what his policy is on permitting staff to take cameras into *(a)* 10 Downing street and *(b)* the Cabinet Office; [222365]

(2) what his policy is on permitting staff to take mobile telephones which have built-in camera facilities into *(a)* 10 Downing street and *(b)* the Cabinet Office; [222366]

(3) how many instances there have been of *(a)* Downing street and *(b)* Cabinet Office staff being refused permission to bring (i) cameras and (ii) camera-enabled mobile phones into their respective workplaces, in each of the last three years. [222367]

Mr. Miliband: Staff from both the Cabinet Office and 10 Downing street (Prime Minister's Office) may bring a camera and/or camera phone into the estate but may only use them to take photographs with prior permission from the relevant security section. All staff

are aware of, and regularly reminded of, departmental security policy which is rigorously enforced. As staff are allowed to bring cameras and/or camera phones into the estate, but are not allowed to use them within the premises, we do not maintain any records of staff being refused permission to bring them into their respective workplaces.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Alderman Knight School

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects the schools adjudicator to announce his decision on the future of Alderman Knight school, Tewkesbury; and if she will make a statement. [222521]

Margaret Hodge: Schools adjudicators are independent of the Department. The timing of an announcement of an adjudicator's decision is a matter for the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.

Bullying

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will develop a strategy of zero tolerance of violence and intimidation directed at young people. [222703]

Derek Twigg: The Government already has a "zero tolerance" approach to violence in schools and takes this issue very seriously. We have made it clear that head teachers may permanently exclude pupils for violence even where this is a first offence. We are working to create a climate in which all violence is recognised as intolerable. To achieve that, we:

are giving every secondary school access to high-quality behaviour management training materials and expert advice from behaviour management consultants;

are providing extra support for schools facing the greatest challenges through our Behaviour Improvement Programme;

have provided £120 million for school security improvements since 1997;

have based over 300 police officers in schools;

are developing specific violence prevention materials through our Violence Reduction in Schools project; and

are consulting on new proposals on keeping knives out of schools, including searching suspect pupils.

These measures will enable schools to tackle the problems that may lead to an escalation to violence and they will make schools even safer for children and staff.

In the main schools are very safe places. Instances of violence are far less frequent than on the streets and in the home. Staff and pupils report fewer concerns about violence than in other European countries.

Diploma in Medicine

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many students have enrolled for higher education courses in England leading to a diploma in medicine in *(a)* September and *(b)* February in each academic year since September 1998; and how many of each semester's cohort (i) started the second year of studies, (ii) started the third year of studies, (iii) qualified and (iv) registered; [219798]

(2) how many students have enrolled for courses leading to a diploma in nursing at *(a)* Luton university and *(b)* the university of Hertfordshire in each semester since September 1998; and how many from each semester's intake (i) started the second year, (ii) started the third year, (iii) qualified and (iv) registered. [219799]

Dr. Howells: This information is not held centrally. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publish completion rates of students on full-time undergraduate courses in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", but these are not calculated for individual subjects, or courses.

Education Funding

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advice she has received from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) on research conducted for the LSC by the Learning and Skills Development Agency on the size of the funding gap between sixth forms and further education colleges. [222158]

Dr. Howells: None. The report has not been published yet, and we have yet to consider the analysis or the report's conclusions.

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects further to reduce the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in South West Bedfordshire. [222176]

Dr. Howells: Government recognise that there are differences in the funding allocated to school sixth forms and further education colleges and have taken action to address this. We have brought up funding levels for further education colleges as we said we would without penalising schools. Our policy has been to continue to bring up the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been provided in the 2004–05 financial year to *(a)* school sixth forms and *(b)* further education colleges to assist them in covering teachers' pension costs. [222722]

Dr. Howells: The Department does not separately allocate funds to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for school sixth form and further education college pension costs. We expect schools and colleges to meet staffing costs from funds they receive from the LSC and other sources. The LSC funding includes provision for changes to the Teachers Pensions Scheme in 2003.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding is withdrawn from *(a)* school sixth forms and *(b)* further education colleges when a student leaves a level 3 course mid-term; and if she will make a statement. [222723]

Dr. Howells: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding school sixth forms and further education providers. As matters concerning the funding impact of retention relate to the LSC's operational responsibilities, Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief

executive, will write to the hon. Member providing the information requested. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much an average school sixth form received as part of the real-terms annual funding guarantee in *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05; and what the allocation will be in 2005–06. [222724]

Dr. Howells: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding school sixth forms including the operation of our guarantee that, provided pupil numbers are maintained, no school will lose out in real terms as a result of the transfer of funding responsibility to the LSC. As matters concerning the operation of the real terms guarantee relate to the LSC's operational responsibilities, Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, will write to the hon. Member providing the information requested. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 279W, on further education, to the hon. Member for Finchley and Golders Green (Dr. Vis), what proportion of the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges is due to *(a)* base funding rates, *(b)* the annual real-terms funding guarantee, *(c)* differing funding of institutions when students drop-out, *(d)* the funding of teachers' pensions, *(e)* the differential in standards funds, *(f)* VAT which is able to be reclaimed and *(g)* costs of maintaining buildings and funding capital projects. [222725]

Dr. Howells: As stated in the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 279W, on further education (FE), to the hon. Member for Finchley and Golders Green (Dr. Vis), the main measure the Department has used to identify the funding gap is the difference in Learning and Skills Council national base funding rates for an AS/A2 qualification at 2002/03, and the comparative increases since.

I recognise that there is more to overall levels of funding than differences in funding rates and I acknowledge that there are other important differences between school and FE funding. This is a complex area and there is currently no reliable like-for-like comparison between schools and colleges. As part of its agenda for change the LSC is currently reviewing the funding systems and will be consulting later in the year.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much schools in Tamworth have received under the new deal for schools. [221939]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Staffordshire LEA was granted the following amounts under the four phases of NDS: NDS1 1997–98: £1.387 million; NDS2 1998–99 £3.975 million; NDS3 1999–2000 £5.541 million; and NDS4 2000–2001 £10.225 million. No figures are held centrally for Tamworth schools for NDS1. Tamworth schools were allocated £252, 846 for NDS2; £2,231,229 for NDS3; and £5,327,046 for NDS4. This information was recorded centrally and local authorities' allocation of resources may differ from this.

E-university

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the UK e-university project was abolished; and if she will make a statement. [222213]

Dr. Howells: We did not abolish the project. A private company, UK eUniversities Worldwide (UKeU), was formed to take forward the UK e-University project. It was intended that this should secure equal funding from public and private sector investment. In autumn 2003 the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) commissioned an independent review of the UKeU plans. In the light of changes in the global financial market, the fact that student recruitment had not met planned targets in the first year, and the lack of any immediate prospect of matching private investment, the Board of the HEFCE concluded that the opportunity cost of providing further funds was too high. HEFCE then sought discussions with UKeU on a restructuring of the company's activities. On hearing of HEFCE's decision, the UKeU board resigned. The HEFCE Board then decided that future HEFCE funding should be used to support the development of e-learning in universities and colleges themselves, placing emphasis on public good objectives.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the UK e-university project; and what plans she has to establish similar distance learning schemes. [222214]

Dr. Howells: We are reflecting on the findings of the Education and Skills Select Committee Report on the UK e-University and consulting with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) which has separately been considering the lessons to be learnt. We will issue a formal response to the Education and Skills Committee in due course. It is intended that future HEFCE funding should support the development of e-learning in universities and colleges.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research was undertaken before implementation of the UK e-university project; and if she will make a statement. [222236]

Dr. Howells: The Higher Education Funding Council for England commissioned a substantial body of research, covering commercial, HE and pedagogic aspects of the project. I understand that the research is being disseminated to the higher education sector via the Higher Education Academy to inform future eLearning. The first volume of the e-University Compendium is available at www.heacademy.ac.uk/e-University.htm.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which Minister was responsible for the UK e-university project. [222237]

Dr. Howells: The e-Universities project was announced by the former Secretary of State for Education and Employment, Mr. Blunkett, in February 2000. The Higher Education Funding Council for England was responsible for taking forward the project and subsequent Secretaries of State and Ministers for Higher Education in this Department were kept

informed of progress. Responsibility for the running of the private company, UK eUniversities Worldwide (UKeU), rested with its Board.

Harrop Fold School

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department has investigated *(a)* the financial position of Harrop Fold School, *(b)* the progress of the school since it was placed in special measures and *(c)* the staff retention rate at the school. [222514]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department has not undertaken any investigation into the financial position of Harrop Fold School. As this school is subject to special measures it receives regular visits from Ofsted to monitor its progress. The reports of the most recent monitoring visits indicate that the school has made reasonable progress since September 2004. The staff retention rate is now very good and next term the school will be fully staffed with no vacancies or supply teachers.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the future of the Harrop Fold School, Worsley, with particular reference to *(a)* its financial position and *(b)* any replacement school. [222515]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Harrop Fold School is currently subject to special measures. Ofsted's report on its last monitoring visit to the school in January 2005 noted that it had made reasonable progress since the last such visit in October 2004. The school has a budget deficit which is being taken into account in the work of the School Improvement Partnership Board that has been established to oversee its recovery. We are not aware of any plans to replace the school, which would be a matter for the local authority in the first instance.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received from *(a)* parents and *(b)* Salford metropolitan borough council about Harrop Fold School, Worsley. [222516]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: DfES Ministers have received four representations from the Harrop Fold Action Group since the school was placed in special measures. There have been no formal representations from Salford metropolitan district council, although the Council has been in regular correspondence about the school with DfES officials since May 2003 when the school was placed in special measures.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who the members are of the School Improvement Partnership Board put in place to monitor progress at Harrop Fold school, Worsley; how often it has met; and to whom it is accountable. [222517]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The membership of the School Improvement Partnership Board (SIPB) set up to manage, challenge and support recovery programmes for Harrop Fold school includes a former headteacher as chair; the executive head teacher of Harrop Fold; the chair of the governing body of Harrop Fold; the chief education officer for Salford; the deputy chief education officer for Salford; a senior education adviser and one official from the Department for Education and Skills. The SIPB has met four times since 31 August 2004. The SIPB is accountable to my Department for the substantial funding we have provided to support its work to improve the school.

Individual Learning Accounts

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the current status is of Individual Learning Accounts; and when they will be re-introduced into England. [222233]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Individual Learning Account scheme was closed on 23 November 2001 after serious allegations of fraud.

The Department is continuing investigations into learning providers that may have abused the Individual Learning Account scheme and is supporting the police in pursuing criminal proceedings against a number of learning providers. To date the police have been successful in cases involving 11 ILA learning providers, which have resulted in 11 individuals being convicted with a variety of prison and suspended sentences, community service and fines being imposed.

Ministers decided, after careful examination of the lessons we must learn, not to introduce another stand alone Individual Learning Account scheme. Instead, we have integrated those ILA elements that proved successful within the broader skills strategy described in the White Paper, "21st Century Skills, Realising Our Potential" (Cmnd 5810), published in July 2003.

Office for Fair Access

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the milestones for admissions submitted to the Office for Fair Access by individual universities are. [222595]

Dr. Howells: Details of all university access agreements that have been approved by the Office for Fair Access, including milestones, will be publicly available on the OFFA website (http://www.offa.org.uk) from Thursday 17 March.

Primary School Class Sizes (Ribble Valley)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in primary schools in the Ribble Valley were in classes of 31 or more in each year since 1996–97. [221984]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary schools[1]: Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher[2]—Ribble Valley parliamentary constituency

	Maintained primary schools		
		Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more	
Position in January each yea r 1997 to 2004	Total pupils in all classes	Number of pupils	Percentage of pupils3
1997	7,565	4,168	55.1
1998	7,776	4,563	58.7
1999	7,612	3,644	47.9
2000	7,781	3,390	43.6
2001	7,508	3,116	41.5
2002	7,768	2,805	36.1
2003	7,965	2,731	34.3
2004	8,138	2,551	31.3

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] A sample of classes being taught at a particular point in the school timetable on the day of the Census in January.
[3] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Professor Sir Roy Meadow

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what work remunerated from public funds has been undertaken by Professor Sir Roy Meadow in the last two years. [222070]

Margaret Hodge: Professor Meadow has undertaken no work during the past two years on behalf of the Department for Education and Skills. My Department does not have information on whether he has undertaken any other work remunerated from public funds.

School Leavers (Ribble Valley)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils in Ribble Valley left school with no qualifications in 2004. [221985]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The proportion of 15 year-old pupils[1] that failed to achieve a GCSE or equivalent qualification in the parliamentary constituency of Ribble Valley in 2003–04 was 3.1 per cent.

[1] GCSE and equivalent results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year (i.e. 31 August 2003) and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Schools (Internet Security)

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she has taken to ensure that schools implement security measures in respect of their use of the internet. [222189]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills and with Becta (The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency) are committed to ensuring that schools have advice and information on internet safety, to help teachers make informed decisions about the technological and practical steps that they can take to keep their students safe.

The Superhighway Safety website includes advice on all aspects of internet safety covering a number of key areas of concern such as e-mails for students, filtering systems, school websites and chat rooms. The guidance pack is online at http://safety.ngfl.gov.uk. Schools are advised to have an acceptable use policy signed by students and their parents, guardians or carers detailing the ways the internet can or cannot be used.

Self-harm

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* training and *(b)* resources are available to educational professionals dealing with young people with experience of self-harm; and what definition of self-harm the Department uses. [221576]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The school workforce can draw upon a range of training support in dealing with self-harm. The resources available centrally include the Department's 2001 guide "Promoting Children's Mental Health in Early Years and School Settings" which gives advice on how self-harm can be managed; and "Promoting emotional health and well-being through the National Healthy School Standard", jointly produced by the Departments of Health and Education and Skills, offers guidance and training modules on whole school approaches to supporting emotional well-being more generally. Every local education authority in England works in partnership with primary care trusts to manage and deliver a local healthy schools programme, supported by a local co-ordinator and education and health team.

Further guidelines for education professionals will be available later this year when a national inquiry into self-harm reports. The Department uses the Inquiry's description of self-harm as encompassing

> "a wide range of things that people do to themselves, in a deliberate and usually hidden way, which are damaging."

SOAs (Dartford)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she *(a)* has taken and *(b)* is proposing to take to assist the lower level super output areas (SOAs) in Dartford that fall within the most deprived 20 per cent. of lower level SOAs in England and Wales in terms of educational qualifications and access to education, skills and training. [221102]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Government policy is not currently targeted at a super output area level, but there is an abundance of activity in the Dartford area to address

the issues arising from the relatively high levels of deprivation, some directly funded through DfES funding, some through a multi-agency approach.

To give some indication of the levels of activity in the Dartford area there is:

a creative writing initiative to engage the pupils;

a major literacy project in Swanscombe (using a variety of budgets);

additional support is made available for providing support for behavioural management in 10 primary schools and the two secondary schools;

three of the primary schools are being remodelled (physical infrastructure) to provide a high quality environment that will enhance the extended school activities by incorporating health, community and social services provision;

vocational centres to enhance the work related learning curriculum developed in schools through funding to address the growth agenda in the area;

funding gained to provide additional support in schools to improve the home:school links and engage better with the local communities;

a children's centre based in Swanscombe.

all schools in the area are addressing the Healthy Schools Standard.

In addition, Kent county council have developed school 'cluster' arrangements to help develop collaborative approaches.

Special Educational Needs

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school teachers are trained to provide physical education for pupils with special educational needs. [221437]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not collected centrally.

Students

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students attended *(a)* Russell Group universities and *(b)* other universities in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) socio-economic class and (ii) ethnic group. [218983]

Dr. Howells: The latest available information on socio-economic group was published in September by the Higher Education Statistics Agency and is given in the first table. The latest information on ethnicity is shown in the second table.

Young full-time first degree entrants to UK HE institutions

	Young entrants (number)	*Of which, percentage[1] from* *Social classes IIIM-V[2]*	*Socio-economic classes 4–7[2]*
Russell group			
2000–01	54,135	16	—
2001–02	56,885	16	—
2002–03	60,695	—	19
Other HE institutions			
2000–01	167,285	28	—
2001–02	172,860	29	—
2002–03	178,485	—	32

[1] Based on those students who provided details of their social background.

[2] A new socio-economic classification was introduced in 200203, which replaced social class. The two classifications are not directly comparable. Social classes IIIM-V cover students from skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled backgrounds; socio-economic classes 4–7 covers those from small employers and own account workers, lower supervisory and technical occupations, semi-routine occupations, and routine occupations.

Source:

"Performance Indicators in Higher Education" published by HEFCE/HESA

All undergraduates in UK HE institutions

	Total students	*Of which, percentage[1] who were* *White*	*Black*	*Asian*	*Mixed*	*Other*
Russell Group						
2001–02	259,130	88.2	1.6	8.2	0.7	1.3
2002–03	265,540	87.2	1.8	8.7	1.3	1.1
2003–04	271,530	86.5	1.9	8.9	1.8	0.8
Other HE institutions						
2001–02	1,143,82 0	85.2	4.5	8.4	0.6	1.3
2002–03	1,196,89 0	84.8	4.7	8.4	1.1	1.0
2003–04	1,252,21 0	84.6	4.9	8.2	1.4	0.9

[1] Based on those students who provided details of their ethnicity.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Numbers have been rounded to the nearest five.

Swimming

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assistance is available to pupils from low-income families for swimming lessons; [222404]

(2) what initiatives her Department has undertaken since 2001 to promote swimming among school pupils; [222405]

(3) what the status of swimming is within the national curriculum. [222407]

Derek Twigg: Swimming and water safety is a compulsory part of the PE national curriculum at Key Stage 2. During key stages 3 and 4, schools must offer pupils two programmes of study from: swimming and water safety; athletics and; outdoor and adventurous activities.

Swimming also has a significant role to play within our national strategy for PE, School Sport and Club Links. Since 2001 we have:

created a new swimming and water safety website (www.nc.uk.net/safeswimming) which provides practical support for schools and swimming teachers;

published, in December 2003, a swimming charter, which sets out guidelines, shares best practice and provides practical support to help schools overcome many of the challenges they face when planning and delivering swimming; and

carried out a pilot programme which tested out how best to support those children who reach the end of Key Stage 2 and are not able to swim 25 metres.

We intend to implement this programme nationally from April 2006 and over £5 million of funding has been allocated to support the scheme in 2006–07 and 2007–08. We will be consulting shortly on what the detail of this programme might look like.

Furthermore, as part of its wider provision, the PE and school sport national professional development programme will help to improve the quality of swimming teaching throughout England. The programme will identify where there is most need and provide specific professional development and support to help ensure high quality swimming tuition in schools. Every school will be able to access this programme free of charge from April 2005.

As it is a statutory part of the national curriculum, no charge to parents can be made for the cost of providing swimming lessons, or for the cost of transport to carry pupils to and from the lesson. Schools can ask for voluntary contributions to cover the cost of swimming activities, but when requesting the contribution it must make it clear that no child will be treated differently, or left out of the activity, because their parent is unable or unwilling to make the contribution.

Teachers

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many full-time equivalent regular teachers there were in maintained schools in September 2004. [221591]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Information on the numbers of teachers in service is collected in January of each year.

Provisional teacher numbers for January 2005 will be published in April 2005.

Figures for January 2004 were published in table 15 of the Statistics of Education, School Workforce in England, 2004 edition a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library. Alternatively this publication is available at the following URL:

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DBA/OL/v000554/index.shtml

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total cost of employing a newly qualified teacher for their first year of work, including salary and pension contributions, is in the current financial year. [222161]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Currently there are four regional pay scales, inner London, outer London, fringe area and England and Wales (excluding the London area). Each of these pay scales has a different starting salary.

For the current financial year (April 4 to March 5), the starting salary of a newly qualified teacher in Inner London is £22,059. The corresponding on costs (national insurance and pension contributions) are 20.7 per cent. bringing the total cost to £26,625.

In outer London the starting salary is £20,862 and the incorporated on costs (national insurance and pension contributions) is 20.6 per cent. bringing the total cost to £25,155.

The starting salary for the fringe area is £19,449. The on costs (national insurance and pension contributions) are estimated to 20.4 per cent. bringing the total cost to £23,420.

For England and Wales (excluding the London area), a newly qualified teacher's salary is £18,558. The corresponding national insurance and pension contributions are estimated at 20.3 per cent. of bringing the total cost to £22,326.

These figures are for the first point of main pay spine for qualified classroom teachers and do not include allowances.

This information is based on data from the school teachers' pay and conditions document 2004 and on the 2004–05 Inland Revenue national insurance rates and thresholds.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been made to the Government of China on human rights abuses in Kheetan Province; and if he will make a statement. [221449]

Mr. Rammell: There was a discussion on Xinjiang at the most recent round of the EU/China human rights dialogue held in Luxembourg in February 2005.

The UK delegation visited Xinjiang in November 2003 as part of our biannual UK China human rights dialogue. There was a follow-up discussion on Xinjiang at the next round of the dialogue held in London on 13–14 May 2004.

We put forward a number of concerns about Xinjiang in connection with the most recent round of the dialogue, held in Beijing on 22 November 2004.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised human rights during his trip to China in January 2005. I discussed human rights issues with Assistant Foreign Minister Li Hui during my trip to China in October 2004.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 25 January from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding Darfur, reference: 1 85889/05. [221619]

Mr. MacShane: My hon. Friend the Minister for Africa (Chris Mullin) replied directly to "Waging Peace" on 9 March and copied this reply to the hon. Member.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 3 February from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding Miss S. Watson of Abu Dhabi. [221620]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean replied to the hon. Member on 10 March.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter of 26 January 2005 from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent, reference 97610. [222513]

Mr. Alexander: UKvisas are continuing with their inquiries with our high commission in Kingston and hope to be able to offer a substantive reply to my hon. Friend shortly.

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what financial assistance has been given by *(a)* the Government and *(b)* the EU to the Northern Cyprus Administration in each of the last three years; and for what projects. [221545]

Mr. MacShane: The British Government have given no financial assistance to the Turkish Cypriot Administration.

Our high commission has funded a number of projects in north Cyprus all designed to help bring Turkish Cypriots closer to the EU, to encourage re-unification of the island and to make a future settlement less costly and easier to implement.

Most EU assistance still awaits agreement on the relevant regulation—details of projects undertaken in the interim may be obtained from the European Commission.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* Turkish Cypriots and *(b)* Turkish settlers living in northern Cyprus who work in the Republic of Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [221546]

Mr. MacShane: We have made no such estimate, although our understanding is that no mainland Turkish workers are permitted to work in the south. The issue of workers remains an important issue for clarification by the parties in the context of a comprehensive settlement.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether a Minister from his Department has visited the closed area of Famagusta; and if he will make a statement. [221557]

Mr. MacShane: I visited Famagusta in October 2004 and saw the sad state of Varosha which has not been inhabited since 1974.

The closed area of Famagusta has not been part of recent visits to Cyprus by Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers, although our high commissioner has visited, under the auspices of the UN peacekeeping force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the areas of northern Cyprus that *(a)* the British high commissioner to Cyprus and *(b)* senior officials at the high commission have visited in the last 12 months. [221572]

Mr. MacShane: It is not possible to list all the areas visited. Our high commissioner and his staff routinely visit northern Cyprus, in order to monitor and influence Turkish Cypriot opinion and to discharge consular and other duties wherever required.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last discussed with the Turkish-Cypriot Administration in northern Cyprus its policy on bringing the closed area of Famagusta into use. [221574]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed this issue with the Turkish-Cypriot Administration. However, our officials regularly discuss all aspects of the situation in Cyprus with Turkish Cypriot representatives.

We have also encouraged dialogue on these issues between the Turkish Cypriot leadership and the European Commission.

Egypt

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the Egyptian President's request to Parliament to amend article 76 of the Egyptian constitution to allow multiple candidates in September's Presidential polls; and if he will make a statement. [221606]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has always supported Egyptian efforts on reform. We welcome President Mubarak's proposal on 28 February for a change to the Egyptian constitution, with the stated aim of enabling direct election of the President from among multiple

candidates. This is the first step towards Egypt taking its place among the leading reforming countries in the region.

EU Presidency

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what programme points, other than the summit with European Union foreign ministers in Newport in September, have been confirmed for the UK's EU presidency agenda. [221601]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the copy of the provisional programme for the UK's presidency of the European Union, which has been placed in the Library of the House.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government plan to issue further guidance on the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe which provides analysis and comparison of the existing treaties and the new treaty, as referred to by the Prime Minister on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1456W. [221570]

Mr. MacShane: A Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) commentary analysing the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe compared with the existing EU treaties was laid before the House on 26 January and published as Command Paper 6459 on 7 February. It can be accessed free of charge at www.europe.gov.uk. Hard copies are available in central libraries and to members of the public on request from the FCO.

Gibraltar

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much money was allocated to Gibraltar from the UK Exchequer in 2004–05. [221481]

Mr. MacShane: The costs of the Convent (the Governor's Office) in the financial year 2004–05 are £1.268 million (£1.187 million running costs and £81,000 capital expenditure). Core Ministry of Defence costs are £78.491 million (£64.698 million operating costs and £13.793 million capital expenditure). The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is also responsible for the Gibraltar Project Fund which has an allocation of £400,000 in financial year 2004–05.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on expanding trade relations with Gibraltar. [221490]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are committed to helping Gibraltar maintain its prosperity through open access to markets in goods and services.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1578W, on Israel, whether he has made representations to the Israeli authorities about the Citizenship and Entrance to Israel law since it was extended on 31 January. [221689]

Mr. Rammell: Our Ambassador in Tel Aviv raised the matter with Israeli Interior Minister Paz-Pines on 7 March. Mr. Paz-Pines said the Israeli government would conduct a further review of the temporary order on 31 May. He expected to see modifications to the law which would allow Palestinians above a certain age to be reunited with their families in Israel. The law would expire at the end of 2005, by which time an entirely new immigration law would need to be introduced.

Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the legitimacy of the first round of parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan; and if he will make a statement. [221605]

Mr. Rammell: As I said in a press statement on 4 March 2005, I am encouraged to see that the parliamentary elections in Kyrgyzstan on 27 February were more competitive than previous elections, and that voting and the count on the day were a considerable improvement. But a number of significant shortcomings, particularly before election day, meant the elections still did not fully match up to international standards. A copy of the statement is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk/news/press-releases.

The UK, like its EU partners, believes that freedom of expression is fundamental to the democratic process. The pressure exerted on the independent media and the late deregistration of some candidates, for example, restricted this freedom for the voters of Kyrgyzstan.

Looking to the second round of parliamentary elections on 13 March 2005 and the presidential elections later this year, I urged the Kyrgyz authorities in my statement of 4 March to take these issues into account and seize the opportunity to set a strong example for the rest of Central Asia.

Moldova

Mr. Trend: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the presidential elections in Moldova; and whether he has assessed this as a free and fair campaign and vote. [221515]

Mr. MacShane: I refer the hon. Member to the declaration on the parliamentary elections in Moldova issued by the EU on 8 March. We are encouraged that the elections were judged by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to have generally met international standards for democratic elections. But we urge the Government of Moldova to address without delay the shortcomings identified by the OSCE, in particular problems concerning campaign conditions and the restricted media environment.

The full text of the EU declaration is available on the presidency's website at www.eu2005.lu.

Nuclear Disarmament

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the governments of *(a)* Iran and *(b)* North Korea on nuclear disarmament; and if he will make a statement. [221433]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary is in regular contact with his Iranian counterpart. Discussion of Iran's nuclear programme forms a key part of these exchanges. He also has frequent discussions with his French, German and US colleagues concerning Iran's nuclear programme. The issue is regularly on the agenda for discussion with a wide range of Ministers from other states.

Discussion of Iran's nuclear programme at senior official level continue on a regular basis.

There has been no direct ministerial contact with the Government of North Korea since the visit of my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) in December 2004. The Government are, however, following closely developments in North Korea, and is in regular contact with other interested Governments. We urge the Government of North Korea to resume its engagement in the six-party talks process, which aims to resolve international concerns about the status of North Korea's nuclear programmes.

Peter Dun

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the case of Mr. Peter Dun. [221277]

Mr. MacShane: We are not able to comment because we owe a duty of confidentiality to serving and former members of staff.

Student Visas

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many rejected overseas student visa applications were *(a)* overturned and *(b)* upheld on appeal in the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [222378]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not have figures detailing the number of successful appeals that were made against decisions to refuse entry clearance.

UK Embassies

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the cost of employing a commercial officer in each UK embassy in *(a)* the EU and *(b)* North America. [222028]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 15 March 2005]*: The decision on which grades to employ at a post on commercial work and therefore the cost to be incurred is determined by the resources needed to meet UK Trade and Investment's (UKTI) trade development and inward investment objective. A commercial officer is not an Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) grade but a job description that can be applied to any of the UK based civil servants or locally engaged staff making up some 1,600 full-time staff equivalents across a wide range of grades and salary bands working on UKTI's objective at FCO posts overseas.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Magistrates Courts

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what criteria are used to calculate the cost-effectiveness of magistrates courts. [221828]

Mr. Leslie: Hitherto magistrates courts have been managed through 42 Magistrates Courts Committees (MCCs). The overall performance of MCCs is monitored through a range of financial and performance measures. The cost efficiency of the MCCs is measured through the "Cost per Unit of weighted Caseload". This measure is calculated by comparing total expenditure for each MCC with the total number of completed proceedings, the latter being weighted according a common set of assumptions of the relative complexity for 14 case types.

Royal Marriage

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether it is intended to amend section 6 of the Civil List Act 1952 consequent upon the decision to raise Mrs. Camilla Parker Bowles to the title of HRH the Duchess of Cornwall on her marriage to HRH the Prince of Wales; and if he will make a statement. [222239]

Mr. Leslie: No.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs where and how it is proposed to convene a meeting of the Privy Council in compliance with the provisions of the Royal Marriages Act 1972; and if he will make a statement. [222240]

Mr. Leslie: The Privy Council met on 2 March 2005 to give effect to Her Majesty's consent to the marriage of HRH the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Parker Bowles in compliance with the provisions of the Royal Marriages Act 1772.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the proposed marriage of HRH Prince of Wales to Mrs. Camilla Parker Bowles is morganatic. [222341]

Mr. Leslie: No.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will publish as a Command Paper documents held in the Public Record Office and other public archives relating to Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin's advice and reasons for refusing Edward VIII's request for a morganatic marriage. [222486]

Mr. Leslie: No.

Training Programmes

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much was spent per magistrate on basic training in each of the last five years; how much was spent in each of those years on providing training materials; and what advice is available to the Judicial Studies Board on learning styles in the context of training programmes. [221829]

Mr. Leslie: Judicial training is the responsibility of the Judicial Studies Board, an independent body chaired by Lord Justice Keene. Training for magistrates is paid for and delivered at local level in 42 administrative areas. The budget for magistrates training is not ring-fenced and currently cannot be isolated from the overall grant allocation made by the Department for Constitutional Affairs to the Magistrates Courts Service.

Most magistrate trainers have attended professional training courses for trainers sponsored by the DCA and will be familiar with the theory of learning styles. To support them the JSB employs professionally qualified trainers who advise on learning styles and methods of delivery of the training and associated materials. JSB magistrates training materials, including reference to learning styles, are accessible on the JSB website and include the Magistrates National Training Initiative (MNTI 2) where advice and guidance on basic training for Magistrates can be found.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 18 March 2005

TRANSPORT

Airport Security Staff

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason security staff at English airports are vetted by the Scottish Criminal Records Bureau; and for how long this has been the case. [222604]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Security staff at UK airports are vetted by the Department for Transport at Counter-Terrorist Check (CTC) Level. All other staff who need to work in the Restricted Zone at airports are required to undergo a check of their criminal record. Such staff need to provide a Basic Disclosure certificate to the pass issuing authority (Aerodrome Manager). At present the only source of such a certificate is Disclosure Scotland (part of the Scottish Criminal Records Office). The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), which provides the Disclosure service in England and Wales, is considering its approach to the introduction of Basic Disclosures as part of a strategy review.

Cycle Lanes (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of cycle lanes there have been in York in each year since 1996–97. [222230]

Charlotte Atkins: The following table gives details of the number of miles of cycle lanes (plus, in addition, cycle tracks) built and opened in York covering the years 1996–97 to 2005–06. No figures are available for 1996–97 to 1997–98 as records were not kept on cycle track/lane lengths at that time.

	Cycle tracks	*Cycle lanes*
1998–99	1.2	0.6
1999–2000	0.6	0.6
2000–01	1.9	1.3
2001–02	6.2	2.5
2002–03	6.2	2.5
2003–04	7.5	3.1
2004–05	6.2	2.5
2005–06	6.3	2.5

Driving Licences

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of the adult population of the United Kingdom has a driver's licence. [221831]

Mr. Jamieson: The latest available comparable figures for the United Kingdom show that, at the end of 2002, the number of licence holders was 40,676,136 representing 85.69 per cent. of the eligible population of 47,469,700.

Heathrow Airport

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the latest assessment is of the terminal facilities which would be required if a third runway were to be constructed at Heathrow. [221652]

Charlotte Atkins: In its response to consultation prior to the Air Transport White Paper, BAA argued that the full potential of an additional third runway at Heathrow could not be realised without a sixth terminal to the north of the A4 and suggested four possible options for new facilities. The White Paper itself acknowledged this.

Work is still under way within BAA to examine the options and impacts, as part of the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow, and any proposals would be the subject of consultation in due course.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the work being undertaken by Project Heathrow on the future development of runway capacity at Heathrow airport is restricted to examining the implications of a new short runway. [222223]

Charlotte Atkins: As set out in the Air Transport White Paper, the programme of work known as the Project for the Sustainable Development of Heathrow includes consideration of the scope for greater utilisation of the two existing runways as well as the possible addition of a third short runway.

Kerrier Home Zone Project

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultation was conducted by Kerrier district council regarding the North Close Home Zone project; how much the consultation cost; and what conclusions were published. [222656]

Charlotte Atkins: Cornwall county council is the authority responsible for implementing the North Close Home Zone project. Kerrier district council has carried out consultation on behalf of, and in partnership with, the county council, and was directly responsible for the organisation of the initial consultation fun day. Other consultation has included door to door surveys, leaflets, exhibitions and statutory consultation.

Overall, the county council reports that approximately £29,350 has been spent on the consultation element of the project.

Results of the consultation have not been published by the county council but have been discussed at meetings of the project working group, the minutes of which are circulated widely.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on the North Close Home Zone project, broken down by main budget heading. [222658]

Charlotte Atkins: Cornwall county council, the authority responsible for the development and implementation of the North Close Home Zone, reports that by mid February this year it had spent £481,500 on the project, of which £460,000 has been provided from the Department's Home Zones Challenge fund.

The council has broken this figure down as follows: £29,350 on consultation, £44,500 on detailed design and £407,650 on construction.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of Kerrier district council's management of the funds for the North Close Home Zone project. [222659]

Charlotte Atkins: Kerrier district council have had no involvement in the management of the funds for the North Close Home Zone project. Cornwall county council are responsible for implementation of the scheme and, therefore, the management of the funds, including the Department's grant from the Home Zones Challenge.

The payment of grant is subject to terms and conditions which set out the requirements relating to the provision of quarterly finance and progress reports and the need for annual certification by an auditor appointed by the Audit Commission. A copy of the terms and conditions was placed in the House of Commons Library in May 2004.

The Secretary of State has appointed a consultant to assist with the management of the Home Zones Challenge, to monitor progress of the schemes and to disseminate good practice. Local authority quarterly finance and progress reports are reviewed and summarised by the consultant in reports to the Department and are taken into account in considering and approving payments. The schemes are reviewed regularly at regional meetings and authorities are visited periodically by officials from the Department and/or the programme consultant to review individual schemes.

Local Authority-sponsored Schemes

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what documentation a local authority sponsoring a major transport scheme is required to produce between the confirmation of compulsory purchase orders and the full approval of funding for the scheme. [222362]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Department issued a guidance note to local authorities in December 2004 on the information that local authorities are now required to submit when seeking full approval and release of funding for major transport schemes under the Local Transport Programme. A copy of this guidance will be placed in the House Library.

London Underground

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment the Government have made of the merits of extending the Central Line of the London Underground network from Shepherd's Bush to Uxbridge. [222218]

Mr. McNulty: The Government have made no such assessment. Proposals for enhancements to the London Underground network are a matter for the Mayor of London. The Mayor undertook a public consultation exercise on proposals for the West London Tram from Shepherd's Bush to Uxbridge between June and October 2004 and announced the results on 1 March 2005.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the organisations which have been consulted by his Department on its proposal to outlaw equipment which detects the presence of speed cameras; and on which dates they were consulted. [222693]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport consulted the following organisations on proposals to prohibit the use of speed assesment equipment detection devices in January 2001.

ACPO
Association of British Drivers
Association of Independent Road Safety Officers
ALBRSO
Automobile Association Ltd.
County Surveyors Society
CPRE
Driver Technologies Association
Institute of Advanced Motorists
Institute of Road Safety Officers
Institution of Highways and Transportation
LARSOA
Local Government Association
Magistrates' Association
Motorcycle Industry Association
Motorcycle Rider Training Association
PACTS
RAC
Road Danger Reduction Forum
Road Haulage Association
RoadPeace
RoSPA
Road Haulage Association
Freight Transport Law
Confederation of Passenger Transport
UK Performance Products Ltd.
Beltronics
Automotive Distribution Association
Welsh Assembly
Scottish Executive

This proposal was deferred pending primary legislation which would give powers to prohibit a vehicle being fitted with or a person using a vehicle carrying these devices.

The Road Safety Bill includes such an enabling power. The precise type of devices that would be prohibited would be identified in regulations made under section 41 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. A statutory consultation would be held on the secondary legislation proposals.

Train Cancellations

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many trains in England and Wales were cancelled on each day between 20 February and 1 March, broken down by reason for cancellation. [221720]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The information is not collated centrally in the specific format requested. Provisional figures for the number of cancelled trains for each day in the specified period are given in the following table. However the causes of such cancellations are not available.

Trains cancelled in England and Wales[1, 2]

Date	*Trains cancelled*[3]
20 February 2005	102
21 February 2005	248
22 February 2005	219
23 February 2005	287
24 February 2005	260
25 February 2005	196
26 February 2005	110
27 February 2005	148
28 February 2005	642
1 March 2005	220

[1] Figures for England and Wales are for all franchised train operating companies excluding Scotrail.
[2] Figures are provisional subject to verification to ensure that recorded cancellations take account of any changes to the number of scheduled trains for reasons such as the need to undertake engineering works or the introduction of emergency timetables.
[3] Figures relate to cancellations as recorded as part of the Public Performance Measure of train reliability, i.e. trains that did not run as planned or a train that ran but did not complete at least half of its scheduled journey.

TREASURY

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222570]

Mr. Timms: The number of accidents reported on HM Treasury's premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of HM Treasury staff and *(b)* contractors is given as follows. No accidents have been reported by members of the public:

Number of accidents

	Staff	*Contractors*	*Near miss*	*Total*
2000	13	1	0	14
2001	11	14	1	26
2002	41	10	0	51
2003	39	38	2	79
2004	13	25	0	38

Jon Trickett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222583]

Mr. Timms: The data will be published in our departmental annual report 2005.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222634]

Mr. Timms: HM Treasury monitor all reported accidents and near miss incidents, identifying trends. Quarterly statistics are produced for the various Health and Safety Committees. These statistics are included in the Treasury's Annual Health and Safety Report that is submitted to the Board.

Drug Deaths

Lynne Jones: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many deaths the primary cause was found to be *(a)* heroin, *(b)* crack cocaine, *(c)* cocaine, *(d)* ecstasy, *(e)* cannabis, *(f)* alcohol, *(g)* solvents and *(h)* prescription drugs in each of the last five years. [222621]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Lynne Jones, dated 18 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths the primary cause was found to be *(a)* heroin, *(b)* crack cocaine, *(c)* cocaine, *(d)* ecstasy, *(e)* cannabis, *(f)* alcohol, *(g)* solvents and *(h)* prescription drugs in each of the last five years. (222621)

The most recently available information is for deaths in 2003. Relevant figures are only readily available for deaths where the underlying cause was either related to drug poisoning or directly related to alcohol (alcohol abuse, dependence and poisoning, and diseases directly related to alcohol use). It is not possible to identify from death certificates which substance was the primary cause when more than one was involved. Figures related to the number of deaths on which substances *(a)* to *(e)* were mentioned are shown in the table below, together with figures on alcohol-related deaths. Figures are for the calendar years 1999 to 2003.

Figures on deaths due to volatile solvent abuse are collected separately by Department of Health. Figures on deaths involving prescription drugs are not available as it is not possible to readily identify deaths where an adverse reaction to a particular drug taken in therapeutic dosage was involved. Adverse reactions to drugs are reported to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency using the yellow card scheme. Figures on deaths from overdoses involving these drugs are available, however some substances are available in prescription and over-the-counter compounds and these cannot be distinguished.

It should be noted that the figures on drug-related poisoning are not directly comparable to the figures on alcohol for the following reasons.

The figures on drugs do not include long-term effects of drug taking, whereas the figures on alcohol include cirrhosis of the liver.

Overdose deaths which involved both drugs and alcohol are coded as due to drug poisoning, in accordance with international rules for coding cause of death.

The figures on alcohol include only those where the underlying cause was alcohol-related. The figures on specific drugs include any mention of a substance on a death related to drug poisoning. This means a death could be included in more than one row of the table, for example if the deceased took both heroin and cocaine.

Number of alcohol-related deaths[1] and deaths from drug-related poisoning[2] involving selected drugs,[3] England and Wales, 1999 to 2003[4]

Deaths from drug-related poisoning where the following substances were specifically mentioned	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
(a) Heroin/morphine	754	926	889	790	591
(b) + *(c)* Cocaine (including crack cocaine)[5]	88	80	96	139	113
(d) Ecstasy	26	36	55	55	33
(e) Cannabis	8	11	15	15	11
(f) Alcohol-related deaths	5,505	5,614	5,970	6,033	6,580

[1] For the years 1999–2000 the cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9). The codes selected to define alcohol-related deaths are listed as follows:
291—Alcoholic psychoses
303—Alcohol dependence syndrome
305.0—Non-dependent abuse of alcohol
425.5—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
571—Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
E860—Accidental poisoning by alcohol
For the years 2001–2003 the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) was used. To maintain comparability with earlier years the following codes were selected:
F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol
I42.6—Alcoholic cardiomyopathy
K70—Alcoholic liver disease
K73—Chronic hepatitis, not elsewhere classified
K74—Fibrosis and cirrhosis of liver
X45—Accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol
The selection of codes to define alcohol-related deaths is described in:
Baker A and Rooney C (2003). Recent trends in alcohol-related mortality, and the impact of ICD-10 on the monitoring of these deaths in England and Wales. Health Statistics Quarterly 17, pp 5–14.
[2] Cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 292, 304, 305.2–305.9, E850-E858, E950.0-E950.5, E962.0 and E980.0-E980.5 for 1999 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes F11-F16, F18-F19, X40-X44, X60-X64, X85 and Y10-Y14from 2001 onwards.
[3] Drugs mentioned on the death certificate of a death where the underlying cause was drug poisoning.
[4] Data are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.
[5] It is not possible to provide separate figures on deaths related to crack cocaine and cocaine from routine mortality data, as these substances are not generally separately identified on death certificates. ONS routinely publishes a combined figure for deaths mentioning cocaine on the death certificate.
Source of data on deaths related to drug poisoning:
Tables of deaths related to drug poisoning on the National Statistics website at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=11695

Economic Growth

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many quarters of continuous economic growth there have been in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* the UK and *(d)* Wales from 1997 to the most recent quarter for which information is available. [221491]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alex Salmond, dated 18 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about economic growth in Scotland, England, Wales and the UK. (221491)

Quarterly GDP data published by the Office for National Statistics show that in the UK there have been 50 consecutive quarters of GDP growth up to and including the fourth quarter of 2004 (chained volume measures). The second quarter of 1992 was the last quarter to show negative GDP growth in real terms, for either the quarter on previous quarter growth rates, or the growth rate of the latest quarter compared to that of the same quarter of the previous year.

Quarterly GDP data published by the Scottish Executive, show positive growth for Scotland for the last 10 quarters up to and including the third quarter of 2004.

No separate quarterly economic data is compiled for England or Wales.

EU Finances

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the UK's share of the most recent underspend on the EU's final budget to be repaid to the UK. [222390]

Mr. Timms: No underspend from the 2004 EC Budget has yet been announced by the European Commission. Any surplus will, as usual, be returned to member states by reducing the amount which they are required to finance in the 2005 EC Budget. This will be implemented by an Amending Budget tater this year. The surplus from the 2003 EC Budget was returned to member states in this way in Amending Budget 7/2004 implemented from 1 October 2004.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what response his Department will make to the National Audit Office report on financial management of the EU, with particular reference to *(a)* persistent errors in transactions, *(b)* failure to comply with regulatory requirements, *(c)* delays in closing the 1994 to 1999 structured programmes and *(d)* poor forecasting of expenditure. [222985]

Mr. Timms: It would not be appropriate for the Treasury to respond to the National Audit Office's report to Parliament on financial management of the EU.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress is being made in the EU on the introduction of resource accounting; and what targets will be set to improve budget accounting reliability. [222391]

Mr. Timms: The European Commission introduced a system of full accruals accounting on time on 1 January 2005.

G7 Meeting

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the agenda is for the G7 meeting due to take place in April. [222481]

Mr. Timms: As set out in Box 2.3 of the 2005 Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report, the UK sees its leadership of the G7/8 and EU this year as an opportunity to address the key challenges of international poverty reduction; structural economic reform; fairer trade; and climate change. G7 Finance Ministers will continue their discussions on these issues when they meet in Washington in April.

MOD Risk Assessment Reports

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of the Ministry of Defence's *(a)* December 2003, *(b)* July 2004 and *(c)* December 2004 progress reports produced under the Risk Management Assessment Framework. [221879]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Sani Abacha

Tom Brake: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether funds have been returned to Nigeria from bank accounts in the UK of the late Sani Abacha in the last five years. [222403]

Mr. Timms: The return to Nigeria of any money held in accounts owned by the Abacha family or close associates is dependent on the Nigerian authorities prosecuting individuals for their offences and subsequently, if these individuals are found to be guilty, obtaining a confiscation order against them. An application for enforcement of that order in the UK courts would then be required. I understand that no such confiscation orders have, as yet, been made in Nigeria.

In line with the recommendations of the Commission for Africa, UK authorities will continue to deliver a range of technical assistance programmes in partnership with Nigerian authorities in relation to anti-money laundering and mutual legal assistance.

School-age Children (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many children of school age there have been in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend. [222490]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibilities of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 18 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the school age populations for the county of Essex and Southend Unitary Authority since 1997. (222490)

Below is a table showing the 1997 to 2003 mid-year population estimates for children aged 5–15 within these areas.

Mid-year population estimates of school age children (5–15)

	Essex (county of)	*Thousand Southend UA*
1997	177.9	22.2
1998	178.6	22.3
1999	182.4	22.6
2000	183.7	22.5
2001	184.7	22.4
2002	185.8	22.4
2003	186.5	22.3

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Energy Policy

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his announcement in the 2004 pre-Budget report, what plans he has to introduce a reduced rate of VAT for micro-combined heat and power units; what data he has collected from field trials; what representations his Department has received from industry; and if he will make a statement. [220786]

Dawn Primarolo: Budget 2005 announced a reduced rate of VAT for the installation of micro-CHP. This decision was taken in light of ongoing field trials, which are overseen by Defra and sponsored by the Carbon Trust in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust. It also follows representations on this issue from industry and stakeholder groups.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Water Quality

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 247W, on bottled water, what recent assessment has been carried out to determine whether tap water remains stale and undrinkable. [222534]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: No recent assessment has been made of whether tap water remains stale and undrinkable.

HOME

Alcohol Confiscation

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions the power conferred on local authorities by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to designate areas where alcohol

may be confiscated from individuals have been used in each year since 2001, broken down by local authority area. [221130]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Since September 2001 over 135 local authority areas have notified the Home Office that they have made designation orders under section 13 of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 to restrict antisocial public drinking in areas that have experienced alcohol-related disorder or nuisance. The following list sets out a breakdown of designation orders made in every year. A number of those listed will appear more than once as they have introduced more than one designation order since 2001.

Local authorities that introduced designation orders:

September 2001-December 2001

Herefordshire Council
Northampton Borough Council
Brighton and Hove City Council

2002

Bedford Borough Council
Bromley (London Borough of)
Chelmsford Borough Council
Cherwell District Council
Cornwall (North) District Council
Daventry District Council
Denbighshire County Council
Devon (North) District Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Eastbourne Borough Council
Eastleigh Borough Council
East Riding (of Yorkshire Council)
Enfield Council
Gloucester City Council
Great Yarmouth
Haringey Council
Harrogate Borough Council
Herefordshire Council
Hyndburn Borough Council
Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Leicester City Council
Lincolnshire (North East) Council
Leicestershire (North West) District Council
Macclesfield (Borough of)
Manchester City Council
Merthyr Tydfil Borough Council
Milton Keynes Council
Newcastle City Council
Oadby and Wigston (Borough of)
Oldham (Metropolitan Borough of)
Oxford City Council
Reading Borough Council
Redditch Borough Council
Ribble Valley Council
Shepway District Council
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Somerset (South) District Council
Southend on Sea Borough Council
Staffordshire (South) Council
Stafford Borough Council
Stratford Upon Avon District Council
Stroud District Council
Sutton (London Borough of)
Swindon Borough Council
Taunton Deane Borough Council
Thanet District Council
Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
Warrington Borough Council
Watford Council
Westminster City Council
Wigan Borough Council
Weymouth and Portland Borough Council
Windsor and Maidenhead Council
Wolverhampton Council
Wrexham County Borough Council
Wycombe District Council

2003

Birmingham City Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Breckland Council
Brighton and Hove City Council
Bristol City Council
Broadland District Council
Burnley Borough Council
Bury (Metropolitan Borough Council)
Cherwell District Council
Craven District Council
Crewe and Nantwich Council
Dacorum Borough Council
Derby City Council
Devon (Mid) District Council
Devon (North) District Council
East Riding (of Yorkshire Council)
East Staffordshire Borough Council
Fylde Borough Council
Harlow Council
Havant Borough Council
Kensington and Chelsea (Royal Borough of)
Kingston Upon Thames (Royal Borough of)
Lambeth (London Borough of)
Lewisham (London Borough of)
Medway Council
Mendip District Council
Middlesbrough Borough Council
Norfolk (North) District Council
Norwich City Council
Oldham (Metropolitan Borough of)
Oxford City Council
Preston City Council
Ribble Valley Council
Salisbury District Council
Scarborough Borough Council
Sefton Council
Somerset (North) Council
South Bedfordshire District Council
Stafford Borough Council
Stoke on Trent Council (City of)
Stratford Upon Avon District Council

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Swansea Council
Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Torbay Council
Tyneside (North) Council
Worthing Borough Council
Wyre Forest District Council

2004

Amber Valley Borough Council
Barking and Dagenham Borough Council
Barnet (London Borough of)
Bath and North East Somerset Council
Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough Council
Bexley (London Borough of)
Birmingham City Council
Bristol City Council
Bromley (London Borough of)
Bromsgrove Council
Camden (London Borough of)
Charnwood (Borough of)
Cherwell District Council
Chesterfield Borough Council
Chester City Council
Coventry City Council
Derby City Council
Dorset (East) District Council
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
East Riding (Yorkshire Council)
Gateshead Council
Gravesham Borough Council
Hackney (London Borough of)
Hammersmith and Fulham (London Borough of)
Harlow Council
Havering (London Borough of)
St. Helens Council
Hertfordshire (East) District Council
Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Kingston Upon Thames (Royal Borough of)
Lewisham (London Borough of)
Lincolnshire (North) Council
Milton Keynes Council
Peterborough City Council
Poole (Council Borough of)
Ribble Valley Council
Rossendale (Borough Council)
Ryedale District Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Staffordshire (East) Borough Council
Staffordshire (South) Council
Stafford Borough Council
Stevenage Borough Council
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Sunderland Council (City of)
Teignbridge District Council
Waltham Forest (London Borough of)
Wansbeck District Council
Wigan Borough Council
Worcester (City of)
Westminster City Council

2005 to date

St. Albans City and District Council
Amber Valley Borough Council
Anglesey (Isle of) County Council
Cheltenham Borough Council
Devon (Mid) District Council
Dorset (East) District Council
Ealing Borough Council
Kerrier District Council
Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Newcastle City Council
Wrexham County Borough Council

Correspondence

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 10 February from the hon. Member for Northavon with regard to a passport application for a constituent, Sa-Sa Ho. [222523]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 15 March 2005.

Passports

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of the adult population of the United Kingdom had a passport in the most recent year for which figures are available. [221830]

Mr. Browne: At the end of 2004, the percentage of the adult population aged 16 and over that holds a valid passport is within the range of 73 per cent. to 85 per cent.

Police Training

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the average annual cost of employing, training and developing a probationary police constable in each year since 1997. [220168]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary have estimated that the average salary, training and development costs of a probationary police constable up to independent patrol (which is normally 31 weeks after joining a force) in 2003–04 were £27,048. This figure includes salary costs of £13,993 per probationary police constable for that period and training and development costs of £13,055.

Information about the associated costs for recruitment, supervision, accommodation, information technology etc. is not collated centrally.

The average annual costs for all these in each year since 1997 is not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Prevention of Terrorism

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the legislative provisions to introduce control orders will contain sunset clauses. [216834]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, as now enacted, does not contain a sunset clause, but instead provides for annual renewal of its provisions subject to approval by both Houses.

In addition, I have informed the House that the Bill to be introduced in the next Session on counter-terrorism offences will provide an opportunity for Parliament, if it so decides, to amend the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

Work Permits

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many citizens from the Isle of Man have been granted work permits in each of the last five years. [222933]

Mr. Browne: No citizens of the Isle of Man have been granted work permits in the last five years. Citizens of the Isle of Man do not require work permits to work in the UK.

DEFENCE

2 Princess of Wales Regiment

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) under whose operational command 2 Princess of Wales Regiment will serve for the duration of their deployment outside their tactical area of responsibility; [222219]

(2) if he will make a statement on the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* duration of the deployment of 2 Princess of Wales Regiment outside their tactical area of responsibility. [222220]

Mr. Ingram: The 2nd Battalion, the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment (2PWRR) is currently part of the UK-led Multinational Division (South East) (MND(SE)). Elements of 2PWRR have recently relocated to Al Muthanna province within the MND(SE) area of operations. They deployed as part of a Battlegroup, based on the Queen's Dragoon Guards, which is providing framework security and conducting security sector reform in that province. That Battlegroup will continue to carry out those tasks until they are replaced, either by another UK Battlegroup or by a coalition partner.

All elements of 2PWRR remain under the operational command of the General Officer Commanding MND(SE), with the exception of one platoon which is currently located in Baghdad, where it provides force protection to senior British military personnel. This is a longstanding deployment which predates the arrival of 2PWRR in Iraq.

AWE Aldermaston

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the expenditure by his Department on AWE Aldermaston was in each of the last five years; and what expenditure he has allocated for 2005–06. [221429]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's expenditure on AWE Aldermaston in each of the past five years is shown in the following table. All costs are at 2004–05 prices. The figure for 2004–05 is provisional. The allocation for 2005–06 has not yet been finalised.

	£ million
2000–01	303
2001–02	284
2002–03	302
2003–04	300
2004–05	312

Civil Servants (Gibraltar)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether local bids will be invited for contracts for work currently carried out by departmental staff in Gibraltar; and whether a bid from existing departmental employees in Gibraltar would be considered. [218934]

Mr. Ingram: Two areas of work currently being carried out by MOD staff in Gibraltar are being examined for contractorisation.

Any company, including those from Gibraltar, could tender if it meets published MOD commercial criteria. There is no current policy that precludes a competitive in-house option for tasks currently done in-house.

Iraq

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in Iraq. [222541]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1, to my hon. Friend the Member for Bradford, North (Mr. Rooney).

RAF Manual of Flight Safety

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 779W, on RAF Manual of Flight Safety, if he will place a copy of the Seventh Edition of AP 3207 in the Library. [217052]

Mr. Ingram: I have placed a copy of the seventh Edition of AP 3207 (incorporating Amendment lists 1–3) in the Library of the House today.

Resource Account Codes

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will provide a description of 2004–05 resource account codes *(a)* GXXWA0 and *(b)* LM003. [221980]

Mr. Ingram: The descriptions are as follows:

GXXWAO

Cost Communication with Flag Officer Training and Recruitment

LMA003

United Kingdom National Insurance Civilian Staff—Loan–United States Air Force Accruing Superannuation.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether she publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of her Department; and if she will make a statement. [222597]

Ms Hewitt: The Department of Trade and Industry publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees. This accident data is contained in the Departmental Report. For 2004–05, there have been only two reportable accidents of a minor nature involving employees.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of her Department are in place; and if she will make a statement. [222638]

Ms Hewitt: Procedures for monitoring accidents are an integral part of the Department's health and safety guidance. There are formal processes in place for recording, analysing and investigating accidents, whether reportable under health and safety legislation or not. Instructions on the reporting and recording of accidents are available to staff on the Departmental intranet and the Department has a team of safety advisers who investigate accidents and ensure appropriate remedial action is taken.

Bank Charges

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will commission research into the *(a)* reasons for and *(b)* level of unavoidable miscellaneous charges made by banks, with particular reference to (i) survey fees, (ii) booking fees, (iii) arrangement fees, (iv) higher lending charges fees and (v) sealing of deeds fees; and if she will make a statement. [220777]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Government have no plans to commission research into miscellaneous charges made by banks. The Banking Code requires that signatories give their customers details of any charges for the day-to-day running of their account when they open it, and that they inform their customers personally if they increase any of these charges or introduce a new charge, at least 30 days before the change takes effect. The signatories are also required to tell customers the charge for any other service or product before they provide that service or product, and at any time the customer asks.

Corporate Responsibility

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Department is taking to ensure companies adopt policies to meet social and environmental obligations. [218998]

Nigel Griffiths: Companies are bound by legislation on a wide range of social and environmental issues including matters relating to employment terms and conditions, health and safety and environmental protection.

At national level HMG supports a number of initiatives aimed at improving business social and environmental performance. Within DTI these include:

Establishment and funding for CSR Academy to mainstream CSR skills into business practice

Sponsorship of Business in the Community's Corporate Responsibility Index

Sponsorship of Business in the Community's Annual Awards for Excellence

Sponsorship of Small Business Consortium's small business journey toolkit for SMEs

Gas Market

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact on UK industry and consumers of the recent rises in the cost of gas on the spot market; what proposals she has to bring price stability to the gas market; and what plans she has to reform the operation of the forward market for wholesale gas. [222172]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The impact on UK industry of the recent temporary rises in spot gas prices will depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas a particular company uses, the degree of their exposure to spot and/or forward prices and the duration of the high prices. It will also be affected by the energy prices paid by their competitors. The impact on domestic consumers will depend on whether the energy supply companies decide to pass on the costs of what was a short-lived spike in spot prices. Prices in the domestic sector are set to cover a range of weather, including such cold snaps, so we would not expect these peaks to feed into domestic prices.

The Department is working to ease the potential supply tightness which causes high prices by facilitating investment in gas import infrastructure projects, such as a doubling of the import capacity of the Bacton-Zeebrugge interconnector, new pipelines from Norway and the Netherlands, and three major new Liquefied Natural Gas terminals.

Regarding the operation of the forward gas market, my Department has commissioned an independent consultant to analyse how it is working, and to propose, if necessary, recommendations for improving it to both Government and industry.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will make a statement on the recent rises in the forward gas market; and what assessment she has made of the impact the increase in the price for delivery in winter 2006 will have on the competitiveness of UK manufacturing; [222549]

(2) what action her Department is taking to mitigate the risk of job losses within the manufacturing sector as a result of rises in industrial gas prices; and if she will make a statement. [222560]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The forward wholesale price for gas for the first quarter of 2006 averaged around 48p/therm in February 2005, and for the first two weeks of March it has been around 54p/therm. However, the average actual price paid for delivery in the winter tends to be lower than the forward price, and the same may happen in 2006. Nevertheless, 54p/therm is above the

forward price in respect of previous winters, driven by changing market views about the tightening winter supply situation.

The Department has commissioned an independent consultant to analyse the operation of the forward market and, if necessary, to propose recommendations for improving it to both Government and industry.

The impact on the competitiveness of manufacturing companies will depend on a variety of factors, including how much gas a particular company uses, the degree of their exposure to spot and/or forward prices, and the duration of the high prices. It will also be affected by the energy prices paid by their competitors. We are working with industry to identify ways it can mitigate the effects of high forward gas prices.

This Government implemented the Manufacturing Strategy in 2002, the first from any Government in over 30 years. In July 2004 we published a review of the Strategy setting out a framework for action to address many of the challenges currently facing manufacturers in the UK. It focuses on support for innovation and skills, and assisting industry to produce smarter, higher-value-added products. This message was reinforced in The DTI Five-Year Programme, published in November 2004.

Industrial Disease (Compensation Claims)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average full and final settlement is for *(a)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease claims and *(b)* vibration white finger claims, broken down by constituency. [211104]

Nigel Griffiths: The figures as of 31 January 2005 are placed in the Libraries of the House today.

Nuclear Decommissioning

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on progress made by the European Commission on its investigation into the setting up and financing of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, with particular reference to state aid matters. [222601]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The UK has recently submitted its comments on the submissions that the Commission has received from third parties. We now expect the Commission to take some time to consider these and other views submitted to it. We stand ready to answer any further questions it might have.

Photovoltaics

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what steps she is taking to implement the Energy White Paper commitment to a 2002 to 2012 solar photovoltaics demonstration programme in line with those of the UK's main competitors; [222972]

(2) what steps she is taking to increase support to the photovoltaic industry as proposed in the Energy White Paper. [222973]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department of Trade and Industry has implemented the Energy White Paper commitment by supporting a "Major Photovoltaic Demonstration Programme" from 2002. This programme is due to end in March 2006, although grants are expected to be paid up to March 2007.

The Department will continue its support for PV through a "low carbon buildings" programme. The low carbon buildings programme will be the subject of formal consultation later this year. Although the programme will be technology blind, projects incorporating PV will be supported. The programme is expected to begin operating in 2006–07.

Renewables

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of terrawatt hours of electricity generated from renewable sources required to meet the Government's 2010 renewables target. [222361]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The 2010 10 per cent. renewable energy target relates to electricity supply to consumers. The latest DTI energy projections indicate that the supply to consumers could be around 330TWh in 2010. This would indicate that to meet the target, renewables generation would need to be 33TWh.

However it should be noted that at this stage, any estimate is necessarily very approximate.

Unsolicited Phone Calls

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action her Department is taking to tackle UK-based organisations using a non-EU company to make unsolicited automated phone calls which would be illegal if made from within the EU. [222410]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department introduced the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations in 1999, which provides a scheme called the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) scheme. This provides protection to subscribers from unsolicited direct marketing calls, which originate from the UK or are made on behalf of UK companies by non-EU companies, irrespective of whether they are dialled manually or made by an automated computer. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has responsibility for the enforcement of the TPS scheme and considers breaches.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Burma

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the Government of Myanmar about the conditions of the Karen people of Myanmar in refugee camps on the Thai border. [221705]

Mr. MacShane: We have not made recent representations to the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) about this specific issue. However, we work closely with the Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees to provide appropriate protection to refugees and to ensure their non-refoulement.

Britain is the largest EU donor providing assistance to refugees outside the country and to poor people inside Burma. Our funds are channelled through non-government organisations such as the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) as well as through UN agencies and the European Commission. The TBBC provides food and other basic necessities to the Karen refugees in Thailand. This complements the help with schooling given by the Karen Education Partnership.

We are also doing everything we can to press the Burmese authorities to begin a genuine process of reform involving all political parties and ethnic groups in Burma. A genuine transition to democracy is essential to address the underlying reasons for the displacement of people in Burma.

The UK co-sponsored the UN General Assembly resolution of 23 December which condemned human rights violations suffered by ethnic groups in Burma. The resolution called on the regime to

> "end the policy of systematic enforced displacement of persons and other policies leading to displacement within Myanmar and refugee flows to neighbouring countries, to provide the necessary protection and assistance to internally displaced persons and to respect the right of refugees to voluntary, safe and dignified return monitored by appropriate international agencies."

Mr. Luke: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Ukrainian ambassador on sales of arms to Burma. [222142]

Mr. MacShane: None.

However, we and our EU partners have raised our concerns with the Ukrainian authorities about the sale of arms to Burma.

The UK and other EU countries maintain an embargo on arms to Burma as part of the EU Common Position on Burma. Although Ukraine is not party to this, we will continue to make them aware of our position and encourage them to align themselves with it.

Burundi

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the new power-sharing constitution in Burundi. [221596]

Mr. MacShane: We welcome the post-transitional Constitution in Burundi, approved by the Regional Peace initiative, and resoundingly endorsed by the Burundian people at the referendum held on 28 February. This is a further step on the path to lasting peace and stability in Burundi.

We and the rest of the international community now urge all parties in Burundi to work constructively towards holding free and fair elections and bringing about a successful end to the transition.

Cuba

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the UK delegation's position on Cuba will be at the forthcoming UN Human Rights Commission. [221789]

Mr. Rammell: We have serious concerns about the human rights situation in Cuba. We have not yet seen a text on Cuba at the Commission on Human Rights and therefore can not confirm our position. However in previous years, the UK has supported a resolution on Cuba.

Cyprus

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he has had with the Turkish-Cypriot administration on the number of private properties built in each of the last three years in Northern Cyprus which were purchased by foreign nationals who are neither Greek or Turkish Cypriot; and if he will make a statement; [221547]

(2) what discussions he has had on the policy of the Turkish-Cypriot administration in Northern Cyprus on maintaining in good condition the properties that Turkish settlers now live in but to which Greek Cypriots claim ownership; and if he will make a statement.[221571]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I met Mr. Talat on 1 July 2004; I also met Mr. Talat and other Turkish Cypriot leaders during my visit to the island in October 2004. On both occasions we discussed a number of Cyprus-related issues. Officials from the British high commission also meet Turkish Cypriot leaders on a regular basis to discuss a full range of issues on the situation in Cyprus, including that of property purchase by foreigners. Through our travel advice and in response to inquiries, we advise potential purchasers of property in the north that there may be significant practical, financial and legal consequences, and we strongly encourage potential buyers to seek independent, qualified legal advice.

The issue of the condition of properties likely to be affected by the resettlement and compensation provisions of the Annan plan was studied during the "needs assessment" phase of the UN process, with the close support and interest of the UK Government.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of properties in Northern Cyprus legally owned by Greek Cypriots which are occupied by Turkish settlers from mainland Turkey; and if he will make a statement. [221550]

Mr. MacShane: We have no figures on this aspect of the property issue. As the Foreign Affairs Committee has recently underscored, the complex and deeply felt issues associated with property ownership go to the heart of the situation in Cyprus, and deserve very careful attention within the context of a comprehensive settlement.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) when the last population survey took place in Northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement; [221551]

(2) how many *(a)* Turkish Cypriots born in Cyprus and *(b)* Turkish settlers he estimates there are in Northern Cyprus; what percentage each represents of the total population; and if he will make a statement.[221552]

Mr. MacShane: The last census in the north of Cyprus carried out by the Turkish Cypriot authorities in 1996 found that there were 137,398 Turkish Cypriots and 54,626 people born in mainland Turkey. However, these figures are not universally accepted. The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly adopted a resolution in 2003 stating that there were 115,000 persons of Turkish mainland origin in the north of Cyprus. The Assembly also noted that in 2001 there were 87,600 Turkish Cypriots in the north of Cyprus. The Assembly's figures too are disputed.

We believe that the population composition in the north of Cyprus will likely be an important factor in any new settlement negotiations. In that context, universally agreed figures on the demographics of the north would clearly be desirable. But it is for the two sides, in the context of renewed efforts towards achieving a settlement, and in conjunction with the United Nations, to discuss the most appropriate way to deal with demographic issues pertaining to the situation in Cyprus.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Turkish troops are stationed in Northern Cyprus; and if he will make a statement. [221553]

Mr. MacShane: We have no precise figures of our own. Current estimates range from 20,000 to 35,000.

Turkey supported the UN Secretary-General's Comprehensive Settlement Plan for Cyprus, which provided for a staged reduction in troop numbers. If the island had reunited on the basis of the plan, Turkish troops would have been reduced by over 80 per cent. by the end of 2007, with a further 50 per cent. reduction within the following four years. Thereafter, the plan allowed for 650 troops to remain in the north of Cyprus, the same number of Turkish troops as set out in the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. This agreement would be subject to regular reviews with a view to eventual withdrawal by mutual consent.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what recent discussions he has had with the Turkish Cypriot administration in Northern Cyprus on its policies to protect and develop the environment; [221573]

(2) what recent discussions he has had with the Turkish Cypriot administration on its policy on Greek Cypriots who wish to return to live in Northern Cyprus being able to do so; and if he will make a statement. [221575]

Mr. MacShane: Neither my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary nor myself have had recent discussions with the Turkish Cypriot administration on these matters. However, officials from the British high commission in Nicosia meet regularly with Turkish Cypriot representatives to discuss the full range of issues related to the situation in Cyprus. One feature of these discussions is the need to improve environmental protection including by use of EU funds in this area.

India

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the Indian Government on the UN Convention Against Torture. [221671]

Mr. MacShane: On the occasion of my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary's most recent visit to India in February this year, he did not raise specifically the issue of the UN Convention Against Torture with the Indian Government. He did however discuss human rights. The Indian authorities can be in no doubt of our concerns about this.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indian Government concerning the recent violent attacks on members of the Sikh community of Chattisgarh. [221709]

Mr. MacShane: We are aware of recent violent incidents between members of the Sikh and Hindu communities in Chattisgarh. We continue as a matter of course to raise our concerns with the Indian Government about religious intolerance in India, including attacks against Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. We will continue to urge the Indian authorities to ensure that the right to freedom of religion, enshrined in its constitution, is upheld and that those responsible for attacks against people because of their religion are brought to justice. We remind them that the UK Government condemns the persecution of individuals or groups because of their religion or beliefs. The UK Government believe that the democratic process in India is the best protection for a peaceful and secure country. We appreciate the remarks by Dr. Manmohan Singh in his first press conference as Prime Minister, when he said

> "We are the most tolerant civilisation and we cannot divide people on the basis of religion and race."

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the UK's undertaking to work towards the total elimination of British nuclear weapons. [221455]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom is fully committed to its disarmament obligations as a nuclear weapon state recognised by the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), including all the undertakings agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. We also support the agreements made at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference that called on the nuclear weapon states to pursue systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons. We are the only nuclear weapon state that has reduced its nuclear capability to a single weapons system and we have reduced the total explosive power of our nuclear forces by over 70 per cent. since the end of the cold war.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax (North Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much council tax was uncollected within the North Somerset local authority in each of the last five years. [221899]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is in the following table:

Council tax collection—North Somerset

£ million

	Amount due[1]	Of which: Collected by end of the financial year	Of which: Not collected by end of the financial year
1999–2000	45.566	44.002	1.564
2000–01	49.000	47.380	1.620
2001–02	52.009	50.434	1.575
2002–03	59.235	57.491	1.744
2003–04	69.751	68.863	0.888

[1] Net collectable debit, excluding amounts funded from council tax benefit.

The amount of council tax ultimately not collected for any particular year is less than that shown in the final column of the above table because collection continues after the end of the financial year. Figures for the amounts ultimately collected are not, however, reported to central Government.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221115]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Fire Service

Mr. Gill: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many recorded attacks there were against *(a)* firefighters while on duty and *(b)* fire service equipment in (i) Leicester, (ii) Leicester, South and (iii) the UK in each year since 1997. [222543]

Mr. Raynsford: Since April 2004 fire and rescue authorities in England and Wales have been asked to report attacks on firefighters through the Fire or Incident of Special Interest (FOSI) system. Since that time 428 attacks on firefighters in England and Wales have been reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. There have been no attacks on firefighters reported by Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Combined Fire Authority.

Local Government

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he *(a)* has taken and *(b)* is proposing to take to assist the lower level super output areas (SOAs) in (i) Dartford and (ii) the Thames Gateway Growth Area that fall within the most deprived 20 per cent. of lower level SOAs in England and Wales in one or more of the seven sub-themes used in the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. [221103]

Yvette Cooper: Spending Review 2004 made available over £1 billion of new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) resources for the period 2006–08 (£525 million for 2006–07 and £525 million for 2007–08). No decision has yet been made on how these new resources will be allocated. The Government want to ensure that we get the most impact from these very substantial funds. We are therefore carefully considering the opinions expressed in the recent consultation exercise to make sure we take full account of the views of key stakeholders involved in delivering neighbourhood renewal at the local level. An announcement on the allocation of these new NRF resources will be made when we have completed our consideration.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal By-Product Regulation

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons the Animal By-Product Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 requires slaughterhouse waste to be handled in an enclosed space. [221871]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Animal By-Products Regulation requires that all intermediate plants have a covered space to receive animal by-products. We consider that in general this will also mean that all handling of by-products must be done in that covered space. The Regulation also requires the plant to be constructed in such a way that it is easy to clean and disinfect, and that floors must be laid down in such a way as to facilitate the draining of liquids. The plant must also have appropriate arrangements for protection against pests, such as insects, rodents and birds. In our view, the combination of these requirements is such that it would be necessary for the plant to have a roof, walls and a floor before we can approve it.

Slaughterhouse waste may contain high-risk material such as Specified Risk Material (SRM). It will usually have a high liquid content, and contain loose fragments of material, thereby increasing the risk of leakage or spillage during handling and the risk of spread by vermin such as rodents or birds. Such waste must therefore be handled in an enclosed space to provide adequate safeguards to protect public and animal health.

Avian Flu

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what agreements are in place with each country which exports poultry feathers to the UK on ensuring that they are not infected with avian influenza; and what measures she has put in place to ensure agreements are adhered to; [221388]

(2) what tests are carried out in the UK on poultry feathers imported from East Asian countries to establish whether they are infected with avian influenza. [221390]

Mr. Bradshaw: Import requirements for feathers are set in European Union legislation. Imports of unprocessed feathers are prohibited from countries that are currently under restriction due an outbreak of Avian Influenza (HPAI).

Community legislation allows import of processed feathers. Every consignment of processed feathers from countries under restriction because of Avian Influenza are veterinary checked at the Border Inspection Post on entry to the EU. Imports of processed feathers from these countries must be accompanied by a commercial document stating that the feathers have been cleaned with a steam current and heated to at least 70°.

Unprocessed feathers are banned from countries under restrictions due to Avian Influenza. They would be easily detectable by smell or sight as they are highly susceptible to deterioration in transit and would be foul-smelling.

Cleaning feathers with a steam current and heated to at least 70° is considered effective in significantly reducing the quantity of virus, if present, to a negligible level. Therefore no further testing is carried out.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the risk of avian influenza being transmitted from imported poultry feathers. [221389]

Mr. Bradshaw: In January 2004 Defra carried out a full veterinary risk assessment of the risk of importing avian influenza from a variety of products, including feathers. The assessment is available on the Defra website http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/avianinfluenza_asia.htm

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what quantity of poultry feathers were imported into the UK from each East Asian country in each of the last five years. [221391]

Mr. Bradshaw: UK imports of feathers from Asia, 2000–04.

tonnes

Country	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
China	827	887	1,276	827	1,867
Taiwan	768	562	795	1,000	817
Vietnam	340	246	54	9	52
Hong Kong	82	19	2	237	21
Singapore	—	—	—	15	0
Pakistan	—	—	—	—	13
India	0	1	1	0	1
Grand total	2,018	1,716	2,127	2,088	2,771

Source:
HM Customs and Excise
Data prepared by Trade statistics, Food Chain Analysis 3, Defra
2004 data is subject to amendments until 30 June 2005

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what input she will seek from *(a)* hon. Members, *(b)* farmers and *(c)* conservation groups in developing a transparent process for making policy decisions on whether badger culling will form part of future policy for controlling bovine tuberculosis. [221278]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government strategic framework for the sustainable control of bovine tuberculosis (bTB) in Great Britain was published on 1 March. Among other things, it sets out how policy decisions on wildlife controls will be reached.

The Government are committed to establishing a new advisory group on bTB to advise the Chief Veterinary Officer and Ministers on policy options and delivery developments, to co-ordinate action taken in England, Wales and Scotland and ensure that decisions at a national or regional level are made in accordance with the principles set out in the Framework. I envisage the new group will be in place by the end of 2005 with membership including those with farmed animal experience and conservation experience.

I expect hon. Members, including the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee, will continue to be interested in the development of new policies in this area.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the current incidence of bovine tuberculosis in Stafford constituency; and if she will take action to reduce such incidence. [221279]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is not available on a constituency basis. Bovine tuberculosis (bTB) data is held by county or Animal Health Divisional Office area.

The incidence of bovine TB in cattle in Staffordshire in 2004 was 6.56 per cent.[1]. The corresponding figure for Great Britain in 2004 was 3.45 per cent.

Our aim to achieve a sustained reduction in disease incidence in cattle in high incidence areas, as well as slow down and prevent the geographic spread of bovine TB to areas currently free of the disease, forms part of our overall vision for the control of TB for the next 10 years. This is set out in the Government strategic framework for the sustainable control of bovine TB which was published on 1 March.

[1] Incidence is defined as confirmed new herd incidents as a percentage of tests on unrestricted herds. Data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on the 8–11 March 2005. This is provisional data, which is subject to change as outstanding TB test and culture results become available.

Cetaceans

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the voyages since 1 January 2002 on which *(a)* her officials and *(b)* agency officials were present and witnessed

dolphin by-catches in trawling nets; and what (i) documentary evidence was assembled, including photographs and videos and (ii) written reports were subsequently produced. [221562]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* As part of Defra-funded research into cetacean by-catch, the Sea Mammal Research Unit (SMRU) has placed observers on a range of trawl fisheries to monitor cetacean by-catch. By-catch has not been observed by any other officials and, to date, by-catch has only been witnessed by SMRU in the pair trawl fishery for bass. From 1 January 2002 to the end of the last fishing season for bass in spring 2004, observations were made covering 352 hauls in which a total of 207 dolphin casualties were observed. It is not possible to provide a list of voyages.

The full details of this research are set out in the following reports produced by SMRU for Defra, available via the Defra website:

"Analysis and mitigation of cetacean by-catch" (reference MF0726)

"By-catch reduction in pelagic trawl fisheries" (MF0733)

"Further development of a dolphin exclusion device" (MF0735)

"Monitoring, impact and mitigation of marine mammal by-catch" (MF0736)

A video was produced by SMRU as part of the work on the development of a dolphin exclusion device, reported above.

Full details of the results of this research were also summarised in the evidence presented by Defra to the House of Commons EFRA Committee Inquiry into cetacean by-catch and contained in the report published by this Committee in January 2004.

Chemicals (EU Authorisation)

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Government have to discuss REACH during its EU Presidency; and if she will make a statement. [221788]

Mr. Morley: REACH is a priority for the UK Government's forthcoming EU Presidency. The Government are working very closely with the Luxembourg Presidency to ensure that substantial progress is made in the negotiations in 2005. Building on the work conducted to date both in the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament, the two Presidencies will invest major efforts on the REACH Regulation with the aim of reaching political agreement by the end of 2005 based on an effective balance between economic, social and environmental considerations.

Climate Change

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639, to my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester, Central (Tony Lloyd) on climate change, what the results were of her discussions with newly developing countries, with particular reference to those with substantial and growing energy needs; and if she will make a statement. [222461]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, together with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry jointly hosted a round table for the energy and environment Ministers from 20 countries, including the emerging economies, on 15–16 March.

This was an innovative event which enabled us to explore common ground and begin to build a shared agenda to tackle issues of access to energy for development, energy security, and environmental protection.

A summary of proceedings will be placed on the Defra and DTI websites shortly.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many Countryside Stewardship payments for 2004 have been paid. [221799]

Mr. Morley: Latest figures show that there have been 25,908 Countryside Stewardship Scheme payments made during the scheme year 2003–04. This figure represents some 97 per cent. of claims received.

Emissions

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons industries subject to the requirements of the National Allocation Plan are not exempt from the requirements of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [220720]

Mr. Morley: Directive 2003/87/EC established the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. Article 9 requires each member state to develop a National Allocation Plan (NAP) stating the total quantity of allowances that it intends to allocate and how it intends to allocate them to installations. The NAP is therefore an integral part of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. Installations which are covered by the Directive must be listed in the NAP and cannot be exempted from the scheme unless they are temporarily excluded from the scheme under Article 27 of the Directive.

Fallen Stock

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers have *(a)* signed up to and *(b)* withdrawn from the National Fallen Stock Collection Scheme since it was established. [221463]

Mr. Bradshaw: The National Fallen Stock Company Ltd. reports that in the first three months of the scheme operating just over 25,000 members had signed up to the scheme. In the corresponding period just under 500 members initially applied to join the scheme but withdrew their application before payment of the subscription fee was processed.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the future of the Fallen Stock Collection Service in Lancashire; and how many farmers are using the scheme. [221692]

Mr. Bradshaw: The National Fallen Stock Company Ltd. reports that there are currently eight collectors registered to collect fallen stock under the Scheme in Lancashire.

Further information on the scheme as it applies to Lancashire is not available. However, the National Fallen Stock Company Ltd. reports that after just over three months of operation it already has over 25,000 members. Whilst acknowledging there have been teething problems with collection of fallen stock in some parts of the country, the National Fallen Stock Company reports that it is pleased with the response and that the scheme is generally working well.

Fisheries

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of whether the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty takes account of fisheries provisions negotiated by those member states that joined the EU in 1995. [222416]

Mr. Bradshaw: No assessment has been made of the fisheries provisions relating to the member states which joined the EU in 1995 in the context of the EU Constitution.

Flood Defences (Sheerness)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) who is responsible for making sure the floodgates in the sea wall are closed properly when there is an exceptional tide at Sheerness; [222709]

(2) who is responsible for the floodgates in the sea wall at Sheerness. [222710]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency and its predecessors constructed the flood defences along the Sheerness frontage on the Isle of Sheppey and retains overall responsibility for the floodgates and floodwalls. The Agency is responsible for issuing tidal flood warnings and ensuring the floodgates are closed as necessary.

The Environment Agency operates the Queenborough tidal flood barrier, located across the Queenborough Creek, but there are local agreements in place with Swale borough council and private landowners to operate all other floodgates along the Sheerness frontage.

Visual inspection to confirm the integrity of the sea defences, and the closure of all the floodgates on the Sheerness frontage, is also undertaken by the Agency during exceptional tides.

Full details of which floodgates are operated by Swale borough council and local landowners are as follows:

Swale borough council is responsible for closing floodgates at:

The Broadway The Esplanade, Beech Street, Sheerness
Cheyne Rock
Queenborough Hard
Crundalls Wharf, North Road, Queenborough
Tesco, Bridge Road, Sheerness
Shellness Road
Elmley Ferry
Warden Bay Promenade
Warden Bay, Jetty Road

Local landowners are responsible for closing floodgates at:

Bretts, Chalk Wharf Canning Town
Ship Breaking Ltd., Queenborough Rolling Mill
Abbots Laboratories, Abbotts Slipway, Queenborough
Medway Ports, Sheerness Docks, Sheerness, Kent

Additionally, the Environment Agency undertakes routine maintenance inspections of all the floodgates every two months, and carries out the actions arising from these inspections that may include capital expenditure—for example to replace worn out gates.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on alleviating fuel poverty in the boroughs of *(a)* Southend-on-Sea and *(b)* Thurrock in each year from 1995 to 2004. [221955]

Mr. Morley: The Warm Front Scheme, the major programme to tackle the problem of fuel poverty in the private sector in England, was launched in June 2000. Between June 2000 and the end of December 2004 expenditure in Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock in each financial year was:

£

	Southend-on-Sea	*Thurrock*
2000–01[1]	53,700	18,600
2001–02	333,900	109,500
2002–03	304,500	101,250
2003–04	394,150	100,000
2004–05[2]	372,250	173,500

[1] June to March.
[2] April to December 2004

The annual estimated expenditure under the previous Home Energy Efficiency Scheme from April 1995 to May 2000 for Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock was:

£

	Southend-on-Sea	*Thurrock*
1995–96	377,350	98,350
1996–97	311,850	70,100
1997–98	231,900	215,850
1998–99	203,750	298,700
1999–2000[1]	84,500	392,650

[1] To May 2000.

Pet Animals

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she plans *(a)* to sign and *(b)* to ratify the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals. [221674]

Mr. Bradshaw: We intend to review further the UK's position on the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals once the Animal Welfare Bill has become law.

Radiation Risks

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes her Department plans to its *(a)* policies and *(b)* regulatory practices following the recommendations of the Report of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters, with particular reference to risk estimates. [220591]

Mr. Morley: I have considered the Report of the Committee Examining Radiation Risks of Internal Emitters (CERRIE), along with the report of its parent body, the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE).

On matters to do with radiation and health, we would take advice from COMARE, the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) and the Department of Health (DH). DH, as well as Defra, co-sponsored CERRIE. DH, through its radiation research programme, will respond to COMARE's recommendation that further work is required to address the uncertainties associated with determining the risk from internal emitters. We look forward to any further practical advice from COMARE or DH as to how uncertainty should be addressed either through policy or the regulatory regime. In the meantime, we shall be encouraging consideration of uncertainty whenever radiation risk is calculated.

Radioactive Waste

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to review low level radioactive waste management policy. [222126]

Mr. Morley: I have agreed with ministerial colleagues within UK Government and the devolved administrations that a review of policy for the long-term management of the UK's low level radioactive waste (LLW) should be carried out.

LLW is generated by a wide range of activities involving the use of radioactive substances. They include the operation of nuclear reactors, the operation of other nuclear processing facilities, the decommissioning and clean up of nuclear sites, non-nuclear industrial activities, the medical use of radioactive materials, and research and educational activities.

While relatively low, the level of radioactivity in LLW can span a very wide range (about five orders of magnitude). Not least because of this, it has been managed in a number of ways in the past: using the national disposal facility at Drigg in Cumbria, using various forms of disposal on the nuclear site on which the waste was generated, using controlled burial to landfill and, for small quantities of very low level waste, through disposal with other ordinary refuse.

What has now changed is that with many nuclear sites and facilities moving into their decommissioning phase, and with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) being set up to deal with this, it has been increasingly recognised that there will be a very large volume of LLW to be dealt with. Potentially this could fill the Drigg disposal facility a number of times over.

The kinds of issue that are going to have to be addressed in the review are as follows. Should we use up existing capacity in the Drigg facility—which is a relatively expensive management option—on very low activity wastes (i.e. how do we best use the Drigg facility as a national asset?). Does it make sense to dig up very large quantities of very low activity waste and transport it around the country to bury at some other site? Is controlled burial to landfill off-site appropriate for nuclear waste, or should we be looking to a greater use of on-site burial under suitably controlled and regulated conditions? For whatever approach is identified, what is the likely timing of the existing Drigg facility becoming full, and what need for action does this imply?

The proposed policy review is intended to consider these kinds of issues. The aim is to identify a policy framework, which will update that set out in the 1995 White Paper "Review of Radioactive Waste Management Policy: Final Conclusions" (Cm2919) to cover the future management of LLW, notably by the NDA. The aim of such a policy statement is not to address the detail of the individual LLW management decisions that have to be made, but rather to define the high level framework—requirements and principles—within which such decisions must be made.

The initial stages are being overseen by a Steering Group drawn from the Government's Radioactive Waste Policy Group (RWPG). RWPG is made up of UK Government, devolved administrations and regulatory body representatives and meets regularly, several times a year, to discuss radioactive waste management policy and regulatory issues. The Steering Group is organising two national stakeholder workshops during the course of 2005 to support consideration of the issues and possible solutions. This work will contribute to the preparation and issue of a Government consultation on the revised policy proposals to be issued around the turn of the year.

The LLW long-term management policy review will be carried out in parallel with the work of the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM), which is assessing options for the long-term management of the UK's higher activity wastes. In contrast to CoRWM's work the issue for LLW is not that of identifying the best long-term management option itself, but rather how best to apply those forms of long-term management that already exist.

Clearly there may be some interdependencies between the LLW management policy review and the work of CoRWM. These will be kept under review and managed by RWPG Committee as the work proceeds.

"Securing the Future"

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what methods she plans to use to publicise the new UK sustainable development strategy, "Securing the Future", with particular reference to schools, colleges and universities. [221174]

Mr. Morley: The Department has developed a forward-looking communications strategy to publicise the strategy to ensure it reaches key audiences. For some stakeholders, more tailored strategic guidance and

advice, drawing on "Securing the future", will be produced and publicised. As reflected in the Strategy, schools, colleges and universities are already developing awareness of sustainable development issues in light of DfES' Sustainable Development Action Plan, and resources to help educators consider these issues will be examined in light of the new strategy.

State Veterinary Service

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the capacity of the State Veterinary Service to meet statutory requirements on *(a)* farm inspections, *(b)* abattoir inspections, *(c)* bovine TB controls and *(d)* other departmental veterinary responsibilities. [221465]

Mr. Bradshaw: The role of the State Veterinary Service is to implement and enforce specific national and EU legislation and regulations relating to animal welfare, the control and eradication of animal diseases and the facilitation of international trade, as agreed with Defra and the devolved Administrations. Implementation and enforcement activities include investigation, inspection and surveillance, licensing, certification and registration. It has specific responsibilities and functions in the case of any outbreak of exotic or other animal disease, which are set out in detailed departmental contingency plans. Abattoir inspections fall within the Food Standards Agency remit.

Reviews of the SVS' resources and work demands are conducted regularly and there are regular performance reports and reviews (reviews are normally quarterly). The outcome of external inspections, EU missions for example, are also monitored.

The Programme preparing for the launch of the SVS as an Executive Agency has included a recent audit of the SVS' Corporate Governance, Finance and Risk Management Systems.

Wildlife Crimes

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many criminal prosecutions for crimes against wildlife in England and Wales were completed in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [221950]

Mr. Morley: Many different pieces of legislation create offences protecting wildlife. Prosecutions are brought both publicly and privately but comprehensive information about them is not held centrally.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Further Education (Bromley)

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether it is her policy fully to fund courses for adults at level 3 in further education in Bromley in 2005–06; [221634]

(2) whether it is her policy to increase fees for courses above level 2 for adults in further education in Bromley in 2005–06. [221636]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. There will be no change in the fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income-based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all, which covers the largest part of the cost of courses, but we also expect adult learners who can afford to do so to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005–06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average funding per student in *(a)* further education colleges and *(b)* sixth forms in schools in the London borough of Bromley is in 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [221635]

Dr. Howells: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council. The Department does not collect or hold information at the level requested. Mark Haysom, the Learning and Skills Council's chief executive will write to the right hon. Member with details of the average funding per student in *(a)* further education colleges and *(b)* sixth forms in schools in the London borough of Bromley for 2004–05. A copy of his letter will be placed in the House Library.

School Funding (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding per pupil was allocated for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school education in Lancashire in each year since 1997. [221989]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to my hon. Friend the Member for Chorley (Mr. Hoyle) on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 273W.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the costs of cleaning the Department were in each year since 1997. [213779]

Mr. Miliband: Figures on costs of cleaning the Department are not fully available for each year prior to 2002 for the Cabinet Office's central London estate.

It is not possible to identify separately cleaning costs at the Centre for Management and Policy Studies College residential and non-residential training sites, Emergency Planning College residential training site and Government News Network, as cleaning services are either provided as part of a wider facilities management contract or paid for as part of rent paid for leased property.

Cleaning costs for the remainder of the Department are shown in the following table:

	£
2002–03	1,043,561
2003–04	1,237,898

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how much has been spent on postage by the Department in each year since 1997. [215031]

Mr. Miliband: Spending on postage by the Cabinet Office in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

	£000
1997–98	770
1998–99	596
1999–2000	492
2000–01	667
2001–02	490
2002–03	840
2003–04	961

In general, all mail sent to UK addresses is sent 'Second Class' unless marked 'First Class' or 'Special Delivery'.

The increase in expenditure since 2001–02 is due to the Cabinet Office's widening span of responsibilities in recent years and Machinery of Government changes.

Government Websites

Mr. Allan: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what action he is taking to prevent UK Government websites from being compromised by *(a)* denial of service and *(b)* phishing. [222188]

Mr. Miliband: The UK Government have a continuous programme of work that identifies vulnerabilities and prevents damage to the critical national infrastructure, public sector networks and other interdependent information systems.

Government policy advises all departments on the appropriate measures required to prevent UK Government websites from being compromised.

Phishing is a form of social engineering that has become very common over the past 18 months. Criminals use this technique to deceive people into disclosing their credit card numbers, bank account details or other valuable information.

At present, we have not seen large-scale phishing attacks against UK Government websites. However, we continue to be concerned about these criminal activities, and are therefore working to raise public awareness of the threat. Government have recently launched the IT safe website (www.itsafe.gov.uk) aimed at providing plain English advice and warnings to the general public.

The UK Government are also working with law enforcement and industry on Project Endurance to increase awareness and promote information and advice to online users to give them the confidence to use the internet safely and securely.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Edinburgh, North and Leith in each year since 1997. [222910]

Estelle Morris: The following table shows the amount awarded to Lottery projects by the New Opportunities Fund in the constituency of Edinburgh, North and Leith.

	Amount awarded (£)
2000	250,773
2001	1,336,259
2002	1,105,254
2003	1,084,276
2004	358,891
2005	69,961
Total	4,205,414

This information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what levels of benefit fraud have been detected in Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber in each of the last three years. [222082]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much it costs to run the Benefit Fraud hotline in each of the last three years; and how many calls it received in each year. [222120]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

National benefit fraud hotline-operational costs and calls received

	Operational costs (£)	Calls received
2001–02	1,086,000	205,999
2002–03	959,277	159,290
2003–04	1,038,505	[1] 213,471

[1] Includes 2,421 calls received by the Local Authority Fraud Hotline which commenced in September 2003.

Notes:

1. Operational costs include staffing, goods and service costs.
2. The operational costs of administering the National Benefit Fraud Hotline include the costs of administering the report-a-cheat-online service. These costs cannot be separated.

Source:

National Benefit Fraud Hotline.

Council Tax Benefit

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans the Government have to increase council tax benefit take-up; and if he will make a statement. [219881]

Mr. Pond: Last year we launched a council tax benefit awareness campaign and we are continuing to support local authorities in raising awareness of council tax benefit in the run-up to, and during, this year's billing round, supported by new posters and flyers, and by press advertising.

National advertising started on 10 January, followed by two weeks of regional press advertising. Further regional press advertising will be released in early March, to coincide with the issue of the council tax bills.

A copy of the council tax benefit flyer was issued with winter fuel payment notification letters, going to around 12 million pensioners encouraging them to "Cut your Council Tax—Find out if you should be paying less."

Flyers are also available in doctors' surgeries, and have been issued to over 20,000 organisations dealing with older people. An electronic version of the flyer is also available for local authorities to download and include with their council tax bills; they can also include a coupon for those who want to claim council tax benefit to fill in and return to their local authority.

We are checking whether those who have already claimed pension credit have claimed CTB (and HB) if appropriate, too, so that we can encourage those who have not claimed to apply—and similarly whether those on HB/CTB have applied for pension credit.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Leeds, West receive council tax benefit; and what the total amount of such benefit was in the last year for which figures are available. [221963]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

Fuel Direct

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to extend the fuel direct payment system to include customers who are not in debt; and if he will make a statement. [221332]

Mr. Pond: There are no plans to extend the fuel direct scheme to include customers who are not in debt, nor any to curb its existing provisions. Such a modification would run counter to our policy of promoting financial inclusion by encouraging people to take advantage of direct debit facilities in bank accounts to pay bills. It would also be incompatible with our aims of achieving a fair and reasonable balance between rights and personal responsibilities, and maintaining the momentum from welfare dependency into work for all those who can.

Homeless People (Education)

Ms Oona King: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his plans to reform the 16-hour rule to enable young homeless people to study full-time while in receipt of housing benefit. [222590]

Mr. Pond: We are currently reviewing the part-time study rules for jobseeker's allowance and housing benefit recipients. We expect the review to be completed by the autumn.

Income Statistics

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the average net income after tax and benefits in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms for (i) each quartile, (ii) two parent families with children, (iii) single parent families with children, (iv) single pensioner households and (v) pensioner couples in (A) the City of York and (B) Yorkshire and the Humber in each year since 1996–97. [222227]

Mr. Pond: The information requested is not available. DWP statisticians are reviewing regional-level estimates and hope to release such estimates as they deem robust, combining years from the Family Resources Survey, when further investigations are complete.

Jobseeker's Allowance

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the levels of jobseeker's allowance were in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; what plans he has to increase the levels of jobseeker's allowance in 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [222923]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance weekly rates of allowances and premiums

	2003–04	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
Contribution based JSA—personal allowances			
under 18	32.90	33.50	33.85
18 to 24	43.25	44.05	44.50
25 or over	54.65	55.65	56.20
Income-based JSA—personal allowances			
under 18	32.90	33.50	33.85
18 to 24	43.25	44.05	44.50
25 or over	54.65	55.65	56.20
Lone parent			
under 18-usual rate	32.90	33.50	33.85
under 18-higher rate payable in specific circumstances	43.25	44.05	44.50
18 or over	54.65	55.65	56.20
Couple			
both under 18	32.90	33.50	33.85
both under 18, one disabled	43.25	44.05	44.50
both under 18, with responsibility for a child	65.30	66.50	67.15
one under 18, one 18–24	43.25	44.05	44.50
one under 18, one 25+	54.65	55.65	56.20
both 18 or over	85.75	87.30	88.15
Dependent children			
from birth to September following 16th birthday	38.50	42.27	43.88
from September following 16th birthday to day before 19th birthday	38.50	42.27	43.88
Premiums			
family	15.75	15.95	16.10
family (lone parent rate)	15.90	15.95	16.10
Pensioner			
single	47.45	49.80	53.25
couple	70.05	73.65	78.90
Pensioner (enhanced)			
single	47.45	49.80	53.25

Jobseeker's allowance weekly rates of allowances and premiums

	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
couple	70.05	73.65	78.90
Pensioner (higher)			
single	47.45	49.80	53.25
couple	70.05	73.65	78.90
Disability			
single	23.30	23.70	23.95
couple	33.25	33.85	34.20
enhanced disability premium single rate	11.40	11.60	11.70
disabled child rate	16.60	17.08	17.71
couple rate	16.45	16.75	16.90
Severe disability			
single	42.95	44.15	45.50
couple (lower rate)	42.95	44.15	45.50
couple (higher rate)	85.90	88.30	91.00
disabled child	41.30	42.49	43.89
carer	25.10	25.55	25.80
bereavement	22.80	23.95	25.85
Allowances for personal expenses for claimants in hospital:			
higher rate	19.35	19.35	20.50
lower rate	15.50	15.90	16.40

Low-income Households (Weston-super-Mare)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners he estimates are living below the poverty line within the Weston-super-Mare constituency. [221898]

Malcolm Wicks: Poverty is about more than low income; it is also about other important factors in people's lives: their health, housing and the quality of their environment. The sixth annual "Opportunity for All" report (Cm 6239), published in September 2004, sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Information on the number of pensioners on low incomes in individual local authorities is not available.

5,151 pensioner households in Weston-Super-Mare were benefiting from the pension credit as at end of December 2004.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households below average income there are in *(a)* the South West and *(b)* Weston-super-Mare constituency. [221900]

Mr. Pond: In 2002–03, an estimated 65 per cent. of households in the South West had incomes below the national mean on the Before Housing Costs income measure, and 64 per cent. on the After Housing Costs measure.

These estimates use the same definition of income used in the Households Below Average Income Series, which is sourced from the Family Resources Survey. It is not possible to provide robust estimates for *(b)* because of small sample sizes.

New Deal

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) which contracts for the delivery of the new deal self-employment programme will be terminated at the end of financial year 2004–05; [222641]

(2) if he will make a statement on the future of the new deal programme for self-employment. [222642]

Jane Kennedy: There is no separate new deal self-employment programme although participants on new deal can receive advice and guidance on self employment, and can undertake test trading through new deal and work-based learning for adults.

We are in the process of informing new deal contractors whether their contracts are being renewed or not and, therefore, this information is currently commercial in confidence.

The paper 'Building on New Deal (BoND): local solutions meeting individual needs', published in June 2004, sets out our approach to the development of our welfare to work strategy. This is available in the Library. The BoND programme will deliver a single new deal which will be accessible to all eligible customers. Self-employment support will feature within the BoND menu.

Skills Training (Over-50s)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason people over the age of 50 are not eligible to receive skills training for the first six months of their unemployment; and if he will make a statement. [222934]

Jane Kennedy: We focus our resources on those people who need the most help to find employment. Around three quarters of unemployed people aged 50 and over stop claiming jobseeker's allowance within six months. Where we know the destination of these people, about three quarters move into work.

New Deal 50 Plus eligibility, and access to skills training through Work Based Learning for Adults in England, is set at six months to specifically help those people who continue to claim benefits and are in need of extra support to move into work.

Our policies are designed to give people aged over 50 real choice to remain in, or rejoin, the workforce and to decide when and how they retire. In May we will be launching a national guidance campaign to raise employers' awareness of, and ability to adopt, flexible employment and retirement opportunities in order to increase the recruitment, retention and training of older workers.

People on jobseeker's allowance are eligible for further education provision which includes skills (vocational) learning, as long as they continue to meet the jobseeker's allowance conditions for being available for work. They, and their dependants, do not have to contribute towards their tuition fees. There is no minimum time on jobseeker's allowance for further education fee concessions.

Income Support (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many families with children in Tamworth have been in receipt of income support for more than one year. [221932]

Mr. Pond: 1,000 families with dependent children up to the age of 19 have been in receipt of income support for more than one year in Tamworth.

Notes:

1. Sample taken in November 2004
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and quoted in thousands.
3. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples, November 2004.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Businesses (Strangford)

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new business start-ups have been recorded by Invest NI in the Strangford constituency in each of the last five years. [222071]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table provides information relating to the number of business start-ups offered assistance in the Strangford constituency during the four years 2000–01 to 2003–04 and the 11 month period from 1 April 2004 to end February 2005.

Strangford parliamentary constituency

	Offers to new business starts
2000–01	10
2001–02	45
2002–03	121
2003–04	174
2004–05[1]	174
Total	524

[1] Figures provided for the 11 month period up to end of February 2005

The total of 524 includes offers to new starts provided through the Start a Business Programme, for which information at a parliamentary constituency area level is available only from September 2001.

The total amount of assistance offered to these starts was £1.2 million, which contributes towards an overall estimated planned investment of £8.7 million within the constituency.

Cross-border Bodies

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the staffing costs of each cross-border body have been as a percentage of total expenditure in each year since their creation; and how many staff work for each body. [212330]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information requested is provided in the following tables.

Staff costs of each cross-border body expressed as a percentage of total expenditure

Body	*2000*[1]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[2]
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	57	54	50	53	45
Waterways Ireland	38	40	34	49	42
The Trade and Business Development Body	27	31	22	21	21
Special EU Programmes Body	52	32	50	58	No figures available[3]
The North/South Language Body[4]	13	11	9	10	13
The Food Safety Promotion Board	8	12	17	14	17
Tourism Ireland Ltd.	n/a	4	18	19	19

[1] This cover the period 2 December 1999 to 31 December 2000
[2] The figures for 2004 are provisional as accounts have yet to be finalised.
[3] The Special European Programmes Body draft accounts for 2004 are still in preparation.
[4] The figures quoted for the North/South Language Body for the years 2001–04 are based on unaudited accounts.

Whole-time equivalent numbers of staff employed as at 7 February 2005

Body	*Number employed*
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	42
Waterways Ireland	340
The Trade and Business Development Body	39.8
Special EU Programmes Body	44
The North/South Language Body	49.2
The Food Safety Promotion Board	34
Tourism Ireland Ltd.	148

Downpatrick Regional Planning Office

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning personnel are employed in the Downpatrick Regional Planning Office; how many planning personnel are responsible for planning matters in *(a)* the Ards borough council area and *(b)* the Castlereagh borough council area; and whether he plans to increase the resources available to the Northern Ireland Planning Service. [222079]

Angela Smith: Within the Downpatrick Divisional Planning Office, on the Operations Side, there is a staff complement of 52 with 47 staff currently in post.

There are currently 14 staff within Ards borough council area and eight staff in the Castlereagh borough council area responsible for planning matters.

Significant additional resources have been allocated to the Planning Service over the last few years in order to employ additional staff. During 2004–05 the Planning Service has sought to recruit 125 additional staff. The Agency now has a complement of 803 staff with 756 staff in post. Workloads in the Planning Service are reviewed regularly as is the need for additional resources.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many planning submissions the Downpatrick Regional Planning Office received from the Ards borough council area in the last *(a)* 12 months, *(b)* 24 months, *(c)* 36 months and *(d)* 48 months. [222105]

Angela Smith: The information is as follows:

	Applications received in Ards borough
Last 12 months	1,537
Last 24 months	2,656
Last 36 months	3,864
Last 48 months	4,863

Note:
For calculation purposes the 12-month period runs from 1 March until end of February.

Inward Investment

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans Invest NI have to market Newtownards as a preferred location for future inward investment; and if he will make a statement. [222072]

Mr. Gardiner: The focus of Invest NI's international sales and marketing effort is to promote aggressively all areas of Northern Ireland, including Newtownards, as an attractive and viable location for new inward investment opportunities, in what is a very competitive global marketplace. In recent years the shift in foreign direct investment flows towards service industries has increasingly witnessed new investment, mainly from the financial services and software sectors, wishing to locate within the larger labour pools available in Northern Ireland.

Invest NI's local offices continue to work closely with key stakeholders to understand and ensure that detailed information on sub-regional sales propositions, including Newtownards, is available to potential investors.

While Invest NI continues to encourage new foreign direct investment to Northern Ireland, it also remains committed to strengthening the international competitiveness of local companies. From 2002–04, Invest NI made 72 offers of assistance totalling £3.88 million to existing companies in the Ards borough council area against investments of £15.5 million. This support was offered through a wide range of programmes.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions have taken place between the local enterprise agency, Invest NI and Ards borough council regarding inward investment in the Newtownards area. [222073]

Mr. Gardiner: Invest NI and its enterprise partners are working with Ards borough council to develop the local economy within the Newtownards region. Invest NI is committed to working closely with others engaged in economic development, and this includes regular attendance at Ards borough council's economic sub-committee meetings, at which inward investment issues are discussed.

With the continuing movement in global foreign development investment trends from manufacturing to predominantly tradable service-based sectors, potential investors place an increasing emphasis on locations within larger labour pools providing good infrastructure or close proximity to University Centres of Excellence.

Invest NI cannot dictate where companies locate but the interaction and co-operation of local stakeholders are important in promoting opportunities for investors to consider areas such as Ards as a potential location. Invest NI has, in the past few years, taken 10 visitors to view locations in Newtownards as part of their visiting itineraries.

NHS (Private Operations)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of operations carried out privately on behalf of the NHS in Northern Ireland was in each of the past four years, broken down by health board. [221519]

Mr. Spellar: The cost of health care purchased by Health and Social Service Boards from independent sector hospitals in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland across all programmes of care for 2003–04 was:

Expenditure on private health care purchased from independent sector hospitals in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and Republic of Ireland

HSS board area	*Year ended March 2004 (£000)*
Northern	2,213
Southern	0
Eastern	120
Western	0
Total	2,333

Further information is not available centrally.

HEALTH

Cancelled Operations

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements are in place to compensate those who have incurred nugatory expenditure as a result of the cancellation of operations. [222345]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Guidance on "special payments", including ex-gratia payments, is contained in the National Health Service Manual for Accounts.

NHS bodies must consider each case on its merits. However, they are able to make ex-gratia payments, generally in cases where there has been financial loss incurred by the complainant, as a result of the actions or omissions of the relevant NHS body.

In exceptional circumstances, payments may also be made where there has been no financial loss, or in "discovered cases" of maladministration where no complaint has been made.

Childhood Leukaemia

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish the report on research by the Childhood Cancer Research Group at Oxford University into possible links between powerlines and childhood leukaemia; and if he will make a statement on the report. [221886]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1690W.

Children's Hospices

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much NHS funding has been allocated to children's hospices in Lancashire in each year since 1997; and what estimate he has made of the proportion of the total children's hospice funding that represented in each year; [222085]

(2) how many children's hospices there are in the Ribble Valley; and how many of them receive *(a)* a proportion of their funding and *(b)* the majority of their funding through the NHS; [222086]

(3) how many children's hospices in the Ribble Valley receive less than 10 per cent. of their core funding from the NHS. [222087]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is one children's hospice in Chorley registered with the Healthcare Commission. The Department does not collect information on hospice funding.

Children's hospice services are funded from a number of sources, including services commissioned by primary care trusts on the basis of their assessment of children's needs and their priorities. There is no upper limit to the amount of funding which the national health service can provide.

The Department continues to encourage representatives of children's hospices to engage actively with local NHS bodies over the contribution that hospices can make to the overall pattern of palliative care they commission for children and young people in their localities.

Community Hospitals

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the role of community hospitals in urban constituencies under the NHS five-year strategy. [218520]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is seeking to create a more localised national health service, with treatment increasingly taking place in community settings. This means that community hospitals will have an important role in both urban and rural areas. The exact nature of that role will be for local determination, as community hospitals must meet the needs of the local population. Therefore, they will vary in size and in the services they provide, depending on local circumstances.

Doctors

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors have been employed by the NHS in *(a)* South Tyneside, *(b)* the north-east and *(c)* the UK in each year since 1997. [221959]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Information in respect of doctors in Scotland and Wales is the responsibility of the devolved administrators. While the institutions in Northern Ireland are dissolved, responsibility rests with Ministers in the Northern Ireland office.

The 2004 medical work force census is due to be published on 22 March.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and general medical practitioners excluding retainers[2] for specified organisations, 1997–2003

Numbers (headcount)

	1997			1998		
		Of which:			Of which:	
	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]
England	89,619	60,230	29,389	91,837	62,140	29,697
Of which:						
North-east	5,033	3,548	1,485	5,048	3,542	1,506
Of which:						
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley	2,015	1,366	649	2,062	1,412	650
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3,018	2,182	836	2,986	2,130	856
Of which:						
4NJ39 South Tyneside PC6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
5KG South Tyneside PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
RE9 South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust	141	141	0	131	131	0
RW9 South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Numbers (headcount)

	1999			2000		
		Of which:			Of which:	
	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]
England	93,981	63,994	29,987	96,319	66,067	30,252
Of which:						
North-east	5,269	3,749	1,520	5,489	3,953	1,536

Numbers (headcount)

	1999			2000		
		Of which:			Of which:	
	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]
Of which:						
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley	2,116	1,460	656	2,162	1,501	661
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3,153	2,289	864	3,327	2,452	875
Of which:						
4NJ39 South Tyneside PC6	89	0	89	84	0	84
5KG South Tyneside PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
RE9 South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust	157	157	0	176	176	0
RW9 South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Numbers (headcount)

	2001			2002		
		Of which:			Of which:	
	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]
England	99,169	68,484	30,685	103,350	72,268	31,182
Of which:						
North-east	5,656	4,053	1,603	5,823	4,178	1,645
Of which:						
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley	2,228	1,532	696	2,252	1,551	701
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3,428	2,521	907	3,571	2,627	944
Of which:						
4NJ39 South Tyneside PC6	87	0	87	n/a	n/a	n/a
5KG South Tyneside PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	13	87
RE9 South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust	242	242	0	218	218	0
RW9 South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust[3]	n/a	n/a	n/a	33	33	0

Numbers (headcount)

	2003		
		Of which:	
	All doctors	HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]
England	108,993	76,400	32,593
Of which:			
North-east	6,071	4,330	1,741
of which:			
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley	2,329	1,571	758
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	3,742	2,759	983
Of which:			
4NJ39 South Tyneside PC6	n/a	n/a	n/a
5KG South Tyneside PCT	101	10	91
RE9 South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust	220	220	0
RW9 South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust[3]	49	49	0

n/a = Not available.

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospital.

[2] All practitioners (excluding retainers) include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.

[3] The South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust is responsible for the delivery of mental health services to people living in Gateshead, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and North Easington.

Note:

Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–1999.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistic
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census

Electromagnetic Hypersensitivity

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effect of electromagnetic hypersensitivity on people's health. [222037]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has made no overall assessment of electromagnetic hypersensitivity on people's health but the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) has commissioned a review of electromagnetic hypersensitivity by a consultant in

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

public health. It will address the range of symptoms reported to arise and explore whether there is a role for the NRPB in terms of prevention, management and public information.

The mobile telecommunications and health research programme, supported by Government and industry sources, is funding studies of individuals who have reported an increased sensitivity to mobile phones and mobile phone base stations.

Food Labelling

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the European Commission about his plans for a traffic light system for food labelling; what response he has received from the Commission about the proposal; whether he plans to introduce legislation to give effect to the system; and whether he expects legislation on the system to be introduced by the European Commission. [217666]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The European Commission is fully aware of, and has expressed support for, the work being progressed in the United Kingdom to develop a voluntary, national signposting system to make it easier for consumers to make healthier food choices. The Food Standards Agency is still investigating various signposting options and no decision has been made on the ultimate format of such front-of-pack labelling.

We will be working with the European Union and will use the British presidency to ensure that Europe as a whole will provide simple nutritional labelling and make it mandatory on packaged goods.

Forensic Medical Examiners

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what training is available to doctors who wish to become forensic medical examiners; and what the cost of this training was in the last period for which figures are available; [215570]

(2) what steps he is taking to increase the numbers of female doctors who become forensic medical examiners. [215686]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is not responsible for the recruitment and training of forensic medical examiners. It is the responsibility of local police authorities and chief officers. There are a number of training providers, but no central information is collated relating to either the content or cost of such training.

Health Promotion

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department has spent on advertising the dangers of *(a)* smoking, *(b)* poor diet and *(c)* alcohol in each year since 1997. [219678]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Health Education Authority ran the public education campaign on the dangers of smoking prior to 1999–2000. The tobacco control campaign run by the Department was launched in December 1999.

The following table shows advertising expenditure on the dangers of smoking from 1999–2000 to date.

Financial year	*£ million Tobacco control*
1999–2000	6.18
2000–01	8.97
2001–02	7.79
2002–03	7.87
2003–04	17.76
2004–05[1]	25.00

[1] Estimated figure.

In my response to a question from the hon. Member on 3 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 324–25W, advertising expenditure on the dangers of smoking from 1999–2000 to date, the amount for 2003–04 was incorrectly listed as £19.36 million. The correct figure for 2003–04 is £17.76 million.

The Department does not advertise the dangers of poor diet. However, the Department promotes the positive benefits of a healthy diet through a range of on-going activities such as the five-a-day programme, including the school fruit and vegetable scheme, promotion of food in schools as well as promoting breastfeeding among the disadvantaged groups.

The following table shows expenditure on promoting healthy diet from 1998 to 2005.

Financial year	*£ million Expenditure*
1998–99	0.37
1999–2000	1.26
2000–01	1.62
2001–02	1.74
2002–03	1.14
2003–04	3.24
2004–05	4.31

There has been no advertising campaign by the Department specifically on the dangers of excessive drinking in the last seven years.

The Department has funded, through its central communications budget, the production of a number of booklets and leaflets advising the public on sensible drinking. Expenditure for these is shown in the following table.

	£ Expenditure
2002–03	96,764
2003–04	44,591
2004–05[1]	39,954

[1] Up to and including quarter three.

Additionally, the Department funds the Drinkline helpline and a dedicated website. It is not possible to provide a separate cost for the operation of the helpline, Drinkline, as this is provided as part of a contract covering FRANK (drugs), Sexual Health Line, Drinkline and Know The Score, the Scottish helpline on drugs. These services have been provided under one contract and one operational model, for purposes of

cost efficiency. The approximate cost of operating the four services in 2004–05 is £1.8 million including VAT, or £1.5 million excluding VAT.

Health Spending

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the spending per head of the population on health services was in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Weston-super-Mare constituency in each year since 1992. [221901]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not collected centrally in the format requested. The table shows expenditure per weighted head of population in England, and by the health authority and strategic health authority areas covering the Weston-Super-Mare constituency, for 1996–97 to 2003–04, which is the latest year for which figures are available. Information in this format is not available prior to 1996–97.

Expenditure per weighted head of population

	Avon Health Authority area	*Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority area*	*£ per head England*
1996–97	638.36	n/a	625.56
1997–98	606.23	n/a	607.85
1998–99	672.26	n/a	659.76
1999–2000	751.06	n/a	763.79
2000–01	856.75	n/a	825.38
2001–02	925.55	n/a	926.13
2002–03	n/a	1,005.46	991.07
2003–04	n/a	1,171.37	1,116.32

Notes:

1. Expenditure is taken from audited health authority accounts and summarisation forms and primary care trust summarisation schedules, which are prepared on a resource basis and therefore differ from cash allocations in the year. Figures are given in cash terms.
2. Allocations per weighted head of population provide a much more reliable measure to identify differences between funding of health authorities and primary care trusts.
3. Figures for 1996–97 to 2001–02 have been prepared using gross expenditure figures. Figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 have been adjusted to eliminate expenditure which would be double counted where an authority acts as a lead in commissioning health care or other services.

Sources:

Audited accounts of the health authorities 1996–97 to 1998–99.
Audited summarisation forms of the health authorities 1999–2000 to 2001–02.
Audited summarisation forms of the strategic health authorities 2002–03 and 2003–04.
Audited summarisation schedules of primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2003–04.
Weighted population figure.

In many health authorities there are factors which distort the expenditure. These include:

the health authority acting in a lead capacity to commission healthcare or fund training on behalf of other health bodies; and

asset revaluations in NHS trusts being funded through health authorities or primary care trusts.

The majority of general dental services expenditure is separately accounted for by the dental practice board (DPB). An element of pharmaceutical services expenditure is accounted for by the Prescription Pricing Authority (PPA). Total expenditure on these items by the DPB and the PPA cannot be allocated to individual health bodies, therefore the total expenditure in the answer does not capture all NHS expenditure within the area.

The proportion of drugs expenditure accounted for by the DPB was larger in 1997–98 and 1998–99, which is why the total expenditure figures for those years appear low compared to 1996–97, 1999–2000, and 2000–01.

For these reasons expenditure cannot be compared reliably between health authorities or between different years.

Heat-related Illnesses

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had about the public health impacts of heat-related illnesses. [218811]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is currently updating the report, "The Effects of Climate Change on Health in the United Kingdom", which was published in 2002. A group of experts, drawn from those who contributed to the original report, has met and is currently examining evidence. The effects of heat and cold on health will be carefully considered. An updated report will be published in the summer of 2005.

Hepatitis

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what additional provision has been made should the hepatitis B awareness campaign result in a large increase in people coming forward for treatment. [220785]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The current health care professional and public awareness campaigns are for hepatitis C, rather than hepatitis B.

Over the three year period 2005–06 to 2007–08, funding for the national health service will increase on average by 7.1 per cent. a year over and above inflation—a total increase over the period of 23 per cent. in real terms. Over three years, this will take the total spent on the NHS in England from £69 billion in 2004–05 to £92 billion in 2007–08. This is a significant increase over historic levels of growth.

Hospital Waiting Times

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time in hospitals in *(a)* South Tyneside, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* the UK has been in each year since 1997. [221958]

Mr. Hutton: The Department collects waiting times information by national health service trust.

Table 1 shows South Tyneside NHS Trust in-patient median waiting time, all specialities: provider based 1996–97 to January 2005.

Table 1

	Year end month	*Median (weeks)*
1996–97	March	15.6
1997–98	March	16.4
1998–99	March	14.9
1999–2000	March	12.4
2000–01	March	10.5
2001–02	March	9.5
2002–03	March	8.7
2003–04	March	8.3
2004–05	January	6.2

Source:
Department of Health KH07 (provider based).

The Department collects waiting times information from strategic health authorities (SHAs).

Table 2 shows Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA, in-patient median waiting time, all specialities: commissioner based 1996–97 to January 2005.

Table 2

	Year end month	*Median (weeks)*
1996–97	March	12.2
1997–98	March	12.3
1998–99	March	11.7
1 999–2000	March	11.1
2000–01	March	11.1
2001–02	March	11.8
2002–03	March	10.9
2003–04	March	9.6
2004–05	January	10.8

Source:
Department of Health, QF01 (commissioner based).

The Department does not collect waiting times data for the United Kingdom, but for England.

Table 3 shows England, in-patient median waiting time, all specialities: commissioner based 1996–97 to January 2005.

Table 3

Quarter ended	*Median waiting inpatient waiters time for (weeks)*
March 1997	13.2
March 1998	14.2
March 1999	12.8
March 2000	12.9
March 2001	12.6
March 2002	12.7
March 2003	11.9
March 2004	10.2
January 2005	9.3

Note:
The introduction of time-bands from April 2004 has led to a more precise calculation of the median waiting time.
Source:
Department of Health, QF01 (commissioner based).

Lancashire Ambulance Trust

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the proposed restructuring of ambulance services by Lancashire Ambulance Trust. [222101]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Any decisions about the configuration of ambulance trusts are a matter for the local health economy to consider, led by the strategic health authority (SHA) and in consultation with patients and the public. Under section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001, national health service bodies are under a duty to consult and involve patients, the public and their representatives in the planning of changes to services, and to involve them in decisions affecting the operation of services. Should a proposal to change services represent a substantial development or variation, NHS bodies are under a duty to consult relevant local authority overview and scrutiny committees.

Medical Treatment (European Countries)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients living in the Ribble Valley have had operations or other medical treatments funded by the NHS in European countries in each of the last three years. [222103]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Midwifery

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of unfilled midwifery posts in the North West. [221411]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library.

MRSA

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* assessment he has made of the scope for the use of essential oils in dealing with MRSA and *(b)* funding he intends to provide for research into the use of such oils in combating MRSA. [220178]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The scientific literature indicates that essential oils can help control health care associated infections, including methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). The Department has allocated £3 million to research into health care associated infection and has recently issued a call for research proposals. If a proposal on essential oils is submitted, it will be carefully considered alongside others.

NHS Spending

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1911W, on NHS spending, what the expenditure on hospital and community services in England is at constant prices. [222777]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the expenditure on hospital and community services in England, at 2003–04 prices, is shown in the table. Expenditure figures provided include the commissioning of secondary health care, which is the closest to the information requested. It is not possible to provide comparable figures prior to 1996–97.

	Amount (£000)
1996–97	25,835,590
1997–98	26,444,802
1998–99	27,551,795
1999–2000	29,086,599
2000–01	31,695,378
2001–02	32,333,446
2002–03	33,859,814
2003–04	36,305,199

Sources:

Health authority audited accounts 1996–97 and 1997–98.

Health authority audited summarisation forms 1998–99 to 2001–02.

Strategic health authority audited summarisation forms 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Primary care trust audited summarisation schedules 2000–01 to 2003–04.

Her Majesty's Treasury gross domestic product deflator.

Nurses

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses have been employed by the NHS in *(a)* South Tyneside, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* England in each year since 1997. [222145]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

The 2004 non-medical workforce census is due to be published on 22 March.

National health service hospital and community health services:
Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, including general medical service practice nurses, for the specified organisations as at 30 September[1] each year

Headcount

		1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
England		318,856	323,457	329,637	335,952	350,381	367,520	386,359
of which:								
North East Government Office Region		18,598	19,033	19,872	20,006	20,977	21,504	22,108
County Durham and Tees Valley strategic health authority	Q10	7,732	8,050	8,244	8,458	8,600	8,647	9,084
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	Q09	10,866	10,983	11,628	11,548	12,377	12,857	13,024
of which:								
South Tyneside primary care group	4NJ39	n/a	n/a	56	50	58	n/a	n/a
South Tyneside primary care trust	5KG	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	257	265
South Tyneside NHS foundation trust	RE9	905	854	899	891	916	615	624
South of Tyne and Wearside mental health NHS trust	RW9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	803	652

Notes:

Practice nurse data is as at 1 October 1997–99

Practice nurse data is estimated for 1998 and 1999

n/a—not applicable

Sources:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Out-of-Hours GP Services

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which areas receive additional funding for out-of-hours general practitioner services on account of their rural character. [221287]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The table shows the 50 primary care trusts (PCTs) that were allocated on account of their rural character additional funding to provide out-of-hours services. The additional funding was aggregated to strategic health authority level and decisions about final allocations were agreed locally.

PCT

East Lincolnshire

Shropshire County

Suffolk West

Craven, Harrogate and Rural District

Southern Norfolk

Central Cornwall

Kennet and North Wiltshire

Cotswold and Vale

Lincolnshire South West

Herefordshire

Mid Hampshire

North and East Cornwall

North Lincolnshire

North Devon

Yorkshire Wolds and Coast

Sussex Downs and Weald

West of Cornwall

East Yorkshire

South Somerset

Huntingdonshire

East Cambridgeshire and Fenland

West Norfolk

Melton, Rutland and Harborough

West Cumbria

Cherwell Vale

Newark and Sherwood

Broadland

South Wiltshire

Hambleton and Richmondshire

Mid Devon

Mendip

Teignbridge

South Cambridgeshire

High Peak and Dales

Bassetlaw

Daventry and South Northamptonshire

South Hams and West Devon

Central Suffolk
North Norfolk
Suffolk Coastal
South Peterborough
North Dorset
Doncaster East
South Huddersfield
Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire
Durham Dales
Maldon and South Chelmsford
SE Oxfordshire
Uttlesford
Eden Valley

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have been received on the new GP out-of-hours service since its introduction *(a)* in England and *(b)* in the North Somerset Primary Care Trust area. [221902]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not centrally available.

Paddington Health Campus

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health from what percentage of Harefield Hospital's catchment area for cardiothoracic NHS inpatients, in-patients will be drawn for the new hospital on the Paddington Basin Health Campus; and when its facilities will be available for them. [221681]

Mr. Hutton: The number of in-patient episodes currently undertaken at Harefield Hospital is projected to grow from 5,500 in 2003–04 to 6,000 by the time the Paddington Health Campus (PHC) opens. Of these patients, it is expected that 73 per cent. will use the PHC and the remaining 27 per cent., predominantly secondary cardiology patients, will use appropriately equipped local hospitals, possibly with cardiac departments operated as satellite Royal Brompton and Harefield services.

The outline business case for the PHC estimates that the new facilities will be fully operational from June 2013.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has consulted HM Treasury on the increase in land acquisition costs over those published in the public consultation document on the Paddington Basin Health Campus project and for which budget provision had been made. [221682]

Mr. Hutton: Her Majesty's Treasury has not yet been formally consulted. However, as recommended by the independent review team, it was represented on the steering group which oversaw the review. Once the Department has approved the outline business case (OBC), my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary of the Treasury will receive the OBC for consideration and approval.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the outcome has been of negotiations between Pearcroft Ltd. and his Department on the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [221683]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has not been in negotiations with Pearcroft Ltd. in relation to the proposed Paddington Health Campus (PHC) and has no plans to do so.

Pearcroft has a shareholding in Paddington Development Corporate Ltd., (PDCL), a privately owned consortium, which, amongst other things, owns land in Paddington. PDCL is currently negotiating with Westminster city council and the Paddington Health Campus team for land required for the proposed PHC. Westminster city council has agreed to broker the land deal.

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his estimate is of the cost to his Department of providing housing for relatives of patients receiving hospital treatment on the Paddington Basin Health Campus. [222006]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The outline business case for the Paddington Health Campus submitted in December 2004 estimated the capital cost of accommodation for relatives of children and adults undergoing complex treatment as £11 million.

Patient Fitness Programmes

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation his Department carries out of the efficacy of fitness programmes for patients referred at primary care level by the NHS. [221645]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Fitness programmes for patients referred at primary care level by the national health service are subject to local evaluation. The Healthcare Commission assesses the performance of primary care trusts in the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

The Department periodically commissions reviews of best practice in the promotion of physical activity, including review-level research into the effectiveness of exercise referral schemes. The Health Development Agency has recently produced an updated evidence briefing on the effectiveness of public health interventions for increasing physical activity among adults and is preparing a briefing on the promotion of physical activity aimed at professionals in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

"Choosing Activity: a physical activity action plan", includes a commitment for production of specific guidelines for children's exercise referral.

Pregnancy Advisory Service

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 13 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 978W, to the hon. Member for Totnes (Mr. Steen), on the Pregnancy Advisory Service, whether funding has been allocated by the Government to the British Pregnancy Advisory Service since 1997. [221725]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The Department has not directly funded the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) in any year since 1997. We do not collect data on the funding BPAS receives through its contracts with primary care trusts.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what requirements there are for primary care trust funding panels to consult patients before reaching a decision on whether to fund treatments and drugs. [213588]

Mr. Hutton: There is no formal requirement for primary care trust (PCT) funding panels to consult patients before reaching a decision on whether to fund treatment and drugs. However, in cases where there is no guidance from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) and a local decision needs to be taken, such consultation would be considered good practice.

Where the National Institute for Clinical Excellence has recommended a treatment in a technology appraisal, PCTs normally have to make funding available for this treatment within three months of the appraisal's publication. NICE consults widely with a range of stakeholders, including patients and patients' organisations, before making a technology appraisal decision.

In addition, all PCTs have patient and public involvement forums, which exist to monitor and review the services arranged and/or provided by the trust from the perspective of the patient. This includes both the range and operation of services.

Scans (Private Sector)

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the decision was taken to site the Alliance Medicals mobile scanner at James Cook Hospital, Middlesbrough rather than at University Hospital, North Durham; and who took the decision. [220843]

Mr. Hutton: The James Cook Hospital was the closest available site which had immediate access to a power and water supply in the grounds of the hospital where mobile scanner units are normally sited. The decision to site the scanner at James Cook Hospital was taken by the local radiology manager, in conjunction with Alliance Medical.

Alliance Medical is investigating the possibility of locating a mobile scanner unit in the North Durham area, ideally on a primary care site which has a suitable power and water supply available in the grounds of the site.

Specialised Health Services

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will take steps to strengthen processes for *(a)* planning, *(b)* decision making and *(c)* performance management in the commissioning of specialised health services. [220248]

Mr. Hutton: Primary care trusts are expected to commission specialised services collaboratively through their membership of the eight specialised commissioning groups and 26 local specialised commissioning groups covering England. Strategic health authorities actively support, monitor and performance manage the commissioning arrangements for specialised services in their areas.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Public Service Agreement target to increase the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment programmes by 55 per cent. by 2004 was met. [219239]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures published by the National Treatment Agency on 30 September 2004 show that 54 per cent. more drug misusers were in contact with drug treatment services in 2003–04 in comparison to the 1998–99 baseline.

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 21 March 2005

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Defence

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what contingency plans have been prepared for coping with a large scale exodus of people from a city following a terrorist attack. [210891]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have been asked to reply.

It would be in extremely unusual circumstances that mass evacuation would be initiated. In such circumstances the existing evacuation and reception planning by local authorities, police and emergency services would come into play. The new regional resilience teams in the Government offices for the regions would be available to assist with co-ordination of incidents affecting several local authority areas. In London, large scale evacuation planning is co-ordained by the London resilience team.

New Environmental Technologies

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has to reform the methodology of regulatory impact assessments in order to reflect more accurately the social and economic benefits of new environmental technologies; and if he will make a statement. [221730]

Mr. Miliband: The regulatory impact assessment (RIA) methodology provides for the assessment of economic, environmental and social impacts. This includes analysing the benefits that may arise from the use of environmental technology as well as any costs to UK industry. Assessments undertaken by Departments should reflect the social, environmental and economic benefits of any relevant emerging technology.

Staff Identity Passes

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the cost of producing a staff identity pass was in the Department on the latest date for which figures are available; and how many staff identity passes have been reported lost or stolen in each year since 1997. [215080]

Mr. Miliband: The average cost of producing a staff identify pass in the Department on the latest date for which figures are available is £8.87. This includes materials and staff costs. Figures on the number of lost or stolen passes are only available from 2003 onwards and are shown in the following table.

	Number of passes
Lost	
2003	61
2004	20
Stolen	
2003	10
2004	31

No incidents have been recorded in this period of attempted use of lost or stolen passes.

I regret that the information I gave in a response to the hon. Member on 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 92W, on security passes was incorrect. That response stated that there were 15 passes reported lost in 2004, when there were in fact 20 passes reported lost in 2004. The correct information has been used in response to this PQ.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the impact the Commission for Africa Report will have on *(a)* delivering funding for development in Africa, *(b)* ensuring value for money of monies committed from the UK to development projects in Africa and *(c)* achieving openness and transparency in how the funds are used in delivering the projects. [222667]

Hilary Benn: The Commission for Africa report is a well argued case for the international community and Africa working in partnership to achieve change. One key recommendation is that aid to Africa should be doubled. DFID supports this, the UK is on track to double UK aid by 2010 from levels in 2004–05. The political momentum generated by the report will encourage other countries to increase aid flows and support the International Financing Facility (IFF). DFID will work to enlist maximum international response through our presidencies of the G8 and EU during 2005.

The Commission for Africa report presents a powerful analysis of the most effective ways to ensure that growth in the quantity of aid is matched by increased aid effectiveness. We strongly agree and will be taking further steps to improve the predictability and harmonisation of UK aid, as recommended by the report, so that it will have maximum impact. The report also recommends that aid is untied—which is already the case for UK aid. More effective aid means better value for money for the UK taxpayer.

The report is clear on the importance of donors being held to account for the effectiveness of their aid and recommends the establishment of new mechanisms for monitoring donor performance against clear, time bound and quantifiable commitments. DFID supports this.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how the International Finance Facility will work in connection with projects

funded by the UK and other international parties in Africa; and what type of infrastructure projects he expects will benefit from such funds. [222668]

Hilary Benn: The International Finance Facility is a financing mechanism designed to provide significant extra resources for development between now and 2015. It would be used to finance country-led development processes in the poorest countries in Africa and elsewhere in the world, but will not act as a development bank or aid agency in its own right. Funds from the Facility would be disbursed through existing, effective, multilateral and bilateral mechanisms.

Finance from the International Finance Facility should ensure that aid is used to finance the investments that will help put countries on a sustainable and lasting path to poverty reduction this could include infrastructure. The detailed mechanics of how disbursement decisions would be made would depend on the Facility's Governance Structure, which would be for agreement by donors at the establishment of the IFF.

Aid Initiatives

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans his Department has for conflict resolution to address the underlying causes of conflict in countries which are excluded from development and debt initiatives. [222698]

Hilary Benn: DFID carries out the majority of its conflict resolution and conflict prevention work through the Global and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools (GCPP and ACPP respectively), which are supplied by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID).

The country and regional strategies in the Africa and the Global Pools are based on where the UK can make a contribution to the reduction and resolution of conflict. The trilateral nature of the Pools means that DFID is involved in a small number of countries that are not development priorities for DFID. The vast majority of the Pools' work, however, is in countries where DFID is also engaged in developmental activities and/or debt initiatives.

Grenada/Cayman Islands

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of reconstruction efforts in *(a)* Grenada and *(b)* Cayman Islands. [222198]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID maintains close contact with the Government of Grenada, including its new Agency for Reconstruction and Development (ARD), and with other donors. We do so both bilaterally and through a forum which is convened by the United Nations Development Programme which includes the participation of the other major donors. Through these contacts we have responded to the Government of Grenada's requests for budget support and technical assistance for the reconstruction effort and have helped to press other donors to respond in a timely manner.

The ARD was formally launched on 15 March—albeit somewhat later than originally envisaged. There has been progress in school reconstruction and in the housing sector. In the education sector, funds from the US Agency for International Development, World Bank, European Commission and DFID are being used for a programme of schools' rehabilitation. All children are now back at school.

The Government of Grenada has said that housing reconstruction and financing is a top priority and has committed to a number of initiatives for rebuilding. For priority vulnerable and needy families, as a first phase, it committed to constructing 225 low-income homes at a cost of about £8,000 per home, and providing material assistance for the repair of 1,125 roofs during the same period. The Government are also offering a Soft Loan Facility which provides a maximum loan amount of approximately £8,000 for 10 years with a one year grace period, at an interest rate of 3 per cent. In addition the Venezuelan Government, the US Agency for International Development, and the People's Republic of China have all committed to the construction and repair of homes in Grenada.

Similarly, while not directly involved in assessing the efforts of the Caymanian authorities, DFID continues to monitor progress in Cayman Islands' recovery from Hurricane Ivan. Since our emergency assistance in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane, when we quickly contributed relief supplies and helped with the clear-up operation, both the islands' Governor and our Disaster Management Adviser have kept in close contact and provided us with reports. In addition, the Cayman Islands Government have shared with us a damage assessment by the United Nations' Economic commission for the Caribbean and Latin America (ECLAC).

We understand that the pace of recovery, including repairs to housing and essential infrastructure, continues to be strong and that the situation is improving on a daily basis. The Cayman authorities have also announced measures, in co-operation with the United Nations Development Programme, to establish a National Emergency Management system and to achieve optimum resilience in the event of any future natural disasters.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the Grenadan Government concerning reconstruction efforts following Hurricane Ivan. [222383]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Secretary of State met with Prime Minister Keith Mitchell MP on Monday 21 March in London, to discuss progress on the reconstruction efforts in Grenada. DFID officials attended a regular meeting of the Government of Grenada-Donor Community Forum on 9 March, in Barbados. The Chief Executive of the Agency for Reconstruction and Development, Dr. Richardson Andrews, and Senior Officials from the Ministry of Education represented the Government of Grenada at that meeting. DFID officials met with the Permanent Secretary in the Grenadian Ministry of Finance on Thursday 10 March in the margins of the Caribbean Development Bank Board Meeting. All these meetings are supplemented by regular contact between the Government of Grenada and FCO

officials in St. Georges, and by the continuous monitoring of our programmes in Grenada by DFID staff in the Caribbean office.

HIV/AIDS

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support the Government are giving to the development and provision of *(a)* microbicides and *(b)* other HIV-prevention methods in his Department's aid programmes to the developing world. [221650]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID is providing a grant of £16 million (October 2001 to September 2006) to the Microbicide Development Programme (MDP) coordinated by the Medical Research Councils Clinical Trials Unit and Imperial College. DFID has also provided £18 million to International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and £1.3 million to International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM).

DFID is supporting a range of prevention interventions across the countries where we work. Our support depends on needs and demand at country level linked to the nature of the epidemic. We support a comprehensive country led approach to HIV prevention. We support governments to strengthen their health and social systems. We also provide specific support to delivering services via civil society, private sector and Government agencies. This covers a range of activities such as school education, harm reduction such as needle exchanges, and methadone replacement for intravenous drug users, voluntary counselling and testing, procurement and supply of sexual and reproductive health commodities and associated training and counselling. We encourage engagement of key stakeholders such as people living with HIV/AIDS, commercial sex workers and intravenous drug users in developing and implementing services.

Access to reproductive health services and information is essential to preventing HIV infection and we support better integration of services for AIDS and sexual and reproductive health, so that they are complementary and not competitive. Sexual and reproductive health services are also a cornerstone of efforts to prevent HIV infection. DFID is a major donor of reproductive health commodities (including condoms), mainly through budgetary support to country strategies that include reproductive health but also via support for specific reproductive health programmes. We support social marketing programmes that distribute contraceptives and condoms for HIV prevention.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to his answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 379W, on HIV/AIDS, if he will place in the Library the report of the Conference on Retroviral and Opportunistic Infections held in Boston USA in March. [222654]

Hilary Benn: I have arranged for the documents entitled "Nevirapine Use for a Second Pregnancy Is Beneficial in Preventing Mother-to-child Transmission of HIV, When Compared to a Transmission rate of 25 per cent. Without Drug Use", "Very Low Verical HIV Transmission Rates Possible in Africa" and "Prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV" which were presented at the Conference on Retrovirals and Opportunistic Infections held in Boston from 23 to 25 February this year, to be placed in the Libraries of the House.

TRANSPORT

Caravans

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the size of vehicle required to tow safely a caravan that has *(a)* twin axles and *(b)* triple axles. [222998]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Government have not carried out any assessment of vehicle size in relation to the towing of caravans.

The suitability of a vehicle to tow a caravan (regardless of the number axles) is determined by the vehicle manufacturers usually as a result of their research and development programmes. The vehicle manufacturer determines the maximum weight of the trailer (caravan) to be towed by the vehicle and displays this on the vehicle data plate as the maximum train weight. The maximum train weight is the overall combined laden weight of the vehicle and the caravan (trailer) which should not be exceeded in any circumstances when used on the highway.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the maximum *(a)* length and *(b)* width is of a caravan that can be legally towed. [223001]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The maximum dimensions regarding the length and width of a caravan that can legally be towed on the roads of the UK is dependent on the maximum gross weight of the towing vehicle.

Towing vehicles with a maximum gross weight of 3500kg or below are permitted to tow a caravan with a maximum length of 7 metres and a width of 2.3 metres.

Towing vehicles with a maximum gross weight exceeding 3500kg are permitted to tow a caravan with a maximum length of 12 metres provided it is fitted with at least four wheels. In all other cases the maximum length is 7 metres. The maximum width is 2.55 metres.

In either case the overall length of the towing vehicle and caravan combination must not exceed 18 metres or 18.75 metres if the towing vehicle was manufactured after 1 June 1998.

Myasthenia Gravis

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the eligibility of sufferers of myasthenia gravis for the Blue Badge scheme. [222131]

Charlotte Atkins: The Blue Badge scheme is designed primarily to assist people with severe difficulty in walking, whatever the cause of their disability. People who are registered blind also qualify under the Scheme. Drivers with a severe disability affecting both arms may also be eligible. Local authorities, which are responsible for administering the Scheme, will decide on an

individual's eligibility on the basis of these criteria. People with myasthenia gravis will be eligible for a badge if they meet the criteria.

Railways

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers used Leicester railway station in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2004 and *(c)* 2005 in (i) morning peak hours, (ii) evening peak hours and (iii) off-peak hours. [222897]

Mr. McNulty: The only available figures held centrally are based on a passenger count on departures from Leicester station taken for one day in November 2004.

	Number
AM Peak (7am to 10am)	1,972
PM Peak (4pm to 7pm)	2,454
Off Peak (6am to 7am, 10am to 4pm and 7pm to 10pm)	3,444
Total	7,870

Roadside Accidents

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will assess the merits of requiring car occupants to wear reflective jackets compliant to standard EN471 when leaving their vehicle at the roadside, except where the vehicle is parked; and if he will make a statement; [222261]

(2) if he will take steps to require car occupants leaving their vehicle by the roadside, except when the vehicle is parked, to wear reflective jackets compliant to standard EN471; and if he will make a statement; [222262]

(3) if he will make it a requirement that drivers carry at least one reflective jacket in their cars; and if he will make a statement. [222320]

Mr. Jamieson: We do not make it a requirement for any road user to wear reflective clothing. However, we do advise vulnerable road users—pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horseriders—to wear fluorescent clothing during the day and reflective clothing at night to improve their visibility to other road users. This advice is contained in the Highway Code.

Drivers are generally less vulnerable. But the Code gives advice to them on where they should stand should their vehicle breakdown, with special advice for motorways. Our leaflet, "A Guide to Safer Motorway Driving", also contains the advice on what to do when vehicles break down on motorways. While there are tragic accidents when drivers leave their vehicles, these are rare. We believe that drivers and occupants are not at great risk when they follow this advice—for example, for motorways they are advised to wait on a nearby bank or verge well away from the traffic. We therefore do not believe that we should go further and require the wearing of special clothing.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what compensation will be payable to *(a)* companies engaged in the supply of and *(b)* those who have bought equipment which detects the presence of speed cameras in the event of such equipment being outlawed under the provisions of the Road Safety Bill. [222700]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government signalled their intentions in January 2001. The provision contained within the Road Safety Bill regarding speed assessment equipment detection devices would allow regulations to be made which would allow the continued use of Global Positioning Systems which contribute to road safety by informing drivers of the location of published safety camera sites. The provisions are designed to deal with devices whose purpose, or one of the purposes of which, is to detect or interfere with the operation of all police enforcement equipment used to assess the speed of motor vehicles.

It would be inappropriate to compensate companies engaged in the supply, or users of equipment that enabled drivers to ignore speed limits and flout the law with impunity endangering other road users.

Traffic Commissioners

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what authority a traffic commissioner has over members of staff in the Traffic Area Network. [223118]

Mr. Jamieson: Staff in the Traffic Area Offices support traffic commissioners to enable them to exercise their responsibilities for operator licensing. Management responsibility for Traffic Area Office staff lies with the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency.

Transport Security Directorate

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport who the Director is of the Transport Security Directorate for *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* Wales; and what role the (i) Scottish Executive and (ii) Welsh Assembly Government play in the Transport Security Directorate's operations. [223133]

Charlotte Atkins: As transport security is a reserved matter there is no separate Transport Security Directorate for Scotland and Wales. Relevant transport operations in Scotland and Wales come under the direction of the Department for Transport's Transport Security and Contingencies Directorate (TRANSEC). TRANSEC officials liaise with the devolved Administrations as appropriate.

Trunk Roads

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress he has made with improvements to Non-Motorised User crossings of trunk roads in England; and what plans he has for further progress. [222203]

Mr. Jamieson: By 31 March 2003, the Highways Agency completed surveys of all Non-Motorised User (NMU) crossing points on the trunk road network and drew up a provisional list of improvements, which would offer good value for money.

The Highways Agency has completed approximately 90 discrete NMU related improvement schemes and plans to complete at least a further 14 such schemes in 2005–06. This figure does not include those NMU

improvement elements that have been incorporated into other larger projects for delivery as part of the Government's Targeted Programme of Improvements. Progress on delivery of NMU crossing improvements will continue to be monitored by the Agency.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding he has allocated to the Highways Agency for Non-Motorised User crossing improvements over the financial years 2005–06 to 2007–08. [222204]

Mr. Jamieson: Non-Motorised User (NMU) crossings are provided where justified as part of major schemes. In addition, small free-standing schemes are funded from the Highways Agency's small schemes budget. Following the recent Spending Review settlement, the Highways Agency is developing its detailed forward programme for small schemes, which include high value-for-money safety schemes, junction improvements, as well as environmental and accessibility improvement measures that include NMU crossings. Within this particular category of funding, the Highways Agency has indicative funding levels of £10 million, £6 million and £7 million respectively for the period 2005–06 to 2007–08 for Accessibility projects.

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the current status of the A681 former trunk road through Sharneyford, near Bacup, Lancashire; and what weight restrictions are in operation upon it. [222421]

Mr. Jamieson: The A681 at Sharneyford is a principal road and is the responsibility of the local highway authority, Lancashire county council. There are no weight restrictions currently in operation on the route.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Listed Places of Worship Grant

7. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners pursuant to his oral answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 20, what the take-up of the listed places of worship grant scheme has been in the last 12 months. [222797]

Sir Stuart Bell: 6,907 applications for VAT refunds have been made under this scheme since 1 April 2004 and roughly £6.5 million has been paid out, of which about 90 per cent. relates to Church of England places of worship.

The Church is extremely grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for extending the scheme until 2008 in his Budget.

As the estimated annual spend on repairs and maintenance is nearly £100 million, there may be some parishes failing to claim. A proportion of repairs cover items which do not qualify under the scheme but there is still a strong suggestion that eligible works are being carried out on Church of England listed church buildings and no application is being made for a VAT refund.

The C of E VAT Group is urging all parishes who have undertaken repair works to listed church buildings costing in excess of £1,000 to make a claim for the VAT refund on completion of the works.

Tourism

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners if he will make a statement on the Church Commissioners' policy on the encouragement of tourism. [222794]

Sir Stuart Bell: Cathedrals and churches are a major draw, not just in their own right but also as the part of the wider communities they serve. Making churches open and accessible raises challenges but congregations are responding with increasing professionalism, aided by advice from national and regional initiatives.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Incitement to Racial Hatred

David Winnick: To ask the Solicitor-General if the Attorney-General will refer the article written by Nasser Amin in the current student journal of the School of Oriental and African Studies to the Director of Public Prosecutions as incitement to racial hatred; and if she will make a statement. [222605]

The Solicitor-General: If any person believes that a criminal offence has been committed, than they may report that allegation to the police. The police can then investigate the allegation and, where appropriate, refer the matter to the Crown Prosecution Service for consideration of whether a prosecution should be brought.

Where the Crown Prosecution Service consider that a prosecution should be commenced for an offence of incitement to racial hatred, they seek the consent of the Attorney-General to prosecute.

The Attorney-General has not to date been asked to consider giving consent to prosecute Nasser Amin for an offence of incitement to racial hatred.

Parliamentary Questions

Lynne Jones: To ask the Solicitor-General, pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1075W, on parliamentary questions, whether the former deputy legal adviser in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Elizabeth Wilmhurst, was one of the three officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office referred to. [222382]

The Solicitor-General: No.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Vehicles

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many motor vehicles have been abandoned in *(a)* Leicester South, *(b)* Leicester and *(c)* England since 1997. [222896]

Alun Michael: Statistics for abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed were first compiled in the Defra Municipal Waste Management Survey for 2000–01.

Annual results for England and Leicester, as well as the total since the figures were first recorded in 2000–01 are listed in the following table.

	England	*Leicester*
2000–01	230,000	1,416
2001–02	286,000	1,434
2002–03	310,000	1,758
Total	826,400	4,608

Agricultural Employment

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many people were employed *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time in agriculture in England in each year from 1990 to 2004. [221957]

Alun Michael: The number of people employed in agriculture in England for the years 1990 to 2004 are shown in the table. The figures include family workers but exclude casual workers, farmers, partners, directors and salaried managers.

Thousand

	(a) Full-time	*(b) Part-time*
1990	100.0	45.7
1991	95.6	45.1
1992	91.7	43.3
1993	88.3	42.9
1994	86.0	42.5
1995	83.4	42.6
1996	81.6	42.6
1997	80.6	41.9
1998	79.2	41.0
1999	73.6	37.2
2000	64.2	32.7
2001[1]	61.2	29.4
2001[2]	62.8	30.3
2002	58.6	28.7
2003	52.6	26.2
2004	50.4	28.3

[1] Shows the results assuming register improvements had not taken place (comparable with June 2000).
[2] Shows the results including register improvements.
Notes:
1. Part-time is defined as less than 39 hours
2. Due to the introduction of new questions in 1998 figures prior to this year are not directly comparable with earlier years' results.
3. Due to a register improvement exercise in 2001, labour figures prior to this are not directly comparable with later results.
Source:
June Agricultural Census

Beekeeping

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reasons her Department has not issued a consultation document on its plans for the budget for the support of beekeepers in England. [222146]

Alun Michael: It is not our practice to issue consultation documents on expenditure plans. We plan to issue a consultation document on our proposal to remove European foul brood from the list of notifiable diseases of bees in the winter of 2006–07, when further data on the effectiveness of the 'shook swarm' technique will be available.

Bird Control

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will publish the new general licence WLF18 for the control of certain species of birds which came into effect on 1 March 2005. [220439]

Mr. Bradshaw: The general licence WLF 18 has been published and is available on the Defra website via the following link: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/cons_man/wlf 18.pdf.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the circumstances in which controlling pigeons on growing crops by non-lethal methods would be *(a)* less effective and *(b)* less practical than shooting. [220446]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra have made no such specific assessment. However, in December 2003 the Central Science Laboratory published a report on the 'Review of international research literature regarding the effectiveness of auditory bird scaring techniques and potential alternatives'. A copy of this report can be found at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/noise/birdscaring/birdscaring.pdf

This review, which was commissioned by Defra, did not include an assessment of shooting.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under what legal authority she transferred the responsibility given to her by S.16 (1A) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to decide whether there is no other satisfactory solution other than killing certain birds, to the authorised persons under the terms of the General Licence WLF18. [220447]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Secretary of State has not transferred the responsibility given to her by S.16 (1A) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to decide whether there is no other satisfactory solution other than killing certain birds, to the authorised persons under the terms of the General Licence WLF18.

The wording of three of the licences (prevention of damage/spread of disease, public safety and air safety) was changed to include reference to the authorised person satisfying himself regarding the effectiveness of alternative methods of control. The new condition was included in order to clarify that general licences properly meet our EC obligations by providing for an assessment of alternatives on a case by case basis.

However, the final responsibility as regards other satisfactory solutions rests with the Secretary of State.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish guidance to persons authorised under general licence WLF 18 on the criteria they should use to assess whether appropriate non-lethal methods of control are ineffective or impracticable. [221392]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra issued a press release on 9 March 2005 announcing the latest revisions to the general licence condition regarding non-lethal methods of control. There are no plans to publish further guidance.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish advice she has received concerning the legal interpretation of condition 4 of general licence WLF 18. [221393]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is necessary for Defra, and other Government Departments, to obtain legal advice in order to formulate policy. Without such comprehensive advice the quality of the Government's decision making would be much reduced since it would not be fully informed and this would be contrary to the public interest.

Disclosure of legal advice has a significant potential to prejudice the Government's ability to defend its legal interests—both directly, by unfairly exposing its legal position to challenge, and indirectly by diminishing the reliance it can place on the advice having been fully considered and presented without fear or favour. Neither of these scenarios is in the public interest

It is for these reasons that Defra will not publish any legal advice it has received in respect of condition 4 of general licence WLF18.

Cormorants

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department plans to amend its policy on the control of fish-eating wildlife other than cormorants [222299]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have no plans to amend the policy on the control of fish-eating wildlife.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to ensure that the granting of licences for the control of cormorants does not lead to the killing of nesting birds. [222300]

Mr. Bradshaw: Licences to shoot cormorants are normally issued between 31 August and 15 April which avoids the main cormorant breeding season (eggs: 20 March to 1 July, unfledged young: 20 April to 1 September). Some licences are extended to 30 April if smolt runs are likely to be affected by cormorant predation.

The presence of a cormorant nesting site close to a proposed licensed site is taken into consideration when assessing the suitability of the site for licensed action; the licence period may be adjusted to avoid taking cormorants which may have dependent young.

English Nature is consulted on all applications for licences to shoot cormorants outside of t he "normal" period of 31 August to 15 April. These applications may be refused on the basis of humaneness if nesting cormorants and their young are likely to be affected.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many individuals of each bird species, other than cormorants, have been killed as a result of licences granted to control cormorants since the change of policy on cormorant control. [222301]

Mr. Bradshaw: We do not hold data on the numbers of individuals of bird species which have been killed as a result of licences granted to control cormorants.

Licences are granted for the shooting of a specific number of cormorants (Phalacrocorax carbo) for a specific purpose (usually preventing serious damage to fisheries) and within a specified location and time frame. This is all clearly laid out on the licence. The shooting of any other species not identified on the licence, whether deliberate or by accident, is not authorised by the licence. A condition of a licence to shoot cormorants is to provide six-monthly returns of the number of cormorants shot under licence. Information on the accidental (or otherwise) shooting of other species is not requested.

Farm Holdings

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of farm holdings in England in each year from 1990 to 2004. [221956]

Alun Michael: The number of agricultural and horticultural holdings in England recorded for the years 1990 to 2004 are as follows:

	Number
1990	150,652
1991	150,966
1992	151,718
1993	153,422
1994	153,426
1995	146,109
1996	145,638
1997	144,777
1998	145,093
1999	147,220
2000	167,855
2001	177,934
2002	187,871
2003	190,687
2004	192,824

Notes:
1. Figures prior to 2000 are for main holdings only, from 2000 onwards main and minor holdings are included. A holding is defined as minor if it meets all of the following conditions:
(a) the total area is less than 6 hectares
(b) the labour requirement is estimated to be less than 100 standard person-days
(c) there is no regular full-time farmer or worker
(d) the glasshouse area is less than 100 square metres
(e) the occupier does not farm another holding
2. The number of holdings in later years reflects changes in administrative recording.
Source:
June agricultural census

Farm Prices

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm-gate prices paid to farmers for supply of *(a)* dairy produce, *(b)* meat and *(c)* fruit and vegetables. [221690]

Alun Michael: The information requested is as follows:

Dairy produce

Nearly all milk produced in the UK leaves the farm as raw milk which is then processed into milk for liquid consumption or manufactured milk products (cheese, butter etc.). The farm-gate price of milk was provisionally 18.5 pence per litre in 2004[1], 9 per cent. higher than in 2000 (when farm-gate milk prices were at their lowest in recent years).

Meat

In 2004 the average price for clean cattle in the UK was provisionally 101.2 pence per kilogram liveweight[2], 13 per cent. higher than in 2000. The average price for clean pigs in the UK was provisionally 102.7 pence per kilogram deadweight, 9 per cent. higher than in 2000. The average price for clean sheep in Great Britain was provisionally 263.6 pence per kilogram dressed carcase weight, 34 per cent. higher than in 2000.

[1] Survey of the value of milk purchased from producers conducted in England and Wales (Defra), Scotland (SEERAD) and NI (DARDNI).

[2] Meat and Livestock Commission market data.

Fruit and Vegetables—Selected farm-gate prices of fruit and vegetables

£ per tonne[1]

	2000	*2004*	*Percentage change*
Dessert apples	357.8	376.4	5
Culinary apples	215.3	378.1	76
Pears	283.3	348.1	23
Cabbages	192.3	204.8	7
Carrots	103.6	194.0	87
Tomatoes	751.6	724.0	-4
Cauliflower	274.1	289.0	5

[1] Wholesale market prices adjusted to convert to farm-gate prices.

Farm Subsidies

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of how many farmers will *(a)* gain and *(b)* lose from the redistribution of the dairy premium to be made under the Single Farm Payment Scheme; and if she will make a statement. [221324]

Alun Michael: A detailed analysis of how English dairy farmers stand to benefit or lose out relative to historic entitlements is provided in the document; CAP Single Payment Scheme, Basis for Allocation of Entitlement, Impact of the Scheme to be Adopted in England, which is available in the Library of the House and on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/capreform/background/pdf/webnoterev16.pdf

By the end of the transitional period some sectors will have gained or lost against historical subsidy receipts. Generally speaking, flat rate payments redistribute subsidy from more intensive to less intensive producers and to land not formerly in receipt of subsidy. On average larger dairy farmers will receive lower payments under this system than under one based on historic receipts whereas smaller farms will on average be better off. We believe that the eight-year transition to the flat rate payment will give all farmers time to adjust.

All payments to dairy farmers in the UK, as for other recipients of the Single Payment, will be decoupled from production, and therefore are no longer linked to particular farming activity. In a decoupled subsidy environment, farmers should only produce milk if they can do so profitably.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why the *(a)* dairy payment and *(b)* additional dairy payment are being redistributed to all farmers entitled to the single farm payment; and whether she plans to reconsider the decision to make such payments. [221948]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, announced in a statement to the House on 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1585–1602, that all possible CAP direct payments, including the dairy premium and additional payment, would be decoupled in the UK at the earliest possible stage—that is in 2005—and that the flat rate model of the Single Payment would be adopted in England.

Those decisions were taken after very careful consideration of the arguments put forward in response to our consultation exercises on these matters. Those responses revealed a significant body of support for decoupling payments, recognising that the more fully support is decoupled, the greater the degree of freedom farmers will be given in respect of their business decisions.

A wide variety of often conflicting views were offered in respect of the Single Payment model, but our decision was ultimately guided by several key principles, namely:

coherence with the Curry Commission report and our own Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy launched in 2002, in particular with the emphasis in both on bringing the industry closer to the market and on the increasing importance of environmentally-sensitive farming;

consistency with our wider objectives for the Common Agricultural Policy, including greater simplicity, transparency, minimal bureaucracy and as few deductions as possible from the basic payment available; and

the need to attract the widest possible support of the stakeholder community, for ongoing payments to farming which, we believe, requires us to move towards a system in which public money is delivering public goods.

We recognise the special circumstances the dairy sector is in, but remain of the view that its long-term interests are best served by the decisions I have referred to.

Fisheries

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total fishing effort in km/hours using gill net and tangle net gear in the English Channel and Celtic Sea, ICES areas VIId, e, f, g, h and j was in *(a)* the 12 metre and over sector and *(b)* under 12 metre sector in the last period for which figures are available. [222861]

Mr. Bradshaw: Information on the length of time gill and tangle nets are left at sea for each individual fishing session is not collected. These sessions can often span more than one fishing trip. As such, the information requested is not available.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK fishing vessels fish with *(a)* gill net and *(b)* tangle net; and what length of each type of net is deployed. [222862]

Mr. Bradshaw: Reliable information on the number of UK vessels fishing with gill nets and tangle nets is only available for those over 10 metres in length. In 2004, 84 of these fished with gill nets and 34 with tangle nets. The length of each type of net can typically be between 100 metres and 10,000 metres depending on the species being targeted.

Harmful Cargoes

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1936W, on harmful cargoes, if she will list the occasions since 1 May 1997 when monitoring of *(a)* fish stocks and *(b)* other marine wildlife has been instigated following the loss of a harmful cargo into the sea, giving in each case the nature of the cargo, the period of monitoring and the results of that monitoring. [222427]

Mr. Bradshaw: On 15 February 1996, the "Sea Empress" laden with over 72,000 tonnes crude oil ran aground off Milford Haven. Extensive monitoring continued for two years covering the contamination with oil of seawater, sediment, fish, shellfish and edible plants and seaweeds with oil as detailed in the report. The main impacts all occurred at the time of the incident or shortly afterwards and there appeared to have been few major long-term effects. A full assessment was provided in the final report of the Sea Empress Environmental Evaluation Committee, published in 1998. A more detailed summary of the report is available at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_shipping/documents/page/dft_shipping_505333.hcsp.

On 31 October 2000, the "levoli Sun" was abandoned and later sunk approximately 11 miles North West of Alderney. The vessel carried a mixed cargo of 4,000 tonnes styrene, 1,000 tonnes methyl ethyl ketone and 1,000 tonnes isopropyl alcohol. More than 1,000 tonnes styrene was lost to sea during the incident. Analysis of edible tissues from crabs recovered one week later from pots laid very close to the wreck prior to the incident demonstrated only low-level styrene contamination that posed no risk to humans. The remainder of the styrene and the ship's main bunker fuel were recovered from the wreck on the seabed. Full details are provided in R.J. Law, C. Kelly, P. Matthiessen and J. Aldridge (2003) The loss of the chemical tanker *levoli Sun* in the English Channel, October 2000. Marine Pollution Bulletin, 46: 254–257.

On 29 June 2003, the "Jambo" carrying 3,300 tonnes sphalerite ore ran aground on rocks off the Summer Isles North West of Ullapool. Sphalerite is mainly composed of zinc sulphide and contains traces of other metals such as lead, cadmium and arsenic. Monitoring included testing water, sediments and shellfish for zinc, toxicity testing and measuring the solubility of metallic elements in the sphalerite ore. It showed that measured levels of zinc in the water were mostly very low. Toxic impacts of zinc to water column animals are therefore considered very unlikely. Measured levels of zinc in sediments are very low except in the immediate vicinity of the wreck (−100 metres) so toxic and smothering impacts to benthic (seabed) animals are therefore expected to be similarly localised. There is currently no evidence to suggest that the discharged cargo from the Jambo has resulted in persistent elevated levels of zinc, cadmium or arsenic in scallop or crab tissues. It is concluded that eating shellfish from the area around the Jambo incident does not raise any food safety concerns for consumers. The final report of the Jambo Environment Group to the Secretary of State's Representative was published in July 2004 and can be obtained from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency at: http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/environment_group_report-5.pdf. An environmental monitoring programme will continue each year until 2007.

Meat Imports (China)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on EU rules regarding the importing of meat from China. [221326]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Imports of red meat from China are not permitted. Imports of poultry meat were banned in January 2002 following the detection in animal products of residues of veterinary medicines.

Bans on some animal products e.g. honey, Royal jelly and rabbit meat have since been lifted following the implementation in China of corrective measures and the guarantees provided by their competent authorities.

However, an inspection visit to China by European Commission Inspectors identified some deficiencies with respect to the production of poultry meat intended for export to the EU. Given that, and the outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza in China, the ban on imports of poultry meat has been retained.

All meat imported into the EU from third countries must enter at designated Border Inspection Posts where they are subject to veterinary inspections to ensure import conditions are met.

Parliamentary Questions

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) when she will reply to question reference 218475 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222106]

(2) when she will reply to question reference 218366 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222107]

(3) when she will reply to question reference 218367 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222108]

(4) when she will reply to question reference 218326 from the hon. Member for St. Ives; [222109]

(5) when she will reply to question reference 218455 from the hon. Member for St. Ives. [222110]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows:

Parliamentary question 218475 from the hon. Member for St. Ives was answered on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1030W.

Parliamentary question 218366 from the hon. Member for St. Ives was answered on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1274W.

Parliamentary question 218367 from the hon. Member for St. Ives was answered on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1032W.

Parliamentary question 218326 from the hon. Member for St. Ives was answered on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1274W.

Parliamentary question 218455 from the hon. Member for St. Ives was answered on 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1938W.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221673]

Alun Michael: The Department's commitment not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of religion or belief is set out clearly in its equal opportunities policy.

The Department does not have a formal policy on the carrying/wearing of knives but as the Kirpan is a religious symbol and is usually securely wrapped and worn under clothing it would be permitted providing it was safe to do so.

The Department's Diversity and Equality Unit has produced guidance for staff in the rights and responsibilities arising from the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003. The guidance incorporated practical advice for staff and managers to consider to help colleagues establish a good work/life balance in relation to their religious observance. This guidance forms part of the internal website, which also includes a calendar of religious festivals, guidance for staff on cultural differences and information for accommodation managers regarding prayer rooms. Where it is practicable, managers are encouraged to allow staff from non-Christian religions to work on privilege days and take the equivalent time to meet their individual needs for either cultural or religious observance.

Religious discrimination is addressed in all diversity training courses, including our e-learning multi-media interactive IT training package. This package can be accessed by staff at their desks, or used as part of a formal group training exercise.

Single Farm Payment

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent advice she has received from the European Agriculture Commissioner on the legality of making the Single Farm Payment in more than one stage. [221462]

Alun Michael: Our understanding from various contacts with the European Commission is that making the Single Payment in more than one stage would probably require an amendment to EU legislation. The Agriculture Commissioner has agreed with my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, that it would be helpful for respective officials to examine the position in more detail. That work is continuing.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

General Election Candidates (Expenditure Limits)

8. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission whether the Commission intends to review the limits on expenditure by candidates in general elections; and if he will make a statement. [222798]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission's recommendations in respect of the variation of election expenses for candidates at UK parliamentary elections, published in January 2005, have been accepted by the Government and came into force on 4 March 2005.

In its report on "The funding of political parties" published at the end of 2004 the Commission stated that, after the next General Election, it would undertake a review of the balance between candidate and party spending limits.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what plans the Commission has to review the system of electoral registration. [222799]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission's report "The electoral registration process", published in May 2003, recommended the implementation of a range of measures designed to make the registration process more straightforward and user-friendly for voters, and to enhance security. Key proposals include the introduction of a system based on the collection and use of individual identifiers; the development of a UK-wide electronic register; and changes to allow voters to register closer to the date of an election.

The Government's Response to the Commission's report was published in December 2004 as Cm 6426.

TREASURY

Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has made, or have been made on his behalf, to companies involved in the CVF programme concerning final assembly of the proposed aircraft carriers. [211434]

Mr. Boateng: Discussions with companies involved in the CVF programme concerning final assembly of the proposed aircraft carriers are a commercial matter for the Ministry of Defence and not for HM Treasury.

Child Trust Fund Accounts

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 16 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 66W, on Child Trust Fund Accounts, when he expects a resolution of the issues necessary for credit unions to offer child trust fund cash deposit accounts. [218719]

Mr. Timms: I refer my hon. Friend to Chapter 5 of the Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report published last week.

Cigarette Smuggling

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of cigarette smuggling was in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [222234]

John Healey: The estimated level of cigarettes smuggled in each of the last four full financial years are given in table 3.9 and table 3.10 of "Measuring and Tackling Indirect Tax Losses", published by HM Customs and Excise in December 2004 and available from the House Library. The estimated level of smuggled cigarettes for 1999–2000 in market share and volume can be found in table 3.2 and table 3.3 of "Measuring indirect tax losses" published in November 2002, which is also available from the House Library.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with cigarette manufacturers on measures to reduce smuggling. [222324]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise have Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco and Gallaher. As part of these, Customs meet regularly to discuss developments in the tobacco market, including measures to reduce smuggling.

Departmental Teams

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* purpose and *(b)* functions of his Department's (i) local government team, (ii) housing and urban team and (iii) devolved countries and regions team are; and how many civil servants are employed in each. [220907]

Mr. Boateng: The purpose of all three teams is to work with ODPM, the devolved Administrations, regional institutions and local government to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of the public services they deliver consistent with agreed spending plans.

The local government team consists of nine civil servants.

The housing and urban team consists of 12 civil servants.

The devolved countries and regions team consists of 10 civil servants.

Domiciliary Care Workers (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of unregistered paid domiciliary care workers in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [222195]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Parmjit Singh Gill, dated 21 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about care workers in Leicester. I am replying in his absence.

The table overleaf gives the available information relating to numbers of care workers, resident in the Parliamentary Constituency of Leicester South and the Unitary Authority of Leicester, for the twelve-month periods ending February 2002 to 2004. Comparable information is not available for earlier years. Information is not held about whether or not these care workers were registered.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistic's Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Number of care workers[1] resident in the unitary authority of Leicester and Leicester, South parliamentary constituency

12 months ending February each year	*Leicester unitary authority*	*Leicester, South parliamentary constituency*
2002	2,000	1,000
2003	3,000	1,000
2004	3,000	1,000

[1] Care workers include care assistants and home carers only.

Note:
These estimates are based on very small sample sizes and are subject to a very high degree of sampling variability. Changes from year to year, especially, should be treated with caution.

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey

ECOFIN

Mr. Hood: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the outcome was of the ECOFIN Council held on 17 February; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement; [218157]

(2) what the outcome was of the ECOFIN Council held on 8 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [221266]

Mr. Gordon Brown: At ECOFIN on Thursday 17 February Council Opinions on the Stability and Convergence programmes for Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Finland were all adopted.

The Council adopted a decision under Article 104(9) of the Treaty recommending measures for Greece to correct its excessive deficit. The Council extended the 2005 deadline to 2006. The Council welcomed the commitment of Greek authorities to continue with their fiscal consolidation effort.

Commissioner Almunia outlined the key components of the Commission's Strategy on Fiscal Statistics (adopted last December), which includes the building of the legal framework, improving the operational capacities of the relevant Commission services, and establishing European standards on the independence of national statistical institutes for the fulfilment of their mission. Conclusions were adopted.

Discussion of Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) reform options took place, on both the preventative arm and the corrective arm of the SGP. The UK highlighted that proper account needed to be taken of the economic cycle, of debt sustainability and of public investment.

An orientation debate was held on European Economic Reform ahead of the Spring European Council on 22 and 23 March 2005. Three items were discussed: draft Council Conclusions following the Commission's Implementation report on the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs); a Key Issues Paper put forward by the Presidency; and the Commission's Spring Report on the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy. The Conclusions on the BEPGs were adopted. The UK supported the Commission's call

for a renewed focus on growth and jobs. The Presidency concluded that the momentum for the Lisbon Strategy had to be maintained, jobs and growth should be prioritised as Europe's relative performance is weak; and Lisbon National Action Programmes were important for increasing the implementation of reforms.

On Financial Perspectives for the period 2007–13 the Presidency set out a work programme with a view to political agreement in June.

At ECOFIN on Tuesday 8 March Council opinions on the Convergence Programmes for Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Slovenia and the UK and on the Stability Programme of Spain were all agreed.

A Recommendation (Article 104.7) to Hungary to correct its excessive deficit was agreed.

The Council examined the principle elements for reform of the Stability and Growth pact ahead of the Spring European Council on 22 and 23 March 2005. Further discussion is planned at a meeting of Ministers on 20 March 2005.

In the context of the Lisbon economic reform agenda, ECOFIN adopted its Key Issues Paper in preparation for European Council on 22 and 23 March 2005.

The Commission outlined the key points of member states' Annual Contributions to the Growth Initiative and informed Ministers that the European Investment Bank (EIB) would be undertaking a mid-term Review of the Initiative by 2007. Council conclusions were adopted. The Commission informed the Council that the Communication on Better Regulation would be published on 16 March. As part of this, the Commission indicated that the pilot projects on reducing the administrative burdens on businesses would be completed this year. I reiterated the need for the pilot phase to be completed by September and the Commission undertook to consider this.

The Council adopted Guidelines for the 2006 Budgetary Procedure and a Recommendation for Discharge of the 2003 EC Budget.

Fraud

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions the UK Government have reported *(a)* fraud and *(b)* other irregularities to the European Anti Fraud Office in the last five years. [222389]

Mr. Timms: The United Kingdom has reported irregularities, which includes fraud, on a quarterly basis to the European Commission and the European Anti Fraud Office, as required under Regulations 1150/2000, as amended by Regulation 2028/2004 (Own Resources), 595/91 (Agriculture) and 1681/94 (Structural Funds). Details of the amounts involved and the number of cases can be found in the European Commission's annual "Fight against Fraud" reports. The report, and its annexes, for 2003 was published on 30 August 2004.

Insurance

Mr. Greenway: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the cost implications for general insurance policies arising from the recent European Court of Justice decision that outsourced services in the insurance industry do not qualify for VAT exemption. [222943]

Mr. Timms: HM Customs and Excise and HM Treasury officials are currently examining the European Court of Justice's decision in detail and discussing with industry representatives its likely impact on the insurance industry.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Leyton and Wanstead (Harry Cohen) of 31 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 597–98W, what his most recent estimate is of how much has been transferred from the reserve to cover the costs of UK involvement in Iraq. [221203]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* In Budget 2003 the Chancellor set aside £3 billion as a special reserve to cover the cost of military operations in Iraq. £1 billion was drawn down by the Ministry of Defence in the spring supplementary estimate for 2002–03.

In the 2003 pre-Budget report, the Government carried forward the £2 billion unallocated special reserve into 2003–04 and added a further £500 million in 2003–04. £300 million was also added in 2004–05 as a prudent allowance against continuing commitments in Iraq and elsewhere in the war against terrorism. A further £520 million for the special reserve in 2004–05 was announced by the Chancellor in the 2004 pre-Budget report.

The Ministry of Defence drew down £1,539 million in the 2003–04 winter and spring supplementary estimates and £950 million in the 2004–05 spring supplementary estimate for the costs of military operations in Iraq.

Ministerial Visit (Beijing)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he had with the Chinese Government during his recent visit to Beijing concerning the position taken by China on the UN Security Council over Sudan and Darfur. [221014]

Mr. Gordon Brown: In Beijing I had discussions with Premier Wen and Finance Minister Jin, on a wide range of issues including foreign policy.

Official Entertainment

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the individuals who have been officially entertained at number 11 Downing street since 1997. [218419]

Mr. Timms: The information requested could not be provided without disproportionate cost.

Official Residences

Chris Grayling: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the official residences for which his Department is responsible; who occupies each one; what the annual cost is of running each property; what contribution the current occupants make towards the

running costs of each; what the total capital and refurbishment expenditure has been on those properties in each of the past five years; how much money was spent in each property on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills and *(e)* electricity and gas in 2003–04; how many (i) domestic and (ii) maintenance staff are employed at each property, broken down by post; and what the total cost of staff employment at each was in 2003–04. [213609]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the written answers he received from the Prime Minister on 20 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1037W, and the former Financial Secretary (Ruth Kelly) on 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 1097W, and to my answer to the hon. Member for Hertford and Stortford (Mr. Prisk) on 16 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1267W. I very much regret that my answer inadvertently contained an incorrect figure: the running costs of the Treasury's residential property in 2003–04 were in fact £127,428 (and not £162,858).

Information relating to expenditure on flowers and plants, wine and entertaining, food, telephone bills and electricity and gas is not available. No maintenance or domestic staff are employed by the Treasury in respect of the flat at 10 Downing Street.

Red Diesel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will be bringing forward, with the Treasury, plans to reform the use of red diesel by excepted vehicles. [222319]

John Healey: HM Treasury and HM Customs and Excise have recently closed a consultation exercise on excepted vehicles entitled to use red diesel. A number of responses have been received, raising a range of issues, and these are currently being analysed. Decisions on whether or not to proceed with changes to the excepted vehicle schedule will be taken once this consideration is complete.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit claimants were penalised for failing to report changes in circumstances which must be reported within three months in the *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 tax year. [222782]

Dawn Primarolo: Families are required to inform Inland Revenue of any change in the adults heading the family within three months of the change. They are also required to inform Inland Revenue within three months if use of qualifying child care ceases or if child care costs fall by £10 a week or more for a period of at least four weeks.

(a) In order to give families time to adjust to the requirements of the system, in 2003–04 the Inland Revenue did not issue penalties to families who failed to report such changes in the required time period or before their award was finalised.

(b) It is not possible to distinguish how many penalties were issued in respect of current awards for 2004–05 following a failure to report a required change in circumstances from those issued as a result of a misrepresentation on the original claim. The total number of penalties issued for these reasons is 33.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Regional Museums (Funding)

10. **Linda Gilroy:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on funding for regional museums. [222745]

Tessa Jowell: Over the period 2002 to 2008 the Government are providing £147 million in funding for regional Museums through the Renaissance in the Regions programme devised and delivered by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. I am pleased that the additional £15 million we are providing in 2007–08 will enable the benefits of Renaissance to be rolled out to all nine English regions.

National Lottery (Unclaimed Prizes)

11. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total amount of unclaimed Lottery prizes is; and what the largest single unclaimed amount is. [222746]

Mr. Caborn: As at 25 February 2005, the total payments to the National Lottery Distribution Fund in respect of unclaimed prizes were £711.1 million. The largest single unclaimed amount is £7,039,469.

Footballers' Behaviour

12. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent representations she has made to football ruling bodies on the impact of players' behaviour on young people; and if she will make a statement. [222747]

Mr. Caborn: I wrote to all Football Club Chairman at the start of the current season to remind them about the issue of fair play and the responsibility their players have in being positive role models for the game. It is important that the Football authorities take a tough stance on this issue and ensure that match officials have their full support when dealing with poor behaviour during games.

Licensing Act 2003

14. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on how the issue of saturation is being dealt with under the Licensing Act 2003. [222750]

Mr. Caborn: On 7 July last year, we published our Guidance to licensing authorities and this is available in the House Library and also on our website www.culture.gov.uk. Our advice on assessing the local cumulative impact of licensing applications made under the 2003 Act can be found in sections 3.13–3.28 of the Guidance.

Women in Sport

15. **Ms Munn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what initiatives she is taking to promote public recognition of the role of women in sport. [222751]

Tessa Jowell: The Government strategy to promote the role of women in sport involves: boosting participation, ensuring continued success for women

elite athletes and putting women in leadership positions in British sport. The public recognition of the role of women in sport is most evident in the bi-annual Honours Lists. The most recent examples of the recognition of women being the award of Damehoods to Kelly Holmes, Tanni Grey-Thompson and Ellen MacArthur.

18. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what strategy her Department is using to increase the number of women on the decision-making boards and committees of sporting bodies. [222755]

Tessa Jowell: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport carries out targeted search to encourage women and other under-represented groups to put themselves forward for consideration for public appointments in all areas.

Tote Privatisation

16. **Mr. Laurence Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the privatisation of the Tote. [222752]

Mr. Caborn: We remain committed to the sale of the Tote to a racing trust, subject to clearance of the sale terms by the European Commission.

Binge Drinking

17. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what contribution her Department is making to the Government's efforts to tackle binge drinking. [222754]

Mr. Caborn: The Government believe that the current licensing 'regime exacerbates binge drinking by encouraging people to drink as much as possible before last orders—our licensing reforms will put an end to this practice. More widely, and in support of the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, in January we announced further proposals to tackle the culture of binge drinking, including Alcohol Disorder Zones; new penalties for disorder; and closure powers related to underage drinking.

Antarctic Huts

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust regarding the future of the huts used by the British explorers Scott and Shackleton in Antarctica; and if she will make a statement. [222492]

Mr. Caborn: In September 2004, my right hon. Friend the Minister for Media and Heritage, met the High Commissioner of New Zealand and the UK Consultant to the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust to discuss proposals by the Trust to preserve the huts of the Antarctic explorers Scott and Shackleton. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has also discussed the on-going preservation and conservation of these huts with the Prime Minister of New Zealand which has territorial responsibility for the Ross Dependency in Antarctica where the huts are located.

Sir Neil Cossons, Chairman of English Heritage, visited Antarctica from 25 January to 1 February 2005 as part of a small group invited by the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust. The purpose of his visit was to ascertain what advice and expertise English Heritage could offer to the New Zealand Government and the Trust on the conservation of the Scott and Shackleton huts located in the Ross Sea Region of the continent.

The British Government are keen to support New Zealand's efforts to preserve these historic huts. In 2002, the Government, through the Government of the British Antarctic Territory, donated £70,000 to support the proposed Ross Sea heritage restoration project developed by the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust. Officials in my Department have also been exploring funding options to assist with this but no suitable sources of funding within the UK heritage sector have been found. However, the Government will continue to support fund raising efforts for the preservation of these unique huts.

Arts (Public Spending)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on public spending on the arts in 2004–05. [222748]

Estelle Morris: A total of £507.5 million of public money has been allocated to Arts Council England for spending on the arts to date in 2004–05. This consists of £367 million of Grant in Aid and £140.5 million from the National Lottery Distribution Fund.

In addition, local authorities up and down the country are spending significant sums of money on the arts. While we have no current figures for this, a survey in 2002–03 suggested that this was then at least £261 million.

Cairngorms

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the possibility of the Cairngorms being designated a world heritage site; what the process for that would be; and if she will make a statement. [222653]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Government has recognised the potential for the Cairngorms being designated as a World Heritage Site by its inclusion on the Tentative List of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which was published in 1999. The Tentative List is an inventory of properties in a territory which the State Party considers suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List and inclusion on the Tentative List is necessary before a property can be nominated for consideration by the World Heritage Committee.

EU Sport Provisions

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) if she will make a statement on the provisions of *(a)* existing EU treaties and *(b)* the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, relating to sport; [222311]

(2) if she will make a statement on the areas in which the institutions of the European Union regulate UK sport; and whether these regulations could be widened under the provisions of Article III-282 of the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. [222312]

Mr. Caborn: The existing European Union treaties contain no provisions that relate directly to sport, but EU law has implications for the conduct of some sporting activities (for example because of the rules on competition and free movement of workers).

Articles 1–17 and III-282 of the Constitutional Treaty provide for a limited competence in relation to sport under which the Union may only act to support, co-ordinate or complement member states' action. But the Constitutional Treaty expressly precludes any harmonisation of member states' laws and regulations in the area of sport.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the reasons underlying the inclusion of sporting issues in the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe. [222313]

Mr. Caborn: The proposal to create a specific EU competence for sport was first introduced in the draft treaty establishing a constitution for Europe proposed by the convention on the future of Europe. Articles I-17 and III-282 of the constitutional treaty set out what was eventually agreed.

The Government are content with these provisions because it is clear that the Union may only act to support, co-ordinate or complement member states' action. The treaty also expressly precludes any harmonisation of member states' laws in the area of sport. The constitutional treaty is therefore fully consistent with the Government's view that sport is primarily a matter for the member states.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what projects and organisations received funding from the European Union during the last financial year under EC budget lines *(a)* 15 04 02 01 (framework programme in support of culture), *(b)* 15 04 02 03 (preparatory actions for co-operations on cultural matters) and *(c)* 15 05 04 (European year of education through sport); how much was spent in total; and what funding is available during the next financial year. [222314]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is as follows:

(a) Framework Programme in Support of Culture (Culture 2000)—EC Budget line 15 04 02 01.

233 European cultural projects have been offered grants in 2004 under the Culture 2000 programme. They will share approximately £22 million in funding. A list with descriptions of the funded projects is available at the following website: http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/cac/index_en.htmi.

The total available under this programme in 2005 will be approximately £14 million.

(b) Preparatory Actions for Co-operation on Cultural Matters—EC Budget line 15 04 02 03

From 2002 to 2004, the EC budget included funds for preparatory actions for co-operation on cultural matters. This appropriation had a limited budget (£1.5 million in 2004) and was intended to finance measures aimed at developing cultural co-operation. The table provides details of the six projects selected in 2004.

Project title	*Objective*	*EU funding (£)*
Generation Europe	Social inclusion	204,682
Wonderland-architectural network	Encourage partnerships	92,873
Foreign editions	Translating literature	238,929
Promoting European live music	Promoting young musicians and facilitating exchanges	640,504
Gateway to cultural co-operation	Information for cultural practitioners	208,720
Les Metropoles de l'Europe	Compare data on artistic practice	58,157
Total		1,443,865

(c) European Year of Education Through Sport—EC Budget line 15 05 04

The following table provides details of the projects and organisations that received funding under the auspices of the European year of education through sport (EYES) 2004, totalling approximately £364,112. EYES 2004 has now ended, and the EU has not committed any further funds for projects in the year 2005.

Project applicant	*Project focus*	*EU funding (£)*
City of Hull Education Department	To develop a series of study activities for young people in the Kingston Stadium who were disaffected with their mainstream studies	38,987
UK Sport	'Clean Start' production of resources to be used in educational contexts to inform young people of the issues and dangers of drug misuse in sport	26,456
The Football Association of England	'Learning through football' used Euro 2004 as catalyst for a teaching resource and the organisation of mini soccer tournaments across the country.	39,683
Leeds City Council Education Department	'LEAP' organised a sports camp for young people, at risk of social exclusion, from across Europe.	34,114
Loughborough University	Researched the impact sport can have in supporting asylum seekers in their attempts to integrate into a new community	38,987
Easington School Sport Partnership	The organisation of a 'health, fitness and activity camp' for several hundred young people form twinned areas across Europe	31,329
Essex County Council Sport Development Unit	Implementing a strategy to encourage young people in schools to link to the local sports clubs in rural Essex	8,354
Renfrewshire Council	The development of a group of young sports leaders who would eventually work in sports clubs in schools and local clubs	17,405
Ross County Football Club	A 'Health and nutrition roadshow' to visit local schools to help young people and their families develop	14,620

Project applicant	Project focus	EU funding (£)
Ipswich Rugby Union Club	Linking school/communities of Ipswich and Arras in France through the medium of rugby	14,620
Belfast City Council	The staging of a conference to assist in the development of a national approach to physical education and sport in all schools	33,418
Glasgow City Council	The organisation of an international conference sharing good practice on the use of sport development to support young people in their communities	19,494
Gateshead Borough Council	A conference linked to the staging of the European junior clubs athletics championships. The conference examined the issues and approaches and young people in sport that are experienced around the United Kingdom and Europe	16,709
Buckinghamshire Disability Sport Partnership	A two day seminar to look at the development of a strategy to improve the integration of young disabled people into sporting activities	11,139
Atlantic Challenge (funding subsequently withdrawn by EU but event still held under EYES objectives and supported by UK)	The organisation of an international rowing and sailing event for young people from 17 nations. The activities also include educational and vocational development activities.	8,354
British Universities Sports Association	An international conference specifically focused on how to improve the transition of young sports people from school sport to sport in higher education	10,443
Total		364,112

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the projects relating to sport that her Department has funded in partnership with institutions of the European Union during the past 12 months; and what further projects are planned. [222315]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not directly funded any projects relating to sport in partnership with EU institutions in the past 12 months. However, one of the Department's non-departmental public bodies, UK Sport, did partly fund the "Clean Start" project, which was 50 per cent. funded by the European Commission, under the auspices of the European Year of Education through Sport 2004. This project produced educational resources to inform young people of the issues and dangers of drug misuse in sport. There are no plans to fund further projects in partnership with European institutions at present.

Gloucester Cultural Centre

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the funding available to bid for projects under the private finance initiative; and if she will make such funding available to build a Gloucester cultural centre. [222221]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has 130 million private finance initiative (PFI) credits available to support new schemes in the latest joint bidding round, which is being run between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department of Health and the DCMS. DCMS priorities for this bidding round are projects that will promote the modernisation of the public library service and the creation of multi-sport facilities. The closing date for expressions of interest, which is the first stage in a two stage application process, was 12 March 2005. We have received Gloucestershire county council's and Gloucester city council's expression of interest for a new cultural centre, and we will be assessing it together with the other expressions of interest we have received. We hope that the process can be completed and authorities notified of the results in June 2005. Further information about the latest bidding round, in the form of guidance to local authorities seeking to apply, can be found at www.local.odpm.gov.uk/pfi/bidguid.pdf

Licence Fees

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate her Department has made of the number of premises licensed under *(a)* the Licensing Act 1964, *(b)* the London Government Act 1963 and *(c)* the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 which will fall into each of the rateable value bands for licence fees under the Licensing Act 2003 (Fees) Regulations; how many in each category will be required to pay the fee multiplier; and if she will make a statement. [221009]

Mr. Caborn: As at 30 June 2004, in England and Wales there were 113,370 on-licensed premises; 46,582 off-licensed premises; and 19,913 registered clubs. These figures can be found in the DCMS publication "Statistical Bulletin Liquor Licensing (England and Wales, July 2003—June 2004)" which was deposited on 27 October 2004 in the House Libraries. This document is also available on the DCMS website at:

http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/research/statistics_outputs/liquor_licensing_statistics.htm

The total number of public entertainment licences issued under the London Government Act 1963 and the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 is not known. Licensing authorities hold figures for their own authority areas and these are not collected centrally. However, surveys suggest that 46,000 public entertainment licences are issued in England and Wales annually.

We have not made any estimates of the distribution of these premises across the fee bands for the 2003 Act by category of existing licence. However, the Regulatory Impact Assessment that accompanied the finalised fees estimated the distribution of all licensed premises across the fee bands as follows:

Band	Non-domestic rateable value (£)	Percentage of premises in band
A	0–4,300	19
B	4,301–33,000	60
C	33,001–87,000	13
D	87,001–125,000	3
E	125,001 and over	5

The fee multiplier applies to premises primarily or exclusively engaged in the supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises that fall into fee Bands D and E. Premises in Band D would pay twice the normal application fee and annual fee; and those in Band E would pay three times the normal application fee and annual fee. It is difficult to estimate precisely how many premises will meet these definitions. However, we believe there will be at least 2,000 such premises and, at most, 4,000.

Participation Survey (Children)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she intends to begin collecting data for children under the Survey of Participation in Sport and Culture. [222826]

Mr. Caborn: The new DCMS survey of participation in sport and culture is scheduled to begin in July 2005. Initially information will be collected from adults and young people aged 16 and above, with data collection from children aged 11 to 15 currently planned to follow from January 2006.

Public Libraries (Internet)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the number of local authorities that offer free internet access in their public libraries. [222836]

Mr. Caborn: The People's Network has been a huge success with 60 million internet hours made available and 11.7 million user sessions in 2002–03 across UK public libraries. The vast majority, 83 per cent. of English library authorities do not make a charge. In line with Government policy on access to the internet for all, when the People's Network was installed, those authorities who were intending to charge were required to have concessionary arrangements for disadvantaged groups of users.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to maximise the contribution to the economy of the tourism, creative and leisure industries. [219962]

Mr. Caborn: The public service agreement target that underpins the Department's economy Strategic Priority is

"to improve the productivity of the tourism, creative and leisure industries".

Information on the Department's performance against this public service agreement target was published on 22 December 2004 in the DCMS Autumn Performance Report (Cm 6435). Copies of the report are available in the House Library.

Southend-on Sea (Cultural Heritage)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1765W, on Southend-on Sea (Cultural Heritage), whether she intends to meet English Heritage to discuss the cultural and architectural heritage of Southend-on-Sea; and if she will make a statement. [222423]

Mr. Caborn: The Department has no plans to meet English Heritage to discuss the cultural and architectural heritage of Southend-on-Sea.

Sport England

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much Sport England spent on consultants in each of the last four years. [221435]

Mr. Caborn: Details of Sport England's spend on consultants in the last four years is in provided in the table.

	Total cost (£)
2004–05	1,187,697
2003–04	1,553,442
2002–03	788,537
2001–02	415,356

Sport England Plan

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what plans she has to meet representatives of the national governing bodies for sport to discuss Sport England's Whole Sport Plan funding process; [223052]

(2) what representations she has received from sports national governing bodies, or their representative bodies, about Sport England's Whole Sport Plan funding process; and what concerns they have raised. [223053]

Mr. Caborn: I have received representations about Sport England's Whole Sport Plan funding process from the Central Council of Physical Recreation (CCPR) on behalf of national governing bodies of sport. The CCPR raised concerns about levels of funding and the transition from the Active Sports programme to County Sports Partnerships. I have asked Lord Carter, Chair of Sport England, to meet national governing bodies of sport as a matter of urgency to discuss these issues.

Sports Institutes

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much lottery funding has been provided to the UK's network of sports institutes to date. [222556]

Mr. Caborn: To date, Sport England has provided £132,085,049 of capital funding and £22,463,000 of revenue funding to the English Institute of Sport. Funding for the Scottish Institute of Sport, Sports Institute Northern Ireland, and the Welsh Institute of Sport, is a matter for the devolved administrations.

Theme Parks

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the revenue generated by theme parks in England in 2004. [222851]

Mr. Caborn: We are not able to estimate the revenue generated by theme parks in England during 2004 as the data is not yet available.

However, the Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) provides data for businesses grouped by standard industrial classifications. The ABI estimate for total turnover for 'fair and amusement park activities' was £500 million in 2003, up slightly from £494 million in 2002.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Cambridge Schools

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the change since 1997 in *(a)* capital expenditure and *(b)* staffing levels has been for each primary and secondary school in Cambridge constituency. [222834]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Capital expenditure for primary and secondary schools in Cambridge is not held centrally. The total capital allocation for Cambridgeshire county council for 1996–97 was £9 million, and for 2004–05 it was £33.2 million, an increase of £24.2 million.

A comparison between 1997 and 2004 staffing levels for each primary and secondary school in Cambridge is contained in the following tables.

Maintained primary schools: Full-time equivalent number of teaching and support staff, January 1997—Cambridge parliamentary constituency

LEA number	*DfES number*	*School name*	*Total full-time equivalent of qualified teachers, other teaching staff and support staff*[1]
905	2105	Milton Road Junior School	15.1
905	2106	Milton Road Infant School	13.0
905	2109	Newnham Croft Primary School	11.9
905	2110	Priory Junior School	22.4
905	2111	Priory Infant School	16.4
905	2113	Romsey Junior School	9.9
905	2114	Sedley Infant School	13.4
905	2115	Shirley Infant School	21.5
905	2118	Arbury Primary School	25.7
905	2119	Colville Primary School	16.4
905	2121	Mayfield Primary School	24.0
905	2123	The Grove Primary School	38.8
905	2312	Cherry Hinton Community Junior School	11.4
905	2317	St. Matthew's Primary School	21.4
905	2335	The Spinney Primary School	11.9
905	2446	Kings Hedges Primary School	27.1
905	3050	Cherry Hinton Church of England VC Infant School	12.0
905	3350	Park Street Church of England Primary School	8.9
905	3352	St. Luke's Church of England Primary School	18.3
905	3358	St. Philip's Church of England Aided Primary School	22.3
905	3366	St. Laurence's RC Primary School	12.9
905	3381	St. Andrew's Church of England Community VA Junior School	23.7

[1] Includes instructors and student teachers, foreign language assistants, unqualified teachers, graduate or registered teachers, teachers entitled to qualify by service and teachers not recognised as qualified. Also includes teaching assistants, technicians, administrative staff and all other education support staff.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained secondary schools: Full-time equivalent number of teaching and support staff, January 1997—Cambridge parliamentary constituency

LEA number	*DfES number*	*School name*	*Total full-time equivalent of qualified teachers, other teaching staff and support staff*[1]
905	4027	Parkside Community College	45.73
905	4029	Chesterton Community College	71.58
905	4031	Coleridge Community College	48.6
905	4057	The Manor Community College Community	38.98
905	4602	St. Bede's Inter-Church Comprehensive School	44.57

[1] Includes instructors and student teachers, foreign language assistants, unqualified teachers, graduate or registered teachers, teachers entitled to qualify by service and teachers not recognised as qualified. Also includes teaching assistants, technicians, administrative staff and all other education support staff.

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained primary schools: Full-time equivalent number of teaching and support staff, January 2004—Cambridge parliamentary constituency

LEA number	DfES number	School name	Total full-time equivalent of qualified teachers, other teaching staff and support staff[1]
873	2105	Milton Road Junior School	18.5
873	2106	Milton Road infant School	14.6
873	2109	Newnham Croft Primary School	14.2
873	2110	Shirley Infant School	23.9
873	2111	Arbury Primary School	34.6
873	2113	Colville Primary School	18.7
873	2114	Mayfield Primary School	25.1
873	2115	The Grove Primary School	16.5
873	2118	Cherry Hinton Community Junior School	11.2
873	2119	St. Matthew's Primary School	27.5
873	2121	The Spinney Primary School	14.1
873	2123	Kings Hedges Primary School	30.0
873	2312	Abbey Meadows Primary School	23.4
873	2317	Ridgefield Primary School	20.3
873	2335	Cherry Hinton Church of England VC infant School	15.6
873	2446	Park Street Church of England Primary School	9.9
873	3352	St. Luke's Church of England Primary School	21.2
873	3358	St. Philip's Church of England Aided Primary School	32.0
873	3366	St. Laurence's RC Primary School	14.7
873	3381	St. Andrew's Church of England Community VA Junior School	19.6

[1] Includes teachers on schemes leading to QTS and teachers recognised as qualified. Also includes teaching assistants, technicians, administrative staff and all other education support staff.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Maintained secondary schools: Full-time equivalent number of teaching and support staff, January 2004—Cambridge parliamentary constituency

LEA number	DfES number	School name	Total full-time equivalent of qualified teachers, other teaching staff and support staff[1]
873	4027	Parkside Community College	63.2
873	4029	Chesterton Community College	90.8
873	4031	Coleridge Community College	54.0
873	4057	The Manor Community College	44.5
873	4602	St. Bede's Inter-Church Comprehensive School	62.0

[1] Includes teachers on schemes leading to QTS and teachers recognised as qualified. Also includes teaching assistants, technicians, administrative staff and all other education support staff.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Capita SIMS System

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Capita SIMS.net in schools, with particular reference to its effect on *(a)* schools attendance reporting and *(b)* suppliers of schools attendance recording systems. [215722]

Derek Twigg: My Department has not made a specific assessment of the effectiveness of the Capita SIMS.net with particular reference to its effect on *(a)* schools attendance reporting and *(b)* suppliers of schools attendance recording systems and has no plans to do so.

Capita SIMS.net is one of several commercial management information systems specifically designed for school use that schools are free to choose from, often in collaboration with their relevant local education authority. In common with other systems, Capita SIMS.net includes attendance reporting and recording functionality which can be adapted to meet specific local needs, such as lesson level registration.

Such automated systems provide real time analysis of pupil level attendance data that make a significant contribution to managing attendance as well as reducing administrative work. It is for schools to decide which system best suits their needs. Wide-ranging advice on the use of information communications technologies is available through the Becta ICT Advice website at http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/.

Contested Adoptions

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many contested adoptions have taken place in each of the last 10 years. [222035]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The number of contested adoptions that have taken place in each of the last 10 years are contained in the following table.

	Step-parents[1]		*Other*		*Total*	
	Contested	*Uncontested*	*Contested*	*Uncontested*	*Contested*	*Uncontested*
1995	491	2,388	733	1,707	1,224	4,095
1996	362	2,384	518	1,700	880	4,084
1997	272	1,780	555	1,542	827	3,322
1998	237	1,556	477	1,377	714	2,933
1999	211	1,332	716	1,617	927	2,949
2000	167	1,193	651	1,992	818	3,185
2001	141	1,055	653	2,329	794	3,384
2002	109	827	725	2,212	834	3,039
2003	129	840	938	2,489	1,067	3,329
2004	104	767	677	2,583	781	3,350

[1] Step-parent adoption occurs where the step-parent applies to formally adopt the child or children of their spouse and assumes parental responsibility to the exclusion of the other birth parent. Contested step-parent adoption cases arise where the non-resident birth parent does not consent to the adoption.

Departmental Policies (Tamworth)

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Tamworth constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [221941]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Tamworth constituency lies within Staffordshire local education authority. The most recent Key Stage 2 and GCSE and equivalents Achievement for pupils attending schools in Tamworth are given in the following tables:

Key Stage 2 Achievements of 11-year-old pupils attending schools in the Tamworth constituency—percentage of pupils gaining level 4 and above

	1997	*2004*	*Percentage point improvement 1997–2004*
Tamworth—English[1]	59	74	15
Tamworth—Maths[1]	57	69	12
National Average—English[2]	63	78	15
National Average—Maths[2]	61	74	13

[1] Pupils attending schools in Tamworth constituency.
[2] The average for all schools in England (including independent schools).

GCSE and equivalents[1] Achievement of 15-year-old pupils[2] attending schools in the Tamworth constituency

Percentage of 15-year-olds gaining	*1997*	*2004*	*Percentage point improvement 1997–2004*
Tamworth—5+A*-C	38.5	43.8	5.3
Tamworth—5+A*-G	88,8	90.6	1.8
National Average—5+A*-G	87.0	88,8	1.8

[1] For 2004 only results incorporate GCSEs, GNVQs and a wide range of other qualifications approved pre-16. Prior to 2004 results are based on GCSEs and GNVQs only.
[2] As standard the results reported relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

At national level, standards have improved across all key stages. The Primary and Key Stage 3 National Strategies, together with the measures we have taken to help schools in the toughest areas are continuing to deliver better results.

Further information by constituency, is provided within the Department's 'In Your Area' website available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea. Where information is not available at the constituency level it has been provided at local education authority level.

This website allows users to access key facts and local information about education and skills based on postcodes. The data available within the site offers comparisons between 1997 and the latest available year and covers five geographies. These are parliamentary constituency, ward, local authority district, local education authority and Government office region. England figures are also provided.

The information available within the website is grouped in a number of broad categories including Literacy and Numeracy at age 11, Literacy and Numeracy at age 14, GCSE/GNVQ results, Pupils with Special Educational Needs, School Initiatives, School Workforce, School Funding and Resources, Children's Social Services, Early Years, Class Sizes, Post 16, Higher Education and Adult Education

Additional information could be provided only at disproportionate cost, However, my Department is investigating ways in which we can disseminate more information about the effects of our policies at a local level. The In Your Area website will be further developed over the coming months to include additional information about Adult Education, School Funding, School Initiatives, School Performance, School Workforce and Post 16.

Gifted Pupils

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to local education authorities regarding provision in schools for gifted and talented pupils. [222555]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We have made clear our expectation that schools and local authorities will make appropriate provision for gifted and talented pupils. There is a range of guidance available to local authorities from the Department, the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth and other partners in the national programme for gifted and talented education. The Department has produced a framework that authorities

and schools are invited to follow when specifying what their programmes will achieve (see http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/giftedandtalented/guidanceandtraining/outcomemeasures/). A self-evaluation instrument, currently being trialled, will help schools to adjust their practice to best meet gifted and talented pupils' needs.

Higher Education

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her Department's assessment of the average cost of providing one higher education place *(a)* in March 2005 and *(b)* in each year from 2005–06 to 2010–11. [223060]

Dr. Howells: This Government have pledged to maintain in real terms funding to support the costs of educating higher education students over the next three years, so that income that may be raised from variable tuition fees will be additional to normal Government funding. Real terms funding per student will not fall below the planned 2005–06 level of £3,490[1] at 2003–04 prices. Funding for 2008–09 and beyond will be considered as part of the 2006 Spending Review.

[1] Real terms unit of funding for teaching, as set out in 2004 Grant Letter to the Higher Education Funding Council for England. This figure relates to full-time equivalent Home and EU-domiciled students studying at English institutions.

Internet (Older People)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support her Department provides to encourage older people to use the internet. [222995]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 18 March 2005]*: UK online centres were established to bridge the gap between those in society who have access to ICT and the internet and those who do not. Between 1999 and 2003 a total of £396 million was invested to set up the centres. There are now 6,000 UK online centres in England, and people over 60 are one of the five main groups in the target audience for UK online centres.

Ufi, the organisation which now has responsibility for the administration and development of UK online, also operates the network of 2,000 learndirect centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Information provided by Ufi on usage of UK online centres shows that:

UK online centres provide help and support for over 500,000 people a year

14 per cent. of UK online users are over 65

85 UK online centres are co-located or linked to Age Concern

In relation to learndirect centres:

Over 1.5 million learners have enrolled on over 3.6 million learndirect courses since April 2000

27 per cent. of learndirect learners who enrolled on courses between August 2004 and January 2005 are over 50, and 12 per cent. are over 60

In addition, an e-government pathfinder project, led by DfES in conjunction with Ufi aimed to test the potential of UK online centres to support e-government service delivery. One pathfinder focused on services for older people, working with Age Concern, to provide access to a range of Government services. The Department and Ufi are currently considering the findings of the evaluation of these pathfinders.

Schools PFI Contract (Wirral)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the ownership composition is of the special purpose vehicle responsible for delivering the private finance initiative contract relating to Wirral schools. [222938]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The ownership composition of the special purpose vehicle for the Wirral schools PFI project is Barclays Equity, 50 per cent., and the Secondary Market Infrastructure Fund (SMIF), 50 per cent. This information is based on data supplied by Wirral metropolitan borough council.

Teachers (London)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures her Department has introduced to ensure the recruitment and retention of teaching staff in the outer London boroughs. [222215]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We are committed to improving recruitment and retention of teachers. Nationally, there are around 29,000 more qualified teachers working in schools than there were in 1997. We have put in place nationally a number of incentives to attract and retain teachers, including PGCE bursaries of up to £6,000 and "Golden Hellos" of up to £4,000 in certain subjects. The Teacher Training Agency supports the cost of Recruitment Managers in local education authorities. Every outer London borough has received funding for the last four years and will continue to be supported for the next two years.

Vacancy rates are falling faster in London than in the rest of the country but remain twice the national rate. We therefore continue to take additional steps to recruit and retain teachers in London, including outer London. As part of the London Challenge, which the Prime Minister launched in May 2003, we introduced Chartered London Teacher status. This recognises and rewards the distinctive skills and expertise demonstrated by teachers in outer and inner London and provides incentives for good teachers to stay teaching in London. We are also aware that the cost of housing is a factor in teachers' decisions about where to live and work. With the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, we have introduced interest-free equity loans to help teachers in London schools buy homes. The Key Teacher Homebuy scheme, which is only available to school teachers in London, offers loans of up to £100,000 for teachers willing to commit to a long-term career working in London schools.

We have established a separate pay scale for teachers in outer London. Starting salaries for teachers in outer London will increase from £20,862 in April 2004 to £21,384 in April 2005 and £22,002 in September 2005. Schools retain the discretion to make such payments or other financial assistance, support or benefits to a teacher as they consider necessary as an incentive for the recruitment of new teachers or the retention of existing teachers.

Universities (Projected Income)

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the projected income from *(a)* tuition and *(b)* top-up fees to British universities is for each year from 2005–06 to 2010–11. [223061]

Dr. Howells: The income from tuition fees[1] for English Higher Education Institutions in 2005–06 is forecast to be £910 million.

From 2006/07, institutions will be free to set fees up to £3,000 for new students. Figures for income from fees from 2006/07 onwards will depend on the pattern of fee charging by institutions and the way that students respond to that pattern. If 91 per cent. of students were charged £3,000 and the remaining 9 per cent. £2000, we estimate that the fee income on a steady state basis on 2006/07 student numbers would be around £2.3 billion.

[1] Full-time home and EU undergraduate and PGCE students.

University Admissions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many applications there were from school pupils for full-time courses at universities in England to commence study in each year from 2001 to 2004 inclusive; and how many applications have been made for enrolment in 2005, excluding applications for deferred entry in 2006. [222522]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Information for the years 2001 to 2004, showing the total number of students who applied throughout the application cycle, is shown in the following table. The latest available figures for 2005 entry show that, as at 15 January, 284,359 students from England had applied. We expect to receive updated information in April. The number of applicants who intend to defer entry is not held centrally.

Applicants from England to full-time undergraduate courses in the UK

Year of entry	*Total applicants*[1]
2001	330,856
2002	331,602
2003	337,593
2004	339,967

[1] Covers all students who applied at any point in the application cycle, including those who applied during the clearing process in August of each year.

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Wirral Schools Services Ltd.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was paid to Jarvis plc for the sale of its equity in Wirral Schools Services Ltd. [222895]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I am not able to disclose this information, since it is not for the Department to comment on financial negotiations between two commercial companies.

PRIME MINISTER

Attorney-General

Mr. Drew: To ask the Prime Minister how many times the Attorney-General has attended Cabinet since 2002; and on what issues he has produced written evidence for the Prime Minister. [222547]

The Prime Minister: Since 2002, the Attorney-General has attended Cabinet 24 times. There is a long-standing convention, observed by successive Governments, that the fact that the Law Officers have advised on a particular issue is not publicly disclosed. There is a strong public interest in allowing Government to have a clear space, immune from exposure to public view, in which it can debate matters internally with candour and free from the pressures of public political debate, including in deciding whether it should seek advice from its principal legal adviser, the Attorney-General.

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Prime Minister when the Attorney-General first gave him his advice on the case for war; and in what form. [221613]

The Prime Minister: As indicated in paragraph 374 of the Butler Report, the Attorney-General gave initial advice prior to the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1441. The date of this advice is withheld as it relates to the formation of Government policy.

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister how many pages constituted the legal opinion provided to Cabinet setting out the Attorney-General's advice on the legality of military action against Iraq in March 2003. [221740]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Solicitor-General (Harriet Harman) gave him on 20 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1335W, and to the letter of 10 March 2005 from the Attorney-General to my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Ladywood (Clare Short), copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Attorney-General attended the whole of the meeting of the Cabinet on 17 March 2003. [221818]

The Prime Minister: The Attorney-General did attend the whole meeting of the Cabinet on 17 March 2003.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the oral answer given on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1514 to the hon. Member for Linlothgow (Mr. Dalyell), in what form the oral report given by the Attorney-General was recorded in the notes of the Cabinet meeting; and when these notes were made available to the full Cabinet. [221920]

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether the advice he received from the Attorney-General regarding the war in Iraq discussed in Cabinet on 17 March 2003 was placed before any other ministerial committee; [221817]

(2) whether the Cabinet meeting on 17 March 2003 discussed any business other than the advice of the Attorney-General regarding war with Iraq. [221819]

The Prime Minister: The proceedings of Cabinet and Cabinet Committee meetings are not generally disclosed, in order to ensure the protection of information whose disclosure would harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Conduct of Committee Guidelines

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Prime Minister if he will publish the Cabinet Office guidelines on the conduct of Cabinet and Ministerial Committee business. [221820]

The Prime Minister: The Cabinet Office provides two sources of guidance on the conduct of Cabinet business. The Ministerial Code sets out the arrangements for collective consideration of business by Cabinet and Cabinet Committees. The Code is amplified by "Cabinet Committee Business: a Guide for Departments". Copies of each are available in the Libraries of the House.

Japan

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister when he received a letter from Sakue Shimohira on behalf of the Association for the Bereaved Families of the Atomic Bomb Dead in Nagasaki; and what response he has made. [221735]

The Prime Minister: As far as I am aware, I have not received the letter.

Mr. Paul Wolfowitz

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister whether he was consulted by President Bush about the qualifications in international development and world poverty matters of Mr. Paul Wolfowitz before he received the American nomination to the post of President of the World Bank; and if he will make a statement. [223457]

The Prime Minister: It is not the practice of the Government to make public details of all discussions with foreign governments.

DEFENCE

Defence Aviation Repair Agency

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he is considering *(a)* a sale or *(b)* a privatisation of the Defence Aviation Repair Agency. [222639]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is conducting a review of the potential future status options for DARA and its Business Units. This work is being carried out without prejudice or preconception. The analysis currently being done by Morgan Stanley to test market interest does not, in any sense, imply that we see sale to the private sector as a preferred option, and any industry interest in any of DARA's business units will be judged impartially against a full range of options, including retaining DARA in-house. The criteria for any final decision will be quality of support to the front line and overall value for money. I aim to reach conclusions about the way forward for DARA, if at all possible, by the middle of 2005.

Deployments

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which sub-units were deployed from the *(a)* 5th Regiment Royal Artillery to (i) Cyprus, (ii) Iraq and (iii) Northern Ireland, *(b)* 32nd Regiment Royal Artillery to (A) Cyprus and (B) Iraq, *(c)* 2nd Royal Tank Regiment to (1) Iraq and (2) Kosovo, *(d)* Light Dragoons to *(x)* Bosnia and *(y)* Cyprus, *(e)* Queen's Royal Lancers to (aa) Kosovo and (bb) Iraq and *(f)* Household Cavalry to Bosnia; and what the dates of each deployment were. [222171]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is shown in the following table. The information relates to the period January 2000 to March 2005, as data prior to this period is not held centrally and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Regiment (a)	*Sub units (b)*	*Theatre (c)*	*Dates (d)*
5th Regiment Royal Artillery	K Battery (Bty)	Cyprus	December 2001-June 2002
	K Bty	Iraq-Telic 1	February-June 2003
	4/73 Bty	Iraq-Telic 2	June-October 2003
	4/73 Bty	Iraq-Telic 3	October 2003-April 2004
	K Bty	Iraq-Telic 4	April 2003-October 2004
	P Bty	Iraq-Telic 5	October 2004-April 2005
	P Bty	Northern Ireland	October 2002-May 2003
	P Bty	Northern Ireland	August-December 2003
32nd Regiment Royal Artillery	46 Bty, 18 Bty	Cyprus	December 2001-June 2002
	42 Bty	Cyprus	June-December 2003
	46 Bty, 18 Bty, 22 Bty	Iraq-Telic 1	February-June 2003
	57 Bty	Iraq-Telic 3	September 2003-April 2004
	22 Bty	Iraq-Telic 4	April-October 2004
	18 Bty	Iraq-Telic 5	October 2004-April 2005
2nd Royal Tank Regiment	RHQ, Cyclops, Falcon, Egypt Badgir	Iraq-Telic 1	February-June 2003
		Iraq-Telic 2	July-November 2003

Regiment (a)	Sub units (b)	Theatre (c)	Dates (d)
	RHQ, Badger, Egypt	Kosovo	February-June 2001
	Cyclops	Kosovo	June-December 2001
The Light Dragoons	B Squadron	Bosnia	April-October 2000
	C Squadron	Bosnia	October 2002-April 2003
	Nil	Cyprus	
The Queen's Royal Lancers	RHQ, D Squadron	Kosovo	April-October 2002
	B, C Squadrons	Iraq-Telic 1	February–June 2003
	A, D Squadrons	Iraq-Telic 2	July-November 2003
Household Cavalry Regiment	A Squadron	Bosnia	September 2001-March 2002
	C Squadron	Bosnia	March-September 2002
	C Squadron (-)	Bosnia	October 2003-April 2004

Future Rapid Effects System

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the defence procurement budget is allocated to the Future Rapid Effects System for each year from 2007 to 2010. [211254]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Rapid Effect System is in its initial assessment phase. Firm decisions on costs and timescales for the programme will not be made until the main procurement decision.

Maritime Coherence Baseline

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the purpose is of the Maritime Coherence Baseline concept; when it will be implemented; and if he will make a statement. [221346]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Maritime Coherence Study Baseline is the core programme emerging from the Maritime Coherence Study. It will provide the basis on which further work and refinement is undertaken. The Maritime Coherence Study is intended to produce a balanced, coherent and more affordable programme to address our capability priorities and provide an industrial programme with stable and balanced loading, and will be implemented over the next two decades.

Nuclear Warheads

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on the transportation by air of nuclear materials related to the United Kingdom nuclear weapons programme. [222054]

Mr. Hoon: Within the United Kingdom, our policy is to use surface transportation for all movements of nuclear material related to the UK nuclear weapons programme. Any necessary movement by air of nuclear material outside of the UK is undertaken in compliance with the UK's International Treaty obligations and in accordance with International Air Transport Association regulations, MOD Health and Safety requirements and all statutory legislative requirements. All Ministry of Defence movements of nuclear materials are conducted only by suitably qualified and experienced personnel under procedures designed to reduce foreseeable risk in accordance with the As Low As Reasonably Practicable principle.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which nations he has assessed as having the capacity to launch a nuclear strike against United Kingdom military bases; and which United Kingdom bases are in range of each nation's weapons. [222055]

Mr. Hoon: We assess that there is currently no significant threat of a nuclear strike against UK military bases. We continue to monitor the nuclear capability of a number of countries.

Oil Tankers

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what assessment his Department has made of the Royal Navy's future requirement for oil supply within the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability (MARS) programme; how many ships are needed; and if he will make a statement; [221134]

(2) what plans he has for the *(a)* purchase and *(b)* lease of commercial oil tankers before the introduction of Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability tankers; [221126]

(3) what measures are in place to meet the oil supply requirement of the Royal Navy in the event of a delay in the introduction of the Military Afloat Reach and Sustainability programme. [221133]

Mr. Ingram: The MARS programme will provide the future maritime tanker capability for the Royal Navy. The future requirement, including how the capability will be delivered, will be determined during the programme's assessment phase. Two of the LEAF class tankers currently in service are leased. We have no current plans to purchase or lease additional tankers for the RFA ahead of the capability to be introduced through the MARS programme. We will consider extending the current fleet of maritime tankers in service as necessary prior to the introduction of the MARS capability.

Panther Vehicle

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the budget is for each year of the Panther vehicle programme. [211268]

Mr. Ingram: The overall acquisition cost of the Panther programme, which is in its Demonstration and Manufacture phase, is £193 million spread over some five years.

RAF Leeming

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact of job losses at RAF Leeming on *(a)* the work of the base and *(b)* the local community; and if he will make a statement. [222278]

Mr. Ingram: The written ministerial statement of 10 March outlined the proposed reductions in the number of Service and civilian posts as a result of the end-to-end review of logistics process for military aircraft support. These reductions form part of the Service and civilian manpower reductions that were announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 21 July 2004.

For RAF Leeming, this will mean a reduction in the number of Service posts by 215 and, subject to Trades Union consultation, a reduction in the number of civilian posts by 20.

I recognise that this may be disappointing news for the local community, but the proposed changes in working practices and force structure will improve efficiency within the RAF.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the long-term future of RAF Leeming. [222279]

Mr. Ingram: RAF Leeming is one of many airfields being considered under the Defence Airfield Review, which is examining our future basing requirements.

I announced on 10 March 2005 that RAF Leeming is one of five RAF Stations currently being considered as a potential base for the new Joint Combat Aircraft when it enters service in the next decade.

Regiments

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* land and *(b)* buildings are held by (i) the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, (ii) the King's Regiment and (iii) the King's Own Borderers. [222317]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Royal Navy Destroyers/Frigates

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the destroyers and frigates serving in the Royal Navy; and what the proposed retirement date for each is. [223251]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Norfolk, a Type 23 frigate, will be withdrawn from service by the end of the month. The latest planned decommissioning dates for the other ships are as follows:

Ship	*Planned decommissioning date*
Type 42 Batch 1 destroyer:	
HMS Cardiff	2005
Type 42 Batch 2 destroyers:	
HMS Exeter	2009
HMS Southampton	2010
HMS Nottingham	2012
HMS Liverpool	2009
Type 42 Batch 3 destroyers:	
HMS Manchester	2011
HMS Gloucester	2011
HMS Edinburgh	2013
HMS York	2012
Type 22 frigates:	
HMS Cornwall	2015
HMS Cumberland	2017
HMS Campbeltown	2017
HMS Chatham	2018
Type 23 frigates:	
HMS Marlborough	2005
HMS Argyll	2019
HMS Lancaster	2019
HMS Iron Duke	2020
HMS Monmouth	2021
HMS Montrose	2021
HMS Westminster	2021
HMS Northumberland	2022
HMS Richmond	2022
HMS Somerset	2023
HMS Grafton	2006
HMS Sutherland	2025
HMS Kent	2028
HMS Portland	2028
HMS St. Albans	2029

Torture-obtained Information

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1257W, on torture-obtained information, on how many occasions in the last year his Department has used information obtained by the use of torture in another country. [218760]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs gave on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 90W.

Trident

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1148W, which Scottish local authorities were involved in the risk assessment; and if he will place a copy of the risk assessment in the Library. [221033]

Mr. Hoon: No Scottish local authorities were involved in the generation of the latest risk assessment on the transport of nuclear material for the Trident nuclear system. The document contains confidential information relating to national security and I am therefore unable to place a copy in the Library as requested.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 189W, on Trident, if he will list the occasions when such incidents occurred while nuclear material was on the jetty. [223304]

Mr. Hoon: On only one occasion, in September 2004, was nuclear material present on the Explosives Handling Jetty when there was an alarm. However, after investigation, this was found to be a false alarm.

Uniforms

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether all *(a)* reservists and *(b)* full-time soldiers are clothed to scale when on deployment overseas. [222289]

Mr. Ingram: Once a deployment overseas has been agreed, a Mounting Instruction is issued on the authority of the Department's Permanent Joint Headquarters to the Front Line Commands, who in turn amplify, as necessary, the requirement for those personnel being deployed and issue instructions to units for action. Equipment, including clothing, is then demanded and issued to the appropriate scale for Reservists and regular full-time soldiers to supplement their personal issue holdings.

On mobilisation, Army Reservists pass through the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre located in Chilwell, Nottinghamshire, for pre-deployment training and administration. Part of this process is to ensure that they have the full scale of personal equipment prior to deploying. Operational theatres have adequate reserve stocks of personal equipment items to make up deficiencies due to loss, damage or wear and tear.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Economic Partnership Agreements

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the need for ACP countries to retain national and regional autonomy in economic partnership agreements with the EU. [221268]

Mr. Alexander: Many of the ACP countries have developed poverty reduction strategies. EPAs should support these by enabling regional groupings to sequence trade reform appropriately and to participate on equal terms in the international economy. We are working closely with other member states, the European Commission and the ACP countries themselves to ensure that the developmental benefits of EPAs are realised.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the EC-Russia Joint Committee on scientific and technological co-operation met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [215421]

Ms Hewitt: There were no meetings of the EU-Russia PCA sub-committee on education, culture, and science and technology during the Italian, Irish and Dutch presidencies. The last took place in Brussels on March 3 2003 during the Greek presidency. Meetings are convened by the European Commission, and the member states are not invited; therefore no UK officials attend.

Gas

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the security of gas supplies in *(a)* winter 2005–06 and *(b)* winter 2006–07; when she expects to lay before Parliament the first report on the medium and long-term energy supplies as required by the Energy Act 2004; and if she will make a statement. [222602]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 17 March 2005]*: Through the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group (JESS), the DTI and Ofgem, with help from national grid, continually monitor developments in the energy market, and look for ways of helping the market work more effectively to deliver secure energy supplies. This includes consideration of the position on gas supplies.

The most recent report was published in November of last year and is available from the Libraries of the House. It shows that the gas supply/demand balance would be tight in 2005–06 if that proves to be a particularly severe winter, and that gas supplies are expected to increase after that.

We expect the report under the Energy Act 2004 to be laid before Parliament in the summer.

In-house Magazines

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent on the production of in-house magazines in the Department in each year since 1997. [213635]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI produces an in-house magazine for all staff, the function of which is to inform them about the organisation's business objectives, and enable them to act as ambassadors for the Department. Research shows that the magazine is widely read and considered useful.

Costs for the current year are £5,000. It is not possible to give figures for earlier years because the costs for the previous DTI newspaper were not itemised individually and to produce them would incur disproportionate costs.

International Accounting Standards

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions he has had with *(a)* his counterparts and *(b)* the European Commission concerning a move towards agreement on international accounting standards. [222394]

Ms Hewitt: Regulation (EC) No. 1606/2002 of the European Parliament and the Council of 19 July 2002 on the application of International Accounting Standards was adopted by member state on 7 June 2002. Prior to its adoption, my Department had extensive discussions with other Government Departments, other member states and the European Commission.

Along with representatives of other member states, my Department sits on the Accounting Regulatory Committee, which was created by the Regulation to consider the adoption of individual International Accounting Standards into European law.

Miners Compensation

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many former miners, their widows

and families in Newcastle-under-Lyme have *(a)* made claims for and *(b)* been paid compensation in respect of (i) chronic bronchitis and emphysema, (ii) vibration white finger and (iii) pneumoconiosis; and how much has been paid out in total so far. [218994]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 2 March 2005]:* The figures for Newcastle-under-Lyme are as follows:

	Number of claims	*Number settled by payment*	*Total paid (£)*
COPD	2762	681	5,514,417
VWF	792	359	3,679,542
Pneumoconiosis	37	27	76,770

Miners' Pensions

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the merits of enabling miners to take an early lump sum in lieu of their miners' pension. [216329]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 21 February 2005]:* Following DTI agreement to a trustee proposal, from spring 2003 certain members of the mineworkers pension scheme can take a final lump sum in lieu of their miners' pension from age 50. The total value of a members' benefits must be less than £5 a week. The qualifying conditions are a matter for the Inland Revenue.

Operating and Financial Review

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the proposed Operating and Financial Review. [222173]

Ms Hewitt: The draft Companies Act 1985 (Operating and Financial Review and Directors' Report etc.) Regulations 2005 were considered by the Second Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation on 3 February 2005. The Regulations were also considered by the House of Lords on 16 March 2005.

The Regulations will require the directors of quoted companies to prepare an Operating and Financial Review in respect of companies' financial years which begin on or after 1 April 2005.

Parking Spaces and Penalties

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent on *(a)* provision of parking spaces for civil servants and *(b)* parking tickets and penalties incurred by civil servants in the Department in each year since 1997. [213810]

Ms Hewitt: My Department does not make any separate provision for car parking and the only parking spaces on the DTI HQ estate are those integral with the buildings.

Information on parking charges or fees paid by my Department for its civil servants on official business can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The Department does not pay parking penalties.

Regional Venture Capital Funds

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average size of investment made by each regional venture capital fund was up to 31 December 2004. [215861]

Nigel Griffiths: A breakdown by English region of the average size of investment (both initial and follow-on) as at 31 December 2004 is as follows.

RVCF	*Average investment overall (£)*
South East	214,848.30
South West	233,333.33
London	229,004.63
East of England	231,622.20
East Midlands	164,740.86
West Midlands	201,477.27
Yorkshire and Humber	232,500.00
North East	147,410.91
North West	171,350.02

Russian Economic Forum

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department has liaised with the Confederation of British Industry on support for and involvement in the Russian Economic Forum to be held in London from 10 to 12 April. [221661]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* Officials have been in regular contact with the CBI about the Russian Economic Forum.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department will play a role in supporting the discussion on Russia's evolution into a modern, market-based democracy at the Russian Economic Forum to be held in London from 10 to 12 April. [221662]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* Officials will attend all relevant sessions of the Russian Economic Forum.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Fire Control Rooms

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the contracts to be entered into by private sector parties in respect of the provision and maintenance of regional fire control rooms will be agreed with the *(a)* regional management boards or their operating vehicles and *(b)* with his Department. [222165]

Mr. Raynsford: The agreements to lease the regional control centres (RCCs) will be entered into by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. We are currently considering the responses to consultation on the appropriate operating vehicles to manage the RCCs, either a local authority company or a lead authority. That entity will then take over the lease for its RCC when the building is ready for handover.

Separate contracts will need to be let for the maintenance of the buildings after construction is complete. This will be a matter for the regional entity responsible for each RCC.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library the detailed business case for regional control rooms after the contracts to construct and maintain them have been let. [222166]

Mr. Raynsford: Once both procurement processes (ie for the accommodation and infrastructure services) are complete a copy of the full business case based on actual costs, less any information which needs to be retained for purposes of commercial confidentiality, will be made available in the Libraries of the House.

House Fires

Mr. Randall: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate his Department has made of the number of house fires in which plug-in air fresheners were a contributory cause in the last five years. [223197]

Mr. Raynsford: The national fire statistics do not distinguish air fresheners as a potential source of fire and so the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not able to determine the number of house fires in which plug-in air fresheners have been a contributory cause.

Recent inquiries with several fire and rescue services has revealed no evidence that air fresheners may be a contributory cause in house fires.

Housing (Liverpool)

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what independent structural survey has been undertaken in the Welsh Streets in Liverpool 8 to assess the state of the properties; and where this information is available to the public. [222661]

Keith Hill: It is understood that Liverpool city council propose to make a compulsory purchase order, to acquire and demolish a number of houses in the Welsh Streets area, as part of their Housing Market Renewal programme. It is for the city council to determine what independent advice they seek, in order to explain why they believe the area is in need of redevelopment.

Housing Market Renewal Areas

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria are used to measure the success of a Housing Market Renewal area. [222660]

Keith Hill: "Homes for All", the Government's five year housing plan sets out our aim to close by a third the gap between the level of vacancies and house values in pathfinder areas compared to the regions by 2010. Our long-term aim is to eradicate the problems caused by low demand housing by 2020.

Specific targets for the period up to March 2006 are included in each pathfinder's funding agreement with the Government.

Local Authority Expenditure

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimates his Department has made of projected future spending by local authorities in each year for which projections have been made; and what proportion of each amount is projected to be met through central Government subsidy in each of those years. [223058]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government have made no estimates of future spending by local authorities, which is primarily for local authorities to determine. SR04 provided the following increases in Net Aggregate External Funding (Net AEF) which is comprised of Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates:

	Net AEF[1] (£ million)
2004–05	42,421
2005–06	44,706
2006–07	47,184
2007–08	49,608

[1] This is the increases announced in SR04. The actual Net AEF total for 2005–06 taking account of changes in function and financing agreed after SR04 is 44,726 million.

Note

The figure for 2004–05 includes the resources which were paid out as PFI Special Grant.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many visits to Southend have been made by his officials in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [223420]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Neighbourhood Renewal Funds (Cornwall)

Mr. Atherton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will break down by district council the allocation of neighbourhood renewal funds in West Cornwall. [222837]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is published on the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit website at: www.neighbourhood.gov.uk/page.asp?id=614

An announcement will be made in due course on the allocation of new Neighbourhood Renewal Fund resources for the period 2006–08, once the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has considered fully the responses to our consultation.

Planning (Children's Homes)

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what planning consents private companies that are seeking to open residential children's homes in private residential properties are required to obtain from their local planning authorities before they are able to commence business. [222644]

Keith Hill: The Town and Country (Use Classes) Order 1987 (the UCO) sets out classes of uses, changes within which do not require planning permission due to the similarity in their impact on local amenity, for example: traffic generation, noise, and visual appearance.

The UCO classifies dwelling houses as a C3 use class. This includes dwelling houses used by a single person, any number of persons living as a family, or by no more

than six people living together as a single household. Any change of use from this status would normally require planning permission.

Sheltered Housing Schemes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he provides to *(a)* local authorities and *(b)* private or independently-run sheltered schemes on how to use arbitration and consultation procedures in disputes between scheme managers and tenants and owners. [222952]

Yvette Cooper: So far as housing-related support issues are concerned, the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework core objective includes a requirement that service users, carers and other stakeholders are made aware of complaints procedures and how to use them. However, this only applies to housing support services and services under Supporting People contract to the local administering authority, and does not apply to private sheltered housing schemes

The Housing Corporation requires that Registered Social Landlord (RSL) tenants and applicants have access to effective complaints procedures, and has produced good practice guidance on complaints handling.

Tenants of RSLs also have statutory access to the Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme (IHOS). In considering cases, the Ombudsman may recommend alternative dispute resolution, either by the use of mediation, arbitration or otherwise, to complainants and member landlords at any time during or at the end of an investigation.

Social Housing

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average number of bedrooms in each social housing unit built was in each year since 1979. [222186]

Keith Hill: Estimates of the average number of bedrooms are not available. The following table shows, for particular years, estimates of the percentages of social dwellings for rent built by flats and houses and with one, two, three and four or more bedrooms.

The figures for 1995–96, 2000–01 and 2003–04 include only Registered social landlord dwellings. Those for 1979, 1985 and 1990 also include local authority and new town dwellings as they then accounted for a larger proportion of social dwellings built.

Figures for each year from 1991–92 are available from the housing statistics section on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's webeite at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_housing/documents/page/odpm_house_604058.xls

[Housing—Housing Statistics—Live Tables—Housebuilding—Table no 251]

Percentage

	1979[1]	*1985*[1]	*1990*[1]	*1995–96*	*2000–01*	*2003–04*
Houses						
1 bedroom	5	8	6	3	3	1
2 bedrooms	13	18	21	34	29	23
3 bedrooms	26	16	17	30	27	24
4+ bedrooms	4	2	3	4	4	6
All	48	44	47	71	63	54

Percentage

	1979[1]	*1985*[1]	*1990*[1]	*1995–96*	*2000–01*	*2003–04*
Flats						
1 bedroom	33	41	35	17	17	13
2 bedrooms	16	13	15	11	17	31
3 bedrooms	2	1	2	1	3	1
4+ bedrooms	—	—	—	—	—	1
All	51	55	53	29	37	46
Houses and flats						
1 bedroom	38	48	41	20	19	14
2 bedrooms	29	32	36	45	46	54
3 bedrooms	29	18	19	31	30	25
4+ bedrooms	4	2	3	4	5	7
All	100	100	100	100	100	100

[1] Figures include both new housing association and new local authority/new town dwellings built.

Trees (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to increase the number of trees in London; and whether, he has met *(a)* the Mayor, *(b)* the London boroughs and *(c)* his Department's ministers to discuss this. [221945]

Keith Hill: The London Tree and Woodland Framework Consultation Document was launched in July 2004, produced by the London Woodland Advisory Group which includes Government Office for London, Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Forestry Commission (FC). Consultation involved a wide range of London stakeholders, and as key members of the Advisory Group the Mayor and officials from the GLA were closely involved in drawing up proposals in the framework, while boroughs through the London Tree Officers Association were key consultees.

The Government plan to launch the Tree and Woodland Framework for London shortly. The document will provide a firm commitment by a wide partnership of London bodies including the GLA and the FC to maintain and enhance London's trees and woodlands as a vital part of the environment and will establish priority locations for new tree planting, taking into account such factors as levels of social deprivation, transport corridors and gateways, derelict land, biodiversity objectives, areas of regeneration and community forests.

The 'million trees campaign' which is managed by Trees for London, supported by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the FC, was initiated in September 2003. This project involves a London-wide partnership to plant one million new trees in London by 2010. To date this has already achieved a total of 330,000 trees. The work of the FC and Thames Chase Community Forest has also resulted in substantial areas of new planting with full public access in the North East of London. This project has been supported by the Government's Capital Modernisation Fund and work to extend the forest will continue. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are also actively involved in the Greening the Gateway partnership which is the shared environmental vision for the Thames Gateway London. I am in regular contact with the Mayor and London boroughs on environmental issues.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants he estimates are living in York. [222229]

Mr. Browne: Statistics on the location of asylum seekers in the UK are linked to the available information on the support that the asylum seeker receives.

At the end of December 2004 there were 151[1] asylum seekers in the local authority area of York recorded as in receipt of National Asylum Support Service (NASS) support.

Corresponding figures for those not in receipt of NASS support are not available and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Numbers of asylum seekers placed in NASS accommodation and numbers who are in receipt of subsistence only support from NASS, are published on a quarterly and annual basis. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2005 (January to March) will be available on 17 May 2005 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

[1] This figure is rounded to the nearest 5 and includes those in receipt of subsistence only support and those in NASS accommodation.

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers and refugees have been issued with short-term certificates of identity to enable them to visit areas affected by the tsunami. [222260]

Mr. Browne: Two short-term certificates of identity have been issued for the purpose of travel to areas affected by the tsunami. One was issued to a refugee, and the other to a person who had been granted exceptional leave to remain in the United Kingdom.

Civil Servants

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether ex-offenders will be eligible for employment by the National Offender Management Service. [220448]

Paul Goggins: Ex-offenders are eligible for employment in the National Offender Management Service, although they may be required to declare any convictions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

National Offender Management Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the National Offender Management Service will be taking to ensure that the prisons and probations work force will be diverse, competent and professional, as described in the NOMS Vision Statement. [218197]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Chief Executive, Martin Narey, is committed to place diversity at the heart of NOMS. A permanent diversity impact assessment process will be in place and a NOMS race and diversity strategic framework is being developed that will be aimed at not only ensuring compliance with legislative requirements, but at also promoting best practice in diversity across NOMS.

Planning has begun on the creation of a learning and development strategy for NOMS. Working closely with Skills for Justice (the Sector Skills Council for the justice sector) and regional probation training consortia, this strategy will identify new learning programmes and qualifications needed to support the development of NOMS.

As the offender management model is now being developed, a particular priority is to define the occupational standards and competencies needed to undertake this critical new role, and hence to develop supporting learning programmes.

The Prison Service and National Probation Service are also developing proposals for an integrated approach to leadership and management development for managers across NOMS. An early output has been the creation of an induction and development programme for the 10 Regional Offender Managers.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the detailed business case for the National Offender Management Service. [220541]

Paul Goggins: We have already published Patrick Carter's independent report "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime", which sets out the case for a National Offender Management Service, and the Government's response "Reducing crime—Changing Lives" which accepts that case.

A separate business case for the National Offender Management Service is currently being prepared.

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1421W, to the hon. Member for Walthamstow, on the National Offender Management Service, which regional offender managers will be responsible for each probation area in 2005–06; and whether the Prison Service budget for 2006–07 will need to be agreed unanimously by regional offender managers. [221136]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The Regional Offender Managers were appointed to cover geographically the nine government areas and Wales. Their remit covers all the probation areas within their region. The prison service budget for 2006–07 will be agreed by the Director General of the Prison Service and the Regional Offender Managers.

Polish Workers

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the numbers of Poles working in the UK. [222336]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

The latest Labour Force Survey for autumn 2004 estimated there were approximately 69,000 Polish nationals in employment in the United Kingdom.

Prison Officers

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison officers have been medically retired in each year since 1997 due to work-related stress. [203365]

Paul Goggins: No information is available on the number of officers granted medical retirement specifically due to work-related stress. The following table contains information on the total number of prison officers, senior officers and principal officers granted medical retirement since 1998 for any reason, within public sector establishments. Information on medical retirements is not available for 1997. The Office for Contracted Prisons does not collect information on medical retirements as privately managed prisons are not contracted to supply this information.

	All officers medically retired
1998	217
1999	195
2000	162
2001	147
2002	142
2003	171
January-October 2004	89

There has, generally, been a fall in medical retirements since revised eligibility criteria were introduced in 1998 through changes in the Civil Service Pension Scheme.

Prisoners (Mental Health)

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will estimate the percentage of prisoners in England and Wales who suffer from mental health problems. [220681]

Paul Goggins: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) undertook a survey of mental ill health in the prison population of England and Wales in 1997. A copy of the survey is available on the ONS website at www.statistics.gov.uk.

Comparable information for Scotland may be obtained from the Scottish Executive. While the institutions in Northern Ireland are devolved, responsibility for such information rests with Ministers in the Northern Ireland office.

Prisons

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* proportion and *(b)* total number of prisoners' initial test results under the mandatory drug testing programme have subsequently proved inaccurate in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [218818]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held on the central Mandatory Drug Testing database.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of prisoner rehabilitation programmes. [220924]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS) has recently published a review of the impact of corrections on re-offending (Home Office Research Study 291). The report, including references, is available on the RDS website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds.

Probation Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether performance by the National Probation Service against its performance measure on enforcement improved *(a)* during 2003–04 and *(b)* between April and September 2004. [203407]

Paul Goggins: The performance of the National Probation Service (NPS) in meeting its target for enforcement in 2003–04 and April to September 2004 is set out in the following tables.

Table 1: Enforcement by month April 2003–March 2004—England and Wales

Percentage

Month	*Breach action taken within 10 days*
April 2003	72
May 2003	71
June 2003	73
July 2003	74
August 2003	78
September 2003	75
October 2003	79
November 2003	80
December 2003	81
January 2004	78
February 2004	82
March 2004	84
Total	77

Table 2: Enforcement by month April to September 2004—England and Wales

Percentage

Month	*Breach action taken within 10 days*
April	84
May	85
June	82
July	86
August	84
September	87
Total	85

The results for the half-year to September 2004 show an improvement of eight percentage points on those for 2003–04. This is very encouraging and continues the upward trend of recent years: in 2001–02 enforcement stood at 53 per cent. rising to 64 per cent. in 2002–03 and again to 77 per cent. last year. The NPS is now closer than ever to achieving its enforcement target of 90 per cent. and I am optimistic that the 85 per cent. achieved in the first six months can be increased by the end of 2004–05.

Radio Frequencies

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of

(a) the effectiveness of Radio Frequency Identification projects and *(b)* their implications for (i) privacy and (ii) civil liberties. [220770]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office invested £5.5 million in launching the Chipping of Goods Initiative in March 2000. The UK was the first country in the world to embrace the use of Radio Frequency Identification Devices (RFID) or 'electronic tagging' to deal with property crime.

The programme was led by the Police Scientific Development Branch and the Business Crime Team and was established as a result of the need to reduce the incidence and cost of property crime and to reduce the burden on police resources in tracing the ownership of stolen goods. It was also established to show the clear business benefits that can be gained from adopting such technology.

Case studies for each of eight demonstrator projects were carried out, each one showing how the business benefited from the use of RFID. Manufacturers, retailers, consumers, the police and other enforcement agencies will all benefit from the wider adoption of this technology.

The eight demonstrator projects are world class implementations and have already received five awards for technical excellence and outstanding achievement, including 'Retail Technology Team of the Year' and the 'European Supply Chain Solution of the Year'.

Within the Identity Cards programme there has been investigation of the capabilities of contactless smartcard interfaces. However there has been no investigation of Radio Frequency Identification technologies which imply the ability to communicate with devices at much greater distances, nor it is envisaged that this would ever form part of the requirements for the Identity Cards scheme.

Regional Offender Managers

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated staffing requirement for each of the regional offender managers is. [221579]

Paul Goggins: Regional Offender Managers will have a total of four staff working to them in the first instance. It is expected that as Regional Offender Managers' roles expand they will require further staff.

Turkish Cypriots

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Turkish Cypriots have been granted *(a)* an entry visa and *(b)* a work voucher for entry into the United Kingdom in each of the last three years. [221548]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

UKvisas does not hold statistics on the numbers of Turkish Cypriots who have applied for visas. However, entry clearance statistics on applications received at our visa issuing post in Nicosia in the last three years for which they are available can be found on the UKvisas website at www.ukvisas.gov.uk—"Entry Clearance: Facts and Figures".

Workers Registration Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long on average registration under the Workers Registration Scheme has taken since the scheme was introduced. [222337]

Mr. Browne: Since the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) was introduced on 1 May 2004 it has taken the WRS Team on average 10 calendar days to register each applicant.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Marine Pollution (County Down)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions have taken place between his Department and *(a)* North Down borough council and *(b)* the National Trust in relation to tackling the sewage washed up at Orlock, County Down. [222932]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Lady.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Lady Hermon, dated 18 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what discussions have taken place between his Department and *(a)* North Down Borough Council and *(b)* the National Trust in relation to tackling the sewerage washed up at Orlock, Co. Down (222932). I have been asked to reply as the issue falls within my operational responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

Water Service regrets the problems that have arisen due to the failure of this screening plant at Briggs Rock, Orlock. Water Service has been in discussion with North Down Borough Council during the past two weeks regarding the problems but has not yet had any discussions with the National Trust. Water Service is currently taking forward a project to replace the existing screening plant at a cost of £150,000, and this is scheduled for completion by the end of this summer. Water Service will discuss the practicalities of a clean up operation at Orlock with both North Down Borough Council and the National Trust.

Parades Commission Chairman

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what official appointments and posts are held by the current Chairman of the Parades Commission. [222872]

Mr. Pearson: Sir Anthony Holland's public appointments are a matter of record and are listed prominently on, for example, the websites and publications of the Parades Commission and the Standards Board for England.

Police Service

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people applying to join the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) categorised as *(a)* Protestants, *(b)* Roman Catholics and *(c)* non-determined (i) have been regarded as suitably qualified, (ii) were suitably qualified but were unsuccessful and (iii) have been successfully recruited to the PSNI since its establishment. [221680]

Mr. Pearson: In PSNI Trainee Constable competitions, individuals are appointed from the pool of suitably qualified candidates at an equal ratio of those who are determined to be from a Catholic community background and those from a non-Catholic community background.

I am advised that, as at 28 January 2005, 3,243 candidates from a non-Catholic community background have reached the pool of suitably qualified candidates; of this number 2,427 have been unsuccessful and 816 have been appointed. For the same period, 1,089 candidates from a Catholic community background have reached the pool of suitably qualified candidates; of this number 279 have been unsuccessful and 810 have been appointed.

Of the 2,706 candidates deemed suitably qualified but not appointed, only 408 were rejected because of the policy of equal recruitment. The remaining 2,298 applicants would still have failed to be appointed had the temporary 50:50 provisions not been applied.

The appointment process is ongoing and these figures remain subject to change.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department has used funds *(a)* to provide alternative employment for workers previously employed in the poppy industry and *(b)* to purchase poppy crops in Afghanistan since 1997. [222196]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my right hon. Friend the Secretary if State for International Development gave him on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1801–02W.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not, as part of its programme, purchased any poppy crops in Afghanistan.

Department for International Development activity in this area forms part of the UK's support for the Afghan 2005 Counter Narcotics Implementation Plan, details of which are contained in my written statement of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 121–23WS.

Antarctica

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action is being taken to conserve the historic huts used by the British explorers Scott and Shackleton in Antarctica; and if he will make a statement. [222491]

Mr. Rammell: As my right hon. and noble Friend the Minster of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean said on 11 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 6, in another place, New Zealand has territorial responsibility for the Scott and Shackleton huts located in the Ross Dependency in Antarctica. The British Government, through the British Antarctic Territory, provide an annual donation of £12,500 to the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, which in turn supports the conservation of the Ross Island huts. In 2002, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, again through the British Antarctic Territory, donated £70,000 to support the proposed Ross Sea heritage restoration project to undertake major preservation work on the huts in question.

China/Taiwan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Chinese authorities on its new law with regard to possible conflict with Taiwan. [222957]

Mr. Rammell: As I said in my reply to the hon. Member for Tweeddale, Ettrick and Lauderdale (Mr. Moore) on 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 338W, Ministers have taken a close interest in the development of China's Anti-Secession legislation. We have discussed it on a number of occasions at Ministerial and official level with the Chinese, in meetings both before and after its enactment.

Although the legislation refers to China's desire to resolve the issue peacefully, we are concerned that it makes reference to the possibility of the use of "non-peaceful means". Our view is still that the Taiwan question should be settled peacefully through negotiation between the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. We remain strongly opposed to the use of force, as we have consistently made clear to all, including the Chinese.

In addition, the EU issued a Statement on 14 March recording its opposition to the use of force to resolve this issue.

We continue to appeal to both sides to avoid unilateral measures which might heighten tensions. Instead, we encourage both sides to continue the progress of recent months through the implementation of practical measures.

Colombia

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Colombian authorities regarding the murder of Luis Eduardo Guerra, leader of the San Jose de Apartado Peace Community. [222248]

Mr. Rammell: We are deeply shocked by the brutal killing of Luis Eduardo Guerra. Our embassy in Bogota has spoken to the judicial authorities and to Colombian Government representatives at the highest level to express our concerns regarding this killing. Luis Eduardo Guerra was a highly respected member of the Colombian NGO community and well known to our embassy. I met him during my visit to Colombia in 2004. I welcome the Colombian Government's assurances that there will be an impartial, swift and effective investigation into this, as well as into the other murders in the San Jose de Apartado Peace Community. Officials from the human rights unit in the Attorney-General's office, as well as forensic specialists and other officials, are in the area where the killings happened and are carrying out their investigation. This process includes interviews with members of the Peace Community, as well as all local army units, to try and establish the facts. We have also stressed to the Colombian authorities the

need for proper protection to be given to witnesses of the crimes and of human rights defenders following the case. The Colombian authorities have assured us that such protection will be available to anyone who needs it. We continue to closely monitor the situation. Those responsible, whoever they may be, must be brought to justice.

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 13 May 2004 from the hon. Member for Brent, East regarding Mr. John Clegg. [215631]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister responsible for our relations with Iraq, replied to the hon. Member's letter on 11 March. Unfortunately we only received the hon. Member's letter on 16 February 2005.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 7 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. M. R. Svei. [221914]

Mr. Alexander: UKvisas have no record of having received this letter. They have requested a copy from the office of my right hon. Friend and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will reply to him as soon as possible once a copy of the letter is received.

Croatia

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on *(a)* progress in establishing the whereabouts of Ante Gotovina and *(b)* the impact of that progress on Croatia's proposed accession to the European Union. [221888]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* On 16 March 2005, EU Foreign Ministers concluded that the conditions for the opening of EU accession negotiations had not been met in the absence of full co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The opening of accession negotiations have been postponed until such time as the Council confirms that Croatia is fully co-operating with ICTY. The UK strongly supported this conclusion.

The postponement does not affect Croatia's candidate status, and the UK fully supports Croatia's eventual accession to the EU. We will continue to work closely with the Croatian Government and encourage them to co-operate fully with the ICTY, in particular in their efforts to locate and arrest fugitive indictee Ante Gotovina.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the Croatian Government. [222199]

Mr. MacShane: The UK Government maintain a regular dialogue with the Croatian Government, through our embassy in Zagreb and in the course of ministerial and official level meetings. Most recently I met the Croatian Foreign Minister, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic on 1 March 2005.

Such meetings address a wide range of issues. In recent months the focus has been on the need for Croatia to fully co-operate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in order for the opening of EU accession negotiations to begin. On 16 March 2005, EU Foreign Ministers concluded that these conditions had not been met in the absence of full co-operation with the ICTY. The UK fully supports Croatia's eventual accession to the EU and we will continue to work closely with the Croatian Government and encourage them to fully co-operate with ICTY.

EU Presidency

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what budget his Department has set aside for the UK Presidency of the EU; and how much of that has been allocated for the provision of public information. [221376]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's budget allocation for 2004–05 is £2.130 million for Financial Year (FY) 2004–05 on UK EU Presidency related activity. The final budget allocation for 2005–06 will be finalised by the end of this month but £8.440 million has currently been set aside. Of this £350,000 has been allocated for the provision of public information and other public-facing activity. (£100,000 FY 04/05 and £250,000 projected for FY 2005–06).

European Constitution

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the dates are of those referendums on the treaty establishing a constitution for the European Union which have been announced. [222395]

Mr. MacShane: The dates of those referendums on the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe which have been announced are: 27 September 2005 (Denmark); 29 May 2005 (France); 10 July 2005 (Luxembourg); 1 June 2005 (Netherlands). The Spanish referendum took place on 20 February 2005.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of whether the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty takes account of derogations negotiated by the latest accession countries, with particular reference to those negotiated by *(a)* the Czech Republic, *(b)* Estonia and *(c)* Poland. [222417]

Mr. MacShane: The derogations negotiated by the latest accession countries, in particular by Czech Republic, Estonia and Poland are taken account of in Protocol 9 to the Constitutional Treaty.

Gibraltar

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what visits to Gibraltar he has planned. [221482]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no current plans to do so.

Holy See

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 21W, on the Holy See, how he intends to widen the pool of potential candidates as Head of Mission to the Holy See beyond the normal reservoir of candidates from the Foreign and Commonwealth Service; how and to whom persons interested may submit an application in support of their candidacy; and if he will make a statement. [222241]

Mr. MacShane: The post of Head of Mission to the Holy See will be advertised publicly in due course. The advertisement will contain details of how to apply.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 21W, on the Holy See, whether he has determined the appropriate level and form of staffing necessary to preserve a viable and effective embassy to the Holy See; and if he will make a statement. [222242]

Mr. MacShane: Final decisions have not yet been taken but the level of staffing will be such as to ensure the efficient and effective conduct of business between the UK Government and the Holy See.

India

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how often the former Director General of the Punjabi Police, Mr K. P. S. Gill, has visited the UK since 1995; and what the duration of each visit was. [221697]

Mr. Mullin: I have been asked to reply.

I regret that I cannot provide this information, as it is not our practice to disclose details of individual entry clearance cases in a public forum. However, I will write to the hon. Member with further information.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations his Department has made to the Indian Government concerning their decision to end the UN moratorium on the death penalty. [222201]

Mr. Alexander: The UK initiated a demarche with EU partners to the Government of India in June 2004 in relation to the death sentence passed on Mr. Dhananjoy Chatterjee. The UK supported a further EU demarche in August 2004 in relation to the same case. On each occasion the EU urged the Indian Government to maintain their de facto moratorium on the death penalty.

Iraq War (Media Coverage)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs with which *(a)* newspaper, *(b)* television and *(c)* radio, (i) journalists and (ii) editors Sir Richard Dearlove initiated meetings following the war in Iraq during 1993 to discuss matters relating to (A) the conflict and (B) weapons of mass destruction; and if he will make a statement. [222340]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* It is the Government's well-established practice not to provide, confirm or deny details of meetings or movements of any members of the UK Security and Intelligence Services, including the Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service.

Israel

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to Israel following statements by senior Israeli political figures that Israel is considering a pre-emptive military attack on Iranian nuclear facilities. [222646]

Mr. Rammell: We are in regular contact with the Israeli Authorities regarding the international community negotiations with Iran. We have not made any representations to Israel regarding reported plans for a pre-emptive military attack on Iranian nuclear facilities by Israel. The Israeli Government has denied such reports. We will continue to monitor the situation.

Minority Languages

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress made in addressing criticisms and recommendations contained in the report by the Council on Europe on UK implementation of its obligations as a signatory to the declaration of lesser-used and minority languages, with particular reference to Scottish Gaelic. [222848]

Mr. Rammell: The UK Government welcomed the Council of Europe's report of 24 March 2004 on the implementation of the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. The report praises the UK for its efforts while also highlighting some areas for improvement.

The Scottish Executive has taken forward a number of Gaelic education initiatives which address the recommendations of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts with regard to Gaelic. The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill is also progressing through the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Executive is actively engaged in discussions with all interested parties in connection with the future of Gaelic broadcasting.

These measures and others will be described in detail in the UK's periodic report to be submitted to the Council of Europe by 1 July 2005.

Moldova

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Moldovan elections. [222990]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave on 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 460W to the hon. Member for Windsor (Mr. Trend).

Nepal

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to fill the post of human rights adviser in the embassy in Nepal. [222430]

Mr. Alexander: The UK is actively recruiting a human rights advisor for the British Embassy in Kathmandu. The role will be funded from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and tasked with the job of formulating and implementing UK human rights policy and programmes in Nepal. Advertisements for the position will be issued soon.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Nepali authorities on retaining and not replacing the present human rights commissioners in post; and if he will make a statement on *(a)* treatment of the commissioners and *(b)* Government support for the commissioners. [222431]

Mr. Alexander: The UK strongly supports the work of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in Nepal and has been part funding its operations from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. We are deeply concerned about the future independence of the NHRC following the King's takeover of power on 1 February and our Ambassador raised our concerns directly with the King in an audience on 8 February. The UK Government believe that the reappointment of the current members of the NHRC, following the expiry of their tenure in May 2005, is the best way to ensure its continued effectiveness. The UK Government have informed the government of Nepal of this position and will continue to press for it.

There have been reports that one of the Commissioners, Sushil Pyakurel, has recently been barred from travelling outside the Kathmandu Valley on two occasions by the Security Forces, which is a source of great concern for the future of the NHRC. The UK intends to maintain its support for the Commissioners and will continue funding NHRC provided its independence and integrity is maintained.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if, at the forthcoming meeting of the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, the Government will press for a reinforcement of the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal to improve human rights monitoring; and if he will make a statement. [222432]

Mr. Alexander: The UK remains committed to monitoring and improving Nepal's human rights performance through a number of means, including the UN Commission for Human Rights. Last year the UK was closely involved in the 60th session of the UN Commission for Human Rights (CHR 60) and contributed significantly to the Chairman's statement. We remain equally engaged this year following the King's take over of power and suspension of fundamental rights on 1 February and are currently working with our international partners to seek the best way to take this forward at CHR 61.

Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the outcome of his meeting with Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz Duarte of Brazil, the Chairman of the 2005 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. [221360]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not held a meeting with Ambassador Duarte, although Ambassador Duarte maintains regular contact with senior officials. The most recent meeting was in London on Friday 11 March when Ambassador John Freeman, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, together with officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Trade and Industry, held consultations with Ambassador Duarte on the forthcoming Review Conference.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Palestinian Authority *(a)* to allow Christian Arabs the right to pursue their religion, with particular reference to the right to pray on the Temple Mount and *(b)* to prevent encroachment on and inappropriate use of Christian holy sites. [222518]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* We have received no representations from the Christian Palestinian population with regard to access to the right to pray at the Haram ash-Sharif Temple Mount area. We have received representations from the Christian Palestinian community regarding difficulties in accessing sites holy to Christians, as well as Jews and Muslims, but these concerns focus on measures taken by the Israeli rather than Palestinian authorities.

Jerusalem has a unique religious and cultural importance for Christians, Jews and Muslims, and we attach great importance to ensuring access to Jerusalem and freedom of worship there for those of all faiths.

Peru

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Peruvian Government concerning the arrest of Pastor Jose Garcia Pena on terrorism charges. [222503]

Mr. Rammell: British embassy officials in Lima have recently spoken to the Peruvian Justice Ministry about the case of Pastor Jose Garcia Pena. We understand that Pastor Jose Garcia Pena was temporarily released from custody on 11 March.

Russia

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place with Russia concerning the presidency of the G8; and what Russia's stated priorities are for their presidency. [222645]

Mr. Alexander: All G8 members, including Russia, are involved in G8 discussions. In addition to these multilateral discussions, we have had a wide range of contacts with the Russians at official and Ministerial level to discuss both their and our G8 presidency themes. The Russians have begun to prepare for their 2006 G8 presidency, but have not yet made any announcements of their priorities.

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the progress being made in Saudi Arabia in introducing elements of democracy; and if he will make a statement. [221595]

Mr. Rammell: We welcome the municipal elections which are being held in Saudi Arabia as a first, but important, step in the growing involvement of the people in political decision-making. We look forward to the development of this process and particularly welcome the Government of Saudi Arabia's commitment to extend voting to women.

Spain

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) if he will raise with the Spanish government air pollution from the oil refinery at La Liniea near Gibraltar; [222281]

(2) if he will raise with the Spanish government water pollution caused by the oil refinery at La Liniea and its effects on Gibraltar's territorial waters. [222282]

Mr. MacShane: The Government hopes that the new trilateral forum will provide a suitable atmosphere in which to discuss issues such as these. However, at the present time we believe that local environmental issues such as these are most appropriately addressed under the local cooperation forum of the Government of Gibraltar-Mancommunidad del Campo de Gibraltar Joint Committee. This Committee has already established a joint epidemiological study to investigate the alleged high incidence of cancer cases in the area.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits Payment

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the administration costs associated with each benefit were in the last year for which figures are available; and what percentage of expenditure on each benefit was accounted for by administration costs. [222905]

Mr. Pond: Information is not available in the format requested. In accordance with the requirements of Resource Accounting and Budgeting, the Department now accounts for its administration and benefit expenditure by Strategic Objective, as set out in its public service agreements (PSA), and by individual Requests for Resources (RfRs), as set out in the Department's Estimates and Accounts.

CSA

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will compensate children adversely affected by delays in transferring cases to the new Child Support Agency system. [222307]

Mr. Pond: Compensation payments can be made to parents with care for losses incurred as a direct result of maladministration by the Child Support Agency.

However, we have always been clear that we will only move people on to the new scheme when we are sure that the new arrangements are working well. This is a sensible approach to implementing a major change and does not amount to maladministration. Compensation is therefore not appropriate.

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons a date has not been set when old Child Support Agency cases will be transferred to the new system. [222308]

Mr. Pond: I refer my hon. Friend to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Ashford (Mr. Green) on 8 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 568W.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221118]

Jane Kennedy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W, by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Timms).

Household Incomes

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households below average income there were in *(a)* East Midlands and *(b)* Leicester South constituency in each year since 1997. [222788]

Mr. Pond: In 2002–03, an estimated 69 per cent. of households in the East Midlands had incomes below the GB mean on the Before Housing Costs income measure, and 66 per cent. on the After Housing Costs measure.

These estimates use the same definition of income used in the Households Below Average Income Series, which is sourced from the Family Resources Survey. It is not possible to provide robust estimates for *(b)* because of small sample sizes.

National Insurance Numbers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many national insurance numbers have been issued to workers arriving from abroad in each year since 1979. [222187]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available.

New Deal

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have found work through new deal programmes in Plymouth since 1997, broken down by *(a)* the new deal for young people, *(b)* the new deal for over 25s and *(c)* the new deal for lone parents. [221610]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the following table.

New deal in Plymouth

Programme	*Individuals into work*
New deal for young people	3,390
New deal 25 plus	660
New deal for lone parents	1,900

Notes:
1. Figures are for the combined parliamentary constituencies of Plymouth Devonport and Plymouth Sutton.
2. New deal for young people started in January 1998; new deal 25 plus started in July 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998.
3. All data is to December 2004.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the City of York have *(a)* enrolled on and *(b)* found work through each of the Government's new deal programmes. [221737]

Jane Kennedy: The available information is in the following table.

New deal in the City of York

Programme	*Individual starts*	*Individuals into work*
New deal for young people	1,400	840
New deal 25 plus	890	390
New deal for lone parents	1,060	640
New deal 50 plus (up to and including March 2003)	190	190
New deal 50 plus (from April 2003)	—	50
Total	3,540	2,110

Notes:
1. New deal for young people started in January 1998; new deal 25 plus started in July 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998; new deal 50 plus started in April 2000.
2. Information on starts to new deal 50 plus is only available up to the end of March 2003.
3. Information on individuals into work through new deal 50 plus up to the end of March 2003 is the number of starts to the new deal 50 plus employment credit.
4. New deal 50 plus jobs figures from April 2003 could include people who have started more than one job.
5. Information for new deal for disabled people and new deal for partners is not available at constituency level.
6. All data is to December 2004.
7. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
DWP Information Directorate

Pensioner Income

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average difference in pension income between men and women in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* England was in the latest period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [222919]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the tables.

Table 1 gives gross income, net income before housing costs, and net income after housing costs for male and female single pensioners (people over state pension age). The results are based on combined data from the three years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03.

Table 1: £ per week in 2002–03 prices

	Scotland	*England*	*Great Britain*
Male single pensioners			
Gross income	212	228	224
Net income BHC	187	194	192
Net income AHC	161	168	166
Female single pensioners			
Gross income	188	188	187
Net income BHC	167	165	165
Net income AHC	142	139	139

Table 2 gives the difference in incomes between male single pensioners and female single pensioners.

Table 2: £ per week in 2002–03 prices

	Scotland	*England*	*Great Britain*
Gross	24	40	37
Net income BHC	20	29	27
Net income AHC	19	28	27

Notes:
1. Based on pensioners' incomes 2002–03. Because of small sample sizes the results are based on an average of three years of Family Resources Survey (FRS) data. The data is from 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03 where appropriate uprated to 2002–03 prices. Estimates of average incomes may still be vulnerable to random fluctuations in the number of very high income pensioners in each group in the FRS sample. In particular the differences between men and women should be treated with caution.
2. Net income is after direct taxes (including council tax) have been deducted).
3. BHC stand for before housing costs, AHC for after housing costs.
4. Northern Ireland was included in the FRS for the first time in 2002–03. Because the table is based on three years of FRS data results are given for Great Britain rather than the UK.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department plans to continue to use means-testing in the calculation of pensions; and if he will make a statement. [222920]

Malcolm Wicks: This Government's priority when they came to office was tackling the legacy of pensioner poverty. We continue to do this by targeting help on today's poorest pensioners and by encouraging all pensioners to receive the benefits they are entitled to. At the same time the Government believe that empowering individuals to make real and informed choices about working and saving for retirement is fundamental if they are to make sure people get the income in retirement they expect.

Income-testing of benefits has existed since before and after the creation of the Welfare State in 1948. With the introduction of pension credit, and the ease by which it can be applied for, we have moved away from the stigmatising weekly means tests of the past.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what changes took place in levels of pensioner poverty between *(a)* 1997 and June 2001 and *(b)* June 2001 and 2005; and if he will make a statement. [222924]

Malcolm Wicks: We have taken many steps to tackle pensioner poverty, including the introduction of pension credit and winter fuel payment, and since 2000 there has been a 7 per cent. real rise in the level of the basic state pension. As a result of these measures during 2005–06 we will be spending extra £11 billion more on pensioners, including £5 billion more on the poorest third.

Poverty is about more than low income; it also impacts on the way people live—their health, housing and the quality of their environment. The sixth annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6239), published in September 2004, sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Analysis suggests our overall strategy to tackle pensioner poverty is having an impact on pensioner incomes. The Household Below Average Income figures present the number and proportion of pensioners living in households with incomes below fixed and relative thresholds. The latest publication shows that between 1996–97 and 2002–03, 1.8 million fewer older people lived in absolute low income on un-rounded figures. In percentage terms, this equated to a fall of around two thirds. Further information is presented in the following table:

Number of pensioners with income below 60 per cent. of 1996–97 median income held constant in real terms

	After housing costs	*Before housing costs*
1996–97	2.7	2.1
1997–98	2.6	2.1
2001–02	1.1	1.4
2002–03	0.9	1.2

Information for 2003–04 onwards is not available. The latest available information about the number of pensioners living in relative low income, measured by households with incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income, is presented in the following table:

Number of pensioners with incomes below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income

Million

	After housing costs	*Before housing costs*
1996–97	2.7	2.1
1997–98	2.7	2.2
2001–02	2.2	2.2
2002–03	2.2	2.1

Source:
Households Below Average Income 2002–03

Households Below Average Income figures for 2003–04 are due to be published on 30 March. A copy will be placed in the Library.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the level of pensioner poverty *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs was in (i) the UK, (ii) Scotland and (iii) England in 2004; and if he will make a statement. [222925]

Malcolm Wicks: The following table gives gross income, net income before housing costs, and net income after housing costs for pensioners, over the three years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 combined.

Pensioners' income per week—2002–03 prices

£

	Pensioner couples			*Single pensioners*		
	Scotland	*England*	*Great Britain*	*Scotland*	*England*	*Great Britain*
Gross income	353	393	386	193	198	196
Net income BHC	304	328	324	171	172	171
Net income AHC	282	307	304	147	146	146

Notes:
1. From Pensioners' Incomes 2002–03—the Great Britain results in table 6 of 2002–03 Pensioners' incomes were incorrect, the corrected numbers are in this table.
2. Because of small sample sizes the results are based on an average of three years of Family Resources Survey data. The data is from 2000–01, 2001–02, and 2002–03 where appropriate uprated to 2002–03 prices. Estimates of average incomes may still be vulnerable to random fluctuations in the number of very high income pensioners in each group in the FRS sample.
3. Net income is after direct taxes (including council tax) have been deducted.
4. BHC stands for Before Housing Costs, AHC for After Housing Costs.
5. Northern Ireland was included in the FRS for the first time in 2002–03. Because the table is based on three years of FRS data results are given for Great Britain rather than the UK.

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average weekly amounts of *(a)* basic state pension, *(b)* additional pension and *(c)* income-related additions received by (i) men and (ii) women were in each year since 1997–98. [217519]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table.

£

As at March:	Average basic state pension		Average additional state pension		Average weekly rate of income-related additions	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1998	61.42	49.95	15.50	5.60		42.29
1999	63.58	51.68	17.23	6.34	52.76	41.82
2000	65.59	53.34	19.40	6.97	56.03	44.43
2001	66.27	53.95	20.43	7.62	59.60	46.45
2002	71.11	57.97	22.81	8.50	58.56	45.27
2003	73.98	60.38	23.45	9.30	59.96	46.02
2004	75.82	61.96	24.73	10.20	48.50	39.16

Notes:

1. Income-related additions refer to the minimum income guarantee and the pension credit (payable from October 2003) and represent male and female claimants. Figures for male claimants are higher because they include a greater proportion of cases where the claim relates to a couple than the figures for female claimants. Figures for March 1998 are only available for all claimants and cannot be given in the format requested.
2. Figures for basic state pension and additional state pension are taken from a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation. The average weekly rates are based on all state pension recipients in Great Britain.
3. Basic state pension means the basic component of Category A or B state pension or Category C or D state pension.
4. A basic state pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a Category A or Category B basic state pension, either in their own right or, where applicable, on the basis of their spouse's or former spouse's National Insurance contributions and to persons aged 80 or over who satisfy the entitlement conditions for Category C or Category D Pensions.
5. Average amounts of additional state pension include the additional state pension component of Category A and B state pension and the addition to long-term incapacity benefit, graduated retirement benefit and age additions paid to people aged 80 and over.

Source:

IAD Information Centre.

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will publish an estimate of the number of pension scheme members who have lost pension through insolvent wind up since 1997 in the same format as the estimate published on 30 June 2004. [219652]

Malcolm Wicks: We shall not have full information on members' losses until their schemes are close to completing wind up. However, based on the information currently available, we estimate that some 80,000 non-pensioner members of schemes winding up since 1997 with insolvent employers could be facing losses of 20 per cent. or more of their expected pensions, 70,000 losses of 30 per cent. or more, 60,000 losses of 40 per cent. or more and 45,000 losses of 50 per cent. or more. These figures exclude those where the difference between the assets in their scheme and the level of losses is less than £10 a week. In addition, we estimate that a small number of pensioner members may be facing significant losses of 20 per cent. or more of their expected pensions.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what initiatives his Department has taken to encourage business investment in worker pensions; and if he will make a statement. [222922]

Malcolm Wicks: We have taken radical action to ease the burdens on business and encourage further investment in employees' pensions. This includes the measures in the 2004 Finance Act to simplify the tax system and provisions in the Pensions Act 2004 to make the running of pension schemes simpler. We have simplified the pensions tax system by changing eight schemes of taxation into one. Simplification measures in the Pensions Act 2004 will enable pension schemes to consolidate and simplify their rules with retrospective effect.

We set up the Employer Task Force to draw on business experience and innovation as a way of identifying and promoting good practice in occupational pensions. Following a recommendation in its report, published in December 2004, we have set up a website aimed at employers which is dedicated to offering guidelines on good practice, with case studies and examples.

We intend to take steps through our informed choice programme to raise awareness among employers of the value for recruitment and retention of employers' pension contributions.

The Government also provide generous tax relief to encourage people to save for an income in retirement, including around £5 billion a year in National Insurance relief to employers.

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what advice was taken from *(a)* the Government Actuary's Department and *(b)* other actuaries by the then Department for Social Security (i) in advance of the introduction of contracting-out rebates for personal pensions in the 1986 Social Security Act and (ii) on the appropriateness of the level and structure of these rebates between the introduction of the 1986 legislation and the introduction of age-related rebates in 1997–98. [223111]

Malcolm Wicks: The contracting-out rebate rates that applied to appropriate personal pensions introduced under the Social Security Act 1986, were set out in a report laid before both Houses of Parliament in March 1987 by the then Secretary of State for Social Security. As required under the legislation, a report by the Government Actuary was laid at the same time and set out the rebate rates that, under the legislation then in force, he considered to be appropriate. Before these reports were laid, a draft of the Government Actuary's report was issued for consultation. This consultation included questions on the appropriateness of the level and structure of the rebates. The actuarial profession were among those consulted and their views were taken into account as part of the consultation process.

The Secretary of State is required to review the level of rebates at least once every five years. The same process as described above took place in 1992 to set the rebate rates from 6 April 1993 and again in 1996 to set the rates from 6 April 1997. As a result of the latest of these reviews, age-related rebates were introduced for members of appropriate personal pension schemes and members of contracted-out money purchase schemes.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the impact of fuel price inflation on the value of winter fuel payments to pensioners. [222194]

Malcolm Wicks: Winter fuel payments are a significant contribution towards fuel costs but are not intended to cover the full cost of fuel bills. The payment has risen from £20 in winter 1997–98 to £200 from winter 2000–01.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the rates of basic state pension payable to *(a)* single pensioners and *(b)* couples were in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2004–05; and what the rates would have been in 2004–05 if they had been uprated in line with prices between 1996–97 and 2004–05. [222226]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table:

£ per week

	Single pensioners	*Pensioner couple*
Rate of basic state pension as at April 1996	61.15	97.75
Rate of basic state pension rate as at April 2004	79.60	127.25
Rate of basic state pension as at April 2004 if it was uprated by retail prices index from 1996–97	74.15	118.50

Notes:

1. Retail prices index as published by the Office for National Statistics.
2. For the years 2001–02; 2002–03; 2003–04, the basic state pension was uprated by more than the retail prices index.
3. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 pence at each uprating.
4. The basic state pension is an individual payment and there is no such thing as a "singles" or "couple's" rate. The pensioner couple rate, commonly referred to as the "couples rate", is the sum total of a basic state pension and around 60 per cent. of it. The actual amount for a couple will therefore depend on the amount of the basic state pension to which the husband is entitled.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate

Public Expenditure

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1171W, on expenditure, (1) what the reasons are for the differences between the figures for benefit and tax credit expenditure in the years 1998–99 to 2004–05 and those in table 1.1 of the April 2004 Public Expenditure: Statistical Analyses; [221208]

(2) what the reasons are for the differences between the figures for benefit expenditure in 1996–97 and 1997–98 and those in table 1.3 of the April 2000 Public Expenditure: Statistical Analyses; [221209]

(3) what the reasons are for the differences between the figures for benefit and tax credit expenditure in 2003–04 and 2004–05 and those in table B16 of the pre-Budget report. [221210]

Mr. Pond: Figures in the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1771W, are consistent with DWP benefit expenditure tables published following the pre-Budget report 2004 at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp, and with tax credit expenditure figures supplied to DWP by HM Treasury following this and previous Budget and pre-Budget report forecasts.

The pre-Budget report assigned child elements of income support and income-based jobseeker's allowance to the tax credits line; since this is benefit expenditure it is included in the benefits column of the answer of 10 February, and the tax credits column is reduced accordingly.

Some housing benefit and council tax benefit expenditure is funded from within local authority budgets and is therefore not included in the social security benefits lines in the pre-Budget report and Public Expenditure: Statistical Analyses (PESA).

For completeness, the answer of 10 February includes these amounts. For 2003–04 only, the pre-Budget report includes spending on the Supporting People initiative in the social security line. This is excluded from the previous answer as it is neither benefit nor tax credit expenditure.

DWP's pre-Budget report benefit expenditure tables reflect the latest 2003–04 outturn figures available at the time the forecast was being prepared. More recent figures were available by the time the pre-Budget report was published. Similarly, outturn figures published in PESA 2000 and 2004 were those available at the time of publication. Outturn figures can change as further accounting information becomes available.

Other differences in expenditure figures included in pre-Budget report and PESA in the areas below are the responsibility of the Departments and agencies listed.

Northern Ireland social security benefits: Northern Ireland Social Security Agency (NISSA);

Tax Credits: Inland Revenue;

War Pensions: Veterans Agency;

Child Benefit: Inland Revenue and

Paternity and Adoption Pay: Department of Trade and Industry.

Tamworth

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Tamworth constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [221931]

Jane Kennedy: We have undertaken a fundamental overhaul of the welfare system, transforming it to an active system that fights poverty, creates opportunity and helps people become self-sufficient and independent.

Since 2001, the Government have significantly extended and improved civil rights for disabled people in areas such as employment, education, access to goods and services and transport. Disabled people in Tamworth will have benefited from these improvements

in disability rights. Similarly, families with severely disabled 3 and 4-year-old children who are unable, or virtually unable to walk, will have benefited from the Government's decision to lower the minimum age entitlement to the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance from April 2001, whilst older and less well off carers have gained extra help through the provisions within the National Carers Strategy.

In 2002–03 we estimate there were around 10 million adults (22 per cent.) and 0.7 million children (5 per cent.) in Great Britain likely to be covered by the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The figures can be broken down to regional level which shows that 21 per cent. of adults and 6 per cent. of children in the West Midlands region are likely to be covered by the provisions of the DDA.

Information on the numbers of customers in Tamworth who are in receipt of disability living allowance (DLA) and attendance allowance (AA) is in the table.

Disability living allowance/attendance allowance recipients—Tamworth

Operational year	*Number*
2001	5,700
2002	6,000
2003	6,300
2004	6,500

Source:
DWP Information Centre. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and are from a 5 per cent. sample at 31 August each year.

Through Jobcentre Plus we are promoting work as the best form of welfare for people of working age. The number of people in work is at historically high levels of over 28.5 million; in Tamworth the proportion in employment has increased by 1 point since 1997 to 72.8 per cent.

Our New Deals have helped lone parents, the young unemployed, the long-term unemployed, disabled people, the over-50s and partners of unemployed people to move from benefit into work. Nationally over 1.25 million people have been helped into work by the New Deals, with 1,890 in Tamworth alone.

Significant progress has been made in eradicating child poverty and the latest figures (for 2002–03) show that, in the UK, there were over half a million fewer children in relative low income than there were in 1996–97. Since 2001–02 incomes for lone parents in receipt of benefit have risen by more than prices or the cost of living. In April 2005 the child allowance rate in income support for a child up to 18 years old will have been increased by 40 per cent. since 2001–02. Child rates in income support and jobseeker's allowance are also being increased above inflation in April 2005 in line with child tax credit upratings. All of this has benefited 1,300 families in Tamworth.

We want all pensioners to have a decent and secure income in retirement and to share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country and our first priority has been to help the poorest pensioners. The Government will be spending nearly £10 billion more in 2004–05 (in 2004–05 prices) on pensioners as a result of measures introduced since 1997, with around half going to the poorest third.

Our reforms include the State Second Pension which helps more future pensioners build up better pensions, especially carers. Pension credit, introduced from October 2003, provides a contribution to a guaranteed minimum income for those aged 60 and over and, for the first time, those aged 65 and over may be rewarded for savings and income. As of December 2004 around 3,855 pensioners in Tamworth were receiving pension credit, with an average award of £38.29 per week.

We know that older people are disproportionately affected by fuel poverty. This winter (2004–05) we have again made available a winter fuel payment of £200 for each eligible household with someone aged 60 or over and £300 to those with someone aged 80 or over to help with their fuel bills. Additionally, for this year, eligible households with someone aged 70 or over will receive the one-off 70+ payment of £100 to help with living expenses including council tax bills. It is paid with the winter fuel payment.

The constituency data on winter fuel payments and the additional 80+ annual payment is available in the Library.

Since 1997 single pensioners and pensioner couples have seen a real terms increase in their basic state pension of 7 per cent. and 8 per cent. respectively. Some 14,400 pensioners in Tamworth have benefited from this increase.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Edinburgh, North and Leith have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [222908]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of senior citizens in Edinburgh, North and Leith who have benefited from the winter fuel payment in each year for which figures are available is in the Library.

Women in Poverty

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women were living in poverty on the latest date for which figures are available, broken down by women of *(a)* Asian, *(b)* black, *(c)* white and *(d)* other ethnic groups. [221602]

Mr. Pond: Poverty is about more than low income; it also impacts on the way people live—their health, housing and the quality of their environment. The sixth annual 'Opportunity for all' report (Cm 6239), published in September 2004, sets out the Government's strategy for tackling poverty and social exclusion and presents information on the indicators used to measure progress against this strategy.

Specific information regarding low income for the United Kingdom is available in 'Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03'. It should be noted that the reporting of year on year changes of low-income rates for small ethnic groups are not reliable. Both publications are in the Library.

According to the latest data, in 2002–03, 3.7 million women in Great Britain were living in households with income below 60 per cent. of median income on the Before Housing Costs measure, and 4.7 million women

were living in low income using a similar threshold on the After Housing Costs measure. Robust estimates of the number of individuals by ethnic group are not available. The estimated proportion of women by ethnic group and the proportion of individuals for each ethnic group that were in low income in 2002–03 are in the following tables.

Proportion of all women living in low income households—broken down by ethnic group

Percentage

Ethnic status	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
White	88	87
Asian	7	7
Other	5	6

Proportion of women in each ethnic group living in low income households[1]

Percentage

Ethnic status	*Before housing costs*	*After housing costs*
White	16	20
Asian	34	40
Of which:		
Bangladeshi/Pakistani	55	64
Indian	21	24
Other	22	33

[1] This table gives an estimate of the 'risk' of low income.

Notes:

1. A breakdown for Bangladeshi/Pakistani and Indian is provided for information as there were a greater proportion of Bangladeshi/Pakistani individuals in low income than there was for other ethnic groups.
2. "Low income households" is defined as households below 60 per cent. median income.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Congestion Charge

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much has been spent on congestion *(a)* charges and *(b)* penalty charge notices by the Department since the commencement of the congestion charging scheme. [213823]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has spent the following amounts on congestion *(a)* charging and *(b)* penalty charge notices since the commencement of the congestion charging scheme:

(a) Charges: £1,390.00

(b) Penalties: £2,690.00

The Department's policy is to recover penalty charges from the drivers who incur them.

Deaths in Custody (Legal Aid)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list those cases in which he has *(a)* awarded and *(b)* not awarded legal aid to families in inquests into deaths in custody since taking office. [222963]

Mr. Lammy: Since November 2001 the Legal Services Commission has been authorised by the Lord Chancellor to fund advocacy at inquests into deaths occurring in police or prison custody, or during the course of police arrest, search, pursuit or shooting, subject to the statutory financial eligibility limits.

From December 2003, Ministers have had the power to waive the financial eligibility limits for legal aid in cases that may engage Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and where it is equitable to do so. Using this power, I have authorised funding for legal representation in 21 death in custody inquests, as at 18 March 2005. I have not refused funding for any death in custody inquest. The numbers break down as follows:

April to March	*Number*
2003–04	10
2004–05	11

Domestic Property Sales

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, how many domestic property sales above £120,000 took place in Pendle in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what percentage of the total domestic sales in Pendle this represents. [223376]

Mr. Lammy: In the calendar year 2004, 537 domestic properties were sold in Pendle for more than £120,000. This represents 16.69 per cent. of all domestic property sales in that district.

Immigration Adjudicators

Mrs. Roche: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the nature is of the training for immigration adjudicators organised and facilitated by senior judicial members of the immigration appellate authority. [221783]

Mr. Lammy: The training provided for immigration adjudicators, organised and facilitated by senior judicial members of the immigration appellate authority (IAA), is tailored to be legislatively relevant, and to reflect the changing environment of asylum and immigration decision making. In 2004 the chief adjudicator introduced a dedicated post of training adjudicator, which has improved the development, and delivery, of training packages to reflect the needs of immigration adjudicators in what is a rapidly developing jurisdiction. The training adjudicator is currently responsible for the facilitation of a series of judicial training conferences, underpinning the transition from the IAA into the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT). These recent conferences were designed to provide the immigration judiciary with the appropriate resources, and legislative knowledge, to continue to produce high quality decisions within the new tribunal.

Minority Indigenous Languages

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on initiatives taken through the British Irish

Council to advance minority indigenous languages in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales and *(c)* Ireland following the discussions at the Fifth Summit. [222849]

Mr. Lammy: At the Fifth Summit of the British-Irish Council, it was agreed that members would:

Jointly consider outcomes of research into inter-generational language transmission;

Carry out an assessment of structures supporting indigenous language learning in adult education in each of the BIC administrations;

Work together to identify priorities for their respective indigenous language use surveys;

Consider together the potential benefits of co-operating on the development of language use surveys;

Share information on their experiences of the relationship between planning policy and linguistic considerations.

This work has been carried forward by the Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages Sectoral Group of the council, which is led by the Welsh Assembly Government. The group has decided to focus on three specific areas, namely language transmission within the family, the teaching of Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages in the field of education and Information and Communications Technology.

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what support has been given to Iomairt Cholm Chille in promoting co-operation through the British Irish Council on minority language issues. [222850]

Mr. Lammy: Work on minority language issues is taken forward by the Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-used Languages Sectoral Working Group of the council, which is led by the Welsh Assembly Government. It would be for members of that group to propose the involvement of non-governmental organisations. To date, such involvement has included, or will include input from various language boards, adult education providers and community-based language groups such as the Welsh Mentrau Iaith.

Non-family Civil Legal Aid

Ross Cranston: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what percentage of the population was eligible for non-family civil legal aid in each of the last 20 years; and if he will make a statement. [222729]

Mr. Lammy: We do not have precise figures for the last 20 years. Estimates of the proportion of individuals eligible for civil legal aid generally from 1986 to 2000 are set out on the following table.

	Percentage individuals eligible
1986	63
1987	60
1988	58
1989	59
1990	56
1991	55
1992	56
1993	52
1994	54
1995	54
1996	52
1997	52
1998	52
1999	51
2000	50

More recent surveys estimate that the proportion of the population eligible for civil legal aid generally has remained at approximately 50 per cent. since 2000.

Nuclear Test Veterans

Mr. Todd: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what representations he has received concerning the continuance of Legal Services Commission funding for the claims of British nuclear test veterans against the Ministry of Defence; and if he will make a statement. [222551]

Mr. Lammy: I have received one letter from the hon. Member for Bournemouth, West (Sir John Butterfill) on this subject. The Department is not aware of receiving any other representations, although data on correspondence are not recorded to give a categorical answer.

I am aware that there has been a dialogue between the Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the applicants' solicitors regarding the continuation of funding.

At the time of writing the LSC has recently received correspondence and enquiries from four MPs, on behalf of constituents who are members of the British Nuclear Test Victims Association.

The LSC granted limited funding in June 2002 to two firms of solicitors to undertake preliminary investigations.

The LSC made an assessment of the atomic veterans' Multi Party Action (MPA) in October 2004. This action not only includes British veterans, but nationals from New Zealand and Fiji. The LSC is currently awaiting further information from the solicitors to enable a decision to be made whether further funding should be provided. Once the information is available the Commission will first consider the merits and then whether the action is affordable from the cash limited budget, having compared it with other major group actions that are being proposed. This is the standard procedure that the Commission currently applies to any major MPA.

Personal Accident Cases

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will take steps to regulate companies involved in no win, no fee claims in personal accident cases. [222249]

Mr. Lammy: The claims management sector must be properly regulated. Many claims management companies have failed to demonstrate the commitment I would have hoped to see by now despite the efforts by the Claims Standard Council. I will be considering how best to safeguard consumer interests now and for the future as we take forward the Clementi reforms.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221667]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's commitment not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of religion or belief is set out in its Equality and Diversity Policy. The Department has not issued specific guidance on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. General guidance on dress places the responsibility on individual managers to inform their employees of the dress code for their particular office. In devising a dress code the guidance requires managers to consult and ensure that they do not discriminate on any grounds and, where an employee's religion requires them to observe a particular dress code, this should be respected. However, recognition and respect for faith must be balanced against considerations for health, safety and security.

The Department's Corporate Diversity Unit is currently devising a toolkit on religion and belief which is intended to include guidance on the wearing of religious objects including the Kirpan.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to focus the asylum system on those genuinely fleeing persecution by taking speedy, high quality decisions and reducing significantly unfounded asylum claims; [219147]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to ensure the fast turnaround of manifestly unfounded asylum cases; [219148]

(3) whether the public service agreement target to ensure that 75 per cent. of substantive asylum applications are decided within two months by 2004 was met; [219149]

(4) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to enforce the immigration laws more effectively by removing a greater proportion of failed asylum seekers; [219150]

(5) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce unfounded asylum claims; [219157]

(6) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to tackle abuse of the immigration laws and promote controlled legal migration. [219158]

Mr. Lammy: I refer the hon. Gentleman for Buckingham to the answer given by the Minister for Citizenship and Immigration, my hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock and Loudoun (Mr. Browne) on 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 205W.

HEALTH

Acute Hospital Beds

Mr. Blunt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many acute hospital beds there are in *(a)* England and *(b)* Surrey and Sussex; and how many acute beds per 100,000 of population there are in (i) County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area and (ii) Surrey and Sussex SHA area. [222962]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Acute hospital beds	*Number*
England	109,846
Surrey and Sussex strategic health authority (SHA)	4,931
Acute beds per 100,000 population	
County Durham and Tees Valley SHA	250
Surrey and Sussex SHA	193

Source:
Beds data: KH03, Population figures: Office for National Statistics mid-2002 estimates.

Alcohol

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many admissions via accident and emergency to NHS hospitals in England for alcohol-related conditions there were in each year from 1997, broken down by trust; and if he will make a statement. [222545]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Alcohol-related Emergency Admissions (Lancashire)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many alcohol-related emergency cases there were in hospitals in Lancashire in the last period for which figures are available. [221986]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table the number of alcohol-related[1] finished admission episodes for acute national health service trusts in Lancashire during 2003–04, where the admission method was emergency.

NHS trust	*Finished admission episodes*
Morecambe Bay hospitals NHS Trust	1,258
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	777
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre hospitals NHS Trust	656
Lancashire Teaching hospitals NHS Trust	1,425
East Lancashire hospitals NHS Trust	1,399

Notes to table:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (six prior to 2002–03) secondary diagnosis fields in HES that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care.

Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

Note:

[1] ICD-10 codes—"alcohol related" as advised by NHS Information Authority clinical coding service. Counts include any of the records where the following listed codes are recorded in the primary or secondary field:

Primary diagnosis:

F10.–Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol

T51.–Toxic effect of alcohol

R78.0–Finding of alcohol in blood Secondary Diagnosis

F10.–Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol

T51.–Toxic effect of alcohol

X45.–Alcohol poisoning and exposure to alcohol

X65.–Intentional self poisoning by and exposure to alcohol

Y90.–Evidence of alcohol involvement determined by alcohol level

Y91.–Evidence of alcohol involvement determined by level of intoxication

R78.0–Finding of alcohol in blood

Z72.1–Alcohol use

Ambulance Response Times

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average response time for ambulances attending 999 calls was in Coventry in each year since 1997. [222614]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally in the format requested.

Data on response times for West Midlands Ambulance Service, which includes Coventry, is shown in the table.

Further information can be found in the statistical bulletin, "Ambulance services, England: 2003–04". A copy is available in the Library and on the Department's website at: www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0411.htm

Percentage of Category A calls responded within 8 minutes

	West Midlands
1997–98	61.2
1998–99	61.6
1999–2000	64.0
2000–01	69.5
2001–02	76.0
2002–03	78.3
2003–04[1]	76.4

Percentage of Category A calls responded within 14 to 19 minutes

	West Midlands
1997–98	96.5
1998–99	96.6
1999–2000	96.9
2000–01	97.1
2001–02	99.3
2002–03	97.3
2003–04[1]	96.3

Percentage of Category B/C calls responded within 14 to 19 minutes

	West Midlands
1997–98	95.9
1998–99	94.8
1999–2000	95.8
2000–01	94.4
2001–02	94.2
2002–03	91.2
2003–04[1]	90.5

Percentage of urgent journeys with arrival time no more than 15 minutes late

	West Midlands
1997–98	77.8
1998–99	78.9
1999–2000	73.5
2000–01	68.0
2001–02	68.5
2002–03	71.1
2003–04[1]	74.6

[1] In 2003–04 the area covered by West Midlands Ambulance Service was increased to include Shropshire.

Autism

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of provision of services for autistic *(a)* children and *(b)* adults in Kent. [222730]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Department has not made an assessment of the provision of services for autistic children and adults in Kent. Our policy of Shifting the Balance of Power means that responsibility for the provision of local health services now rests with primary care trusts (PCTs). It is for PCTs, in conjunction with strategic health authorities, to ensure that local services meet the needs of their local communities.

British Pregnancy Advisory Service

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects his Department to issue its report on the British Pregnancy Advisory Service. [221746]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Chief Medical Officer (CMO) is currently investigating this matter and will draw conclusions and make recommendations to the Secretary of State. The CMO expects to be able to submit his report to the Secretary of State shortly.

Cancelled Operations

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cancelled operations there were in each quarter of 2004–05 in the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust. [222480]

Dr. Ladyman: The published data for last minute cancelled operations in each of the last three quarters of 2004–05 for West Suffolk Hospitals National Health Service Trust are shown in the table.

Quarter (2004–05)	Number of last minute cancelled operations
1 (April-June)	56
2 (July-September)	98
3 (October-December)	313

The quarterly trend for the trust is not uncommon. Traditionally, the number of cancelled operations in the winter months (quarter three) is generally higher than other quarters in most trusts.

Deafness

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the use of funds allocated to primary care trusts for the purpose of ensuring that deaf people receive equal treatment and access to medical care; and if he will make a statement; [222467]

(2) what plans he has to issue instructions to *(a)* primary care trusts, *(b)* health trusts and *(c)* foundation hospitals to record deafness and the preferred communication method for the purpose of the proposed needs assessments to be undertaken by these bodies. [222548]

Dr. Ladyman: The Healthcare Commission is responsible for regulating and inspecting national health service services including those for deaf people.

The Department has no plans to issue such guidance to health and social care providers at a local level. However, individual health and social care practitioners are expected to record the preferred methods of communication of deaf and hard of hearing clients.

Good practice guidance published jointly by the Department and the Disability Rights Commission last year gives practical suggestions of ways in which NHS managers and healthcare staff can make a real difference by meeting the needs of disabled service users, including those who are deaf.

Information on deafness is not collected centrally.

Dementia

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assistance his Department provides for *(a)* people who suffer from dementia and *(b)* their carers; and if he will make a statement. [221366]

Dr. Ladyman: Standard 8 of the national service framework for older people, launched in 2001, sets out service models, actions and milestones for the national health service and social care organisations in the provision of services for older people with dementia and depression, and their carers.

A carers' grant was introduced in 1999 to support councils in providing breaks and services for carers in England. The grant has been increased annually and has provided an extra £225 million over the past four years. It was worth £100 million during 2003–04, helping an additional 130,000 carers. The carers' grant will be £185 million in 2005–06 and will continue until 2007–08 at least. Councils will be able to use the money to give carers help with taking a break from caring and also to give them on-going support with caring.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to change the drugs available on prescription for people who suffer from dementia; and if he will make a statement. [221367]

Ms Rosie Winterton: None, but the hon. Member may wish to consult the record of the recent debate in Westminster Hall, *Official Report*, columns 93–101WH, which outlines a number of issues the Department will be raising in its response to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's current consultation on its draft appraisal of drugs for Alzheimer's disease.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what treatment is available for people with dementia on the national health service; [222695]

(2) what plans he has to improve the service provided to Alzheimer sufferers. [222696]

Dr. Ladyman: Standard 8 of the national service framework for older people sets out service models, actions and milestones for the national health service in the provision of services for older people with dementia and depression.

In 2003, the then Secretary of State for Health, my right hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn), announced that, as part of the eighth wave of its work, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence would be producing comprehensive guidelines on all aspects of dementia care, including the use of antipsychotic drugs. A draft will be available for consultation in 2006.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the individual cost to the NHS is of *(a)* assessment, *(b)* fitting and *(c)* follow-up in providing a digital hearing aid. [222030]

Dr. Ladyman: Following a change in accounting procedures, data on the costs of digital hearing aids is no longer included in the annual collection of unit costs and activity data from national health service providers. In the last year for which information was available, 2002–03, the average cost of a digital hearing aid was £140.

European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the activity of the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products in the UK in the last 12 months; and if he will list the publications and newsletters published by the Agency over that period. [215274]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The activities of the European Medicines Agency (EMA), the name of which was changed as of 20 May 2004, will be reported in the annual report for 2004, which is likely to be published in the coming weeks.

The EMA's activities during 2004 covered European Union enlargement; medicines for human use; medicines for veterinary use; working with regulators across the world; the European medicines network;

making structural changes to the organisation and planning for the future, which is set out in the road map 2010.

The EMA publishes a large number of documents each year. All documents are available free of charge on the EMA website at www.emea.eu.int.

Freedom of Information Act

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of requests made to the NHS and its agencies under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 since 1 January. [222526]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Department did not make estimates in advance of numbers of Freedom of Information requests likely to be received by organisations in the national health service, as there was no sound basis for doing so.

General Practitioners

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have been received on the new GP out-of-hours service in *(a)* England and *(b)* Leicester since its introduction. [222785]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not centrally available.

Health Statistics (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were waiting to see a consultant at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital on *(a)* 1 May 1997, *(b)* 7 June 2001 and *(c)* the latest date for which figures are available. [223157]

Dr. Ladyman: The information for individual hospitals is not held centrally.

The table shows the total number of patients waiting for admission to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital National Health Service Trust for the nearest dates to those specified.

Period	*Total waiting*
31 March 1997	4,245
30 June 2001	4,210
30 September 2003	3,648

Hospital Car Parking

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice his Department gives to hospital trusts on the policy of charging *(a)* staff, *(b)* visitors and *(c)* patients for hospital car parking. [222284]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Guidance on car parking charges was issued to national health service hospitals in March 1996. The guidance allows individual hospitals to decide whether or not to charge staff, visitors and patients for car parking and the cost of such charges in the light of local circumstances. Where charges are introduced, patients who are eligible to claim reimbursement of travelling expenses under the hospital travel costs scheme may have the charges reimbursed.

Hospital Energy Bills

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the annual energy bill has been at NHS hospitals in each of the last 10 years; [221999]

(2) what steps his Department has taken to improve the energy efficiency of NHS hospitals. [222000]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table. Data on energy costs is not available before 1998–99.

£ million

	Total annual cost of energy
1998–99	177
1999–2000	183
2000–01	197
2001–02	243
2002–03	244
2003–04	261

The figures quoted are as reported by the national health service and include costs for all forms of energy used, e.g., coal, gas and electricity sourced both locally and from outside suppliers.

Under the requirements of the Government's climate change programme, the Department has set mandatory energy/carbon efficiency targets on the NHS in England to:

Reduce the level of primary energy consumption by 15 per cent., or 0.15 million tonnes carbon from March 2000 to March 2010.

Achieve a target of 35–55 GigaJoules/100 cubic metres energy efficiency performance for the healthcare estate for all new capital developments and major redevelopments or refurbishments.

Achieve a target of 55–65 GigaJoules/100 cubic metres for all existing facilities.

In November 2004, the NHS Estates Agency issued guidance, entitled, "Carbon/energy management in healthcare—best practice advice for the NHS in England on meeting the mandatory carbon/energy targets—March 2000-March 2010", to assist the NHS and to ensure the requirements are kept in focus. The larger more energy intensive elements of the NHS estate are subject to the requirements of the emission trading scheme, which sets a cap on carbon emissions.

Intensive Care Bed Register

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) on how many occasions there were no intensive care beds available on the intensive care bed register in each NHS region in each year since 1997; [222137]

(2) how many *(a)* intensive care beds, *(b)* high dependency beds and *(c)* total critical care beds there have been in the NHS in each year since 1997; and what plans he has to increase the number of such beds. [222143]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect information on the intensive care bed register.

The available data on intensive care and high dependency provision has been published since March 1999. The latest figures show that there were a total of 3,213 critical care beds in January 2005 compared with 2,362 in January 2000—a 36 per cent. increase.

Copies of the statistical publications are available in the Library. Data from July 2001 to the most recent available are also available on the Department's website at: www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/index.htm.

IT Projects

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many trusts in each of the clusters of the NHS National Programme for IT he expects will have implemented and begun to use patient administration systems that form the first release of the common reference solution delivered by local service providers by the end of March; [220859]

(2) how many trusts in each of the clusters of the NHS National Programme for IT he expects will have implemented and begun to use the patient administration systems that form the first release of common reference solution delivered by local service providers by the end of December. [220865]

Mr. Hutton: By the end of March, none. The anticipated numbers by the end of December, broken down by cluster area, are shown in the table.

Cluster	*Trusts*
North West and West Midlands	37
North East	15
Eastern	29
London	4
Southern	5
Total	90

These year-end figures are broadly in line with the high level profile in the latest published indicative implementation schedule for the national programme for information technology. This will be subject to change as details of local implementation plans become firmer.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Government's target remains that Choose and Book will be implemented across England by the end of 2005. [220866]

Mr. Hutton: The Government's targets are for all patients to be offered the choice of at least four or five providers at the point of general practitioner referral and for patients to be able to book the date and time of their hospital appointment by the end of 2005. The Choose and Book service will greatly assist local health communities in achieving these targets.

We have asked the national health service to produce revised returns showing how they plan to roll out the Choose and Book service. We have asked strategic health authorities as a guide to aim for the Choose and Book service to be used for at least 80 per cent. of GP referrals for first consultant outpatient appointments by the end of 2005. Where the Choose and Book service is not being used by this date, there will be other systems in place to ensure that patients receive a choice of four to five providers and can book the date and time of their appointment.

Medical Staff Salaries

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average salary of *(a)* medical consultants, *(b)* junior doctors and *(c)* nurses has been in each year since 1997. [221814]

Mr. Hutton: The Department only holds figures for 1999, 2000 and 2002. These are shown in the table.

Average annualised salary for selected groups of national health service staff

	Mean annualised earnings (£)		
England	*1999*	*2000*	*2002*
All consultants	63,000	65,000	70,600
Doctors in training and equivalents	24,300	25,100	27,600
Qualified nurses	18,600	19,400	21,100

NHS Campuses

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what definition he uses, in the context of the new priorities for the Learning Disability Development Fund, of a NHS Campus; which NHS trusts include a campus within their provision; how many people with a learning disability there are in each campus setting; and what targets have been set for the reprovision of campuses into more appropriate settings in the community. [222624]

Dr. Ladyman: A national health service residential campus is a:

> "Service operated by an NHS Trust comprising housing, some of which will be clustered on one site, together with some shared central facilities and developed as a direct result of the closure of NHS hospitals". Valuing People, Department of Health, March 2001.

A survey was undertaken on behalf of the Valuing People support team (VPST) in 2003. Data collection proved difficult, so the Department has confidence in the overall figures, but not in the individual NHS trust data. The current estimate is that there are approximately 3,000 people living in NHS campuses and approximately a further 3,000 people living in arrangements where NHS trusts are involved but in partnership with other providers. A further survey to improve accuracy is currently underway.

In the implementation guidance for "Valuing People" (HSC 2001/016:LAC(2001)23), objective 6 is clear that people with learning disabilities and their families should be supported to have greater choice and control over where and how they live. Sub-objective 6.3 also states the intention of:

> "Enabling all people currently in NHS long-stay hospitals to move into more appropriate accommodation and reviewing the quality of outcomes for people living in residential campuses".

NHS Pensions

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the proposed new NHS pension arrangements on

levels of early retirement in advance of the deadline for transfer to the new scheme; and if he will make a statement. [223062]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Confederation is currently consulting scheme members and other interested parties on proposals for changes to the NHS Pension Scheme for England and Wales. Consultation closes on 11 April. Ministers will make decisions on changes to the scheme following consultation, taking full account of the responses received and of the likely impact of changes on the recruitment and retention of high quality and motivated staff.

Oxford Radcliffe NHS Trust

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mothers due to give birth to premature babies in Oxfordshire were sent elsewhere in the UK because the Oxford Radcliffe NHS trust was unable to admit them either at the John Radcliffe or Horton hospitals in the last three years. [222559]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Seroxat

Mr. Luke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will meet a party of hon. Members and members of the Seroxat Users' Group. [222409]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* My noble friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Lord Warner) has agreed to meet with the hon. member to discuss the concerns of the Seroxat Users' Group and is in correspondence to clarify these concerns.

Social Workers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many social workers *(a)* are and *(b)* have yet to be fully registered. [222202]

Dr. Ladyman: Data provided by the General Social Care Council (GSCC), on behalf of the Department, shows that 61,676 social workers have applied for registration with the GSCC. Of these, all are either fully registered or are through the initial stages of the registration process. 33,803 were registered by noon on 18 March 2005, which is the majority of those that applied before the cut-off date. Remaining applicants will be registered within three months.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future of strategic health authorities. [218924]

Mr. Hutton: I refer my hon. Friend to "Creating a Patient-led NHS, Delivering the NHS Improvement Plan", which is available in the Library. Chapters three and five of this document include information on the future role of strategic health authorities.

Strategy Documents

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* white papers, *(b)* green papers and *(c)* key strategy documents have been published by his Department since 1997, broken down by (i) title and (ii) date of publication. [218109]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since May 1997, the Department has published 10 White Papers, five Green Papers and 34 other key strategy documents, which are shown in the table.

Title	*Year*
White papers	
The new NHS: modern, dependable	1997
Modernising social services: promoting independence, improving protection, raising standards	1998
Smoking kills: a White Paper on tobacco	1998
The Food Standards Agency: a force for change	1998
Saving lives: Our Healthier Nation	1999
The NHS plan: a plan for investment, a plan for reform	2000
Valuing people: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century	2001
Building on the best: choice, responsiveness and equity in the NHS	2003
Our inheritance, our future: realising the potential of genetics in the NHS	2003
Choosing health: making healthy choices easier	2004
Green Papers	
Our healthier nation: a contract for health	1998
Adoption: a new approach	2000
Reforming the Mental Health Act	2000
Mental Health Bill consultation document	2002
Draft Mental Health Bill	2004
Other key strategy documents	
A first class service quality in the new NHS	1998
Information for health: an information strategy for the modern NHS, 1998–2005	1999
National service framework for diabetes	1999
National service framework for mental health	1999
A quality strategy for social care	1999
Agenda for change: modernising the NHS pay system	2000
National service framework for coronary heart disease	2000
Pharmacy in the future: implementing the NHS Plan	2000
Quality and performance in the NHS	2000
The NHS cancer plan: a plan for investment, a plan for reform	2000

Title	Year
Building a safer NHS for patients: implementing an organisation with a memory	2001
National service framework for older people	2001
Shifting the balance of power within the NHS: securing delivery	2001
The national strategy for sexual health and HIV: better prevention, better services, better sexual health	2001
Consultant contract framework	2002
Getting ahead of the curve: a strategy for combating infectious diseases (including other aspects of health protection)	2002
Hepatitis C strategy for England	2002
HR in the NHS Plan: more staff working differently	2002
Improvement, expansion and reform: the next three years priorities and planning framework, 2003–2006	2002
Introducing payment by results: the NHS financial reforms	2002
National suicide prevention strategy for England	2002
NHS dentistry: options for change	2002
Patient and public involvement: the future picture	2002
Delivering the NHS Plan: next steps on investment, next steps on reform	2002
Confidentiality the Caldicott way	2003
Developing NHS Direct: a strategy document for the next three years	2003
Keeping the NHS local: a new direction of travel	2003
National service framework for children, young people and maternity services	2004
National service framework for renal services	2004
Practice based commissioning	2004
Reconfiguring the Department of Health's arm's length bodies	2004
Standards for better health	2004
The NHS improvement plan: putting people at the heart of public services	2004
National service framework for long term conditions	2005

Like previous Governments, we have published many other documents, including responses to parliamentary committee's reports.

Surgical Instruments

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment has been made of the need for the individual coding of surgical instruments under contract requirements for the new regional super centres being established for the decontamination of surgical instruments; [220579]

(2) how many NHS hospital trusts have a bar code system in place for the management of surgical instruments; [220580]

(3) what assessment has been made of the likely effect on patient safety of adopting bar coding for individual surgical instruments; [220581]

(4) what assessment has been made of the merits of adopting a system of individual surgical instrument traceability in NHS trusts; [220582]

(5) what assessment has been made of the implementation of the guidance in Health Service Circular 2000/32 regarding systems for the tracing of surgical instrument sets to patients on whom they have been used; [220588]

(6) if he will require the use of bar coding for surgical instruments in those areas where sterile service super centres are to be introduced; [220634]

(7) how many NHS trusts have the capacity to identify individual surgical instruments used after a high risk patient has been identified. [220635]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's guidance on the tracking of surgical instruments is contained in Health Service Circular (HSC) 2000/032 (Decontamination of Surgical Instruments). This asked chief executives of national health service trusts to have taken steps, by April 2002, towards having systems in place to enable the tracing of surgical instrument sets to patients on whom they have been used. The presence (or absence) of such a system was taken into account in assessing each NHS trust's compliance with the Department's guidance made as part of the "Review of the decontamination of surgical instruments in the NHS in England", published in December 2001. NHS trusts are not required to report to the Department which tracing system they use.

Compliance with the provisions of the Medical Devices Directive (93/42 EEC)—compulsory for commercial reprocessing centres providing a service to the NHS—implies the ability to track surgical instruments through the system. It does not—and nor does Departmental guidance—require any particular form of marking, such as bar codes, to be used. The detailed contents of contracts between NHS organisations and private sector providers of decontamination services are a matter for the parties concerned.

The Department's guidance on handling instruments used on suspected CJD patients or in certain brain biopsies recommends that such instruments should be quarantined pending confirmation of a diagnosis. All hospitals that have implemented the guidance in HSC 2000/032 will have the capacity to do this. Other than the review published in 2001, no complete survey of their compliance has been undertaken.

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA) has commissioned a survey that includes tracking and tracing systems in use in NHS trusts. NHS PASA is also discussing with the NHS the technologies presently available for marking instruments, such as laser etching; and those being developed, such as the implantation of radio frequency identification chips in individual instruments.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards achieving the public service agreement target of enhancing accountability to patients and the public. [219229]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A new set of arrangements have been put in place to enhance accountability to patients and the public. Patients' forums have been set up to monitor local health services and to feed back the views of local people to the trusts. Patient advice and liaison services provide information, advice and support to help patients, families and their carers. Independent complaints advocacy services offer support to patients and their carers wishing to pursue a complaint about their national health service treatment or care. Health overview and scrutiny committees in local authorities are scrutinising health services and a new duty has been placed on the NHS to involve and consult in service planning and operation, and in the development of proposals for changes. The advent of NHS foundation trusts has further led to greater accountability to patients and the public by enabling far greater local ownership and involvement of patients, the public and staff.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards achieving the public service agreement target of securing sustained national improvements in patient experience as measured by independently validated national surveys. [219230]

Ms Rosie Winterton: With reference to improving the patient experience, national patient survey results to date show that the vast majority of patients—across all surveys—are positive about the overall care that they receive and the national health service staff who provide that care. For example, they have confidence and trust in staff, feel involved in their treatment/care, feel that they are listened to, get answers to any questions they have in a way they can understand and are treated with respect and dignity.

All national patient survey results are posted on the website of the Healthcare Commission at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the public service agreement target to improve the life outcomes of adults and children with mental health problems through year-on-year improvement in access to crisis and child and adolescent mental health services was met in 2004. [219236]

Dr. Ladyman: The target date for access to crisis resolution services for all patients requiring emergency access is December 2005. Based on the rapid expansion in the availability of crisis services and an estimate that 70,000 people will access services in 2004–05, we expect to meet the target.

Information about improvement in access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) in 2004 is being collected through the annual CAMHS mapping exercise. The deadline for finalising data prior to their use by the Healthcare Commission was 28 February 2005. The data is due to be published on 1 June 2005. Data for 2003 and further information about the process for 2004 is available at www.camhsmapping.org.uk.

Wells Report

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the cost of the Wells Report was; and for what reason he does not currently intend to publish the report; [219067]

(2) what the cost was to public funds of the Wells Report. [220094]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No specific budget was allocated to the Wells report work. Its compilation involved the input of many individuals in a number of different organisations. The cost to public funds of the report could therefore be estimated only at disproportionate cost. The report will not be published, as to do so would prejudice similar future examinations of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which other public authorities discharge their functions.

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate for outturn against planned budget for West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust is for *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [222318]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not make any estimates of the outturn against planned budgets for national health service organisations. The audited information in respect to the 2004–05 financial position of the NHS trusts will be published in their individual annual accounts and will be available centrally in autumn 2005. The Department has no plans to publish un-audited information.

The Department does not have any information in respect of 2005–06 and 2006–07. The actual audited information will be available in the autumn following each of those years.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 22 March 2005

TRANSPORT

Airports

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with *(a)* BAA and *(b)* other airport companies about improving (i) the facilities and (ii) cleanliness at UK airports; and if he will make a statement. [221325]

Charlotte Atkins *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Regular meetings with BAA and other airport operators present a good opportunity to discuss a range of airport issues. However, the refurbishment of existing airport facilities and routine methods of maintaining cleanliness are primarily matters for the operators to decide, with appropriate regard to all relevant health and safety legislation.

Enforcement arrangements are subject to local arrangements at each airport but generally the Health and Safety Executive is responsible for enforcement airside, while local authority inspectors are responsible for enforcement at terminal buildings and landside activities. Local authority inspectors are also responsible for enforcing food hygiene and food safety legislation throughout airports, and they consider health, safety and welfare issues affecting employees, including provision and adequacy of welfare activities.

Buses

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pensioners in Morecambe and Lunesdale he expects will benefit from free bus transport. [223475]

Charlotte Atkins: From April 2006, the Government are extending the existing statutory minimum requirement for concessionary fares so that people aged 60 and over and disabled people in England will be guaranteed free off-peak travel on their local bus services, with no charge for the pass.

In Morecambe and Lunesdale, all residents over 60 will benefit from free local bus travel. According to the 2001 census, there were then 20,223 pensioners (men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over) and 22,549 people over 60 in Morecambe and Lunesdale.

Congestion Charge

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on congestion *(a)* charges and *(b)* penalty charge notices by the Department since the commencement of the congestion charging scheme. [213825]

Charlotte Atkins: Information on congestion charges and penalty notices incurred by vehicles provided to the Department by the Government Car and Despatch Agency is included in the response given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 957W.

The central Department has spent £1,168.87 on congestion charges incurred by civil servants on official business. This figure does not include the Department's agencies as they do not record the charges separately from other travel costs and the information could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

The Department does not usually pay congestion penalty charges, as civil servants are personally responsible for such fines. One penalty of £40 was paid soon after the charge was introduced as the penalty was incurred as the result of a payments error.

Crossrail

Clive Efford: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether a full cost benefit analysis has been made of the need for a Crossrail station at Woolwich; and if he will make a statement; [223126]

(2) what consultation has been carried out to ascertain the views of people in southeast London on a Crossrail station at Woolwich; [223127]

(3) what assessment has been made of whether a Crossrail station at Woolwich would meet the Government's integrated transport criteria for new rail schemes; [223128]

(4) if he will ensure that the merits of a station at Woolwich are properly assessed before the Crossrail Bill is presented to the House; [223129]

(5) what estimate has been made of the costs of building a station at Woolwich after the Crossrail link to Abbey Wood has opened. [223130]

Mr. McNulty: A Crossrail station at Woolwich was considered during the development of the project, but could not be justified on the current estimates of cost, passenger numbers and benefits. Crossrail will pass under Woolwich in deep tunnels and the cost of constructing an underground station would therefore be high. In view of this, powers have not been sought for a station at Woolwich in the Bill introduced into Parliament on 22 February 2005. However, the alignment of the tunnels has been designed so as to allow a station at Woolwich to be developed in the future, if it could be justified at that time. An area of land has also been safeguarded for this purpose.

No estimate has been made of the potential cost of constructing a station at Woolwich once Crossrail is operational. However, this would entail closure of the route from Custom House to Abbey Wood for a number of years, and therefore the cost would be greater than for construction before operation.

Cross London Rail Links Ltd., the company set up to develop and promote the Crossrail project, consulted widely including two 12-week rounds of public consultation on the project. During both rounds, public information centres were held at Woolwich and Abbey Wood, to provide information and seek residents' views.

These were supported by mail drops to those potentially affected, newsletters, a dedicated website and a 24-hour telephone helpline.

Gatwick Express Service

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what safety issues *(a)* at stations and *(b)* on trains were considered prior to the publication of the Strategic Rail Authority's Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Study proposal to remove the all day Gatwick Express Service; [222162]

(2) what account the Strategic Rail Authority has taken of the safety report commissioned by BAA and submitted to the Strategic Rail Authority in consideration of its plans to remove the all day Gatwick Express; [222163]

(3) if he will make a statement on the changes proposed for the Gatwick Express Service set out in the Strategic Rail Authority's Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Study; [222164]

(4) what account the Strategic Rail Authority took of the expected increase in numbers of passengers using Gatwick airport outlined in the Air Transport Policy in its Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Study proposals to remove the all day Gatwick Express service; [222168]

(5) what assessment he has made of the expected change in road use that would ensue if proposals to remove the all day Gatwick Express Service, as set out in the Strategic Rail Authority's Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Study, are implemented. [222177]

Mr. McNulty: The draft Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy does not propose removing the London Victoria to Gatwick airport service. It proposes keeping the fast Gatwick to Victoria services, and increasing their frequency from four to eight trains per hour. Services will be extended to cover south coast destinations. In developing the strategy the SRA reviewed a number of documents and data sources to understand future growth demands, this included "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper. The SRA and Network Rail are continuing to work closely together regarding passenger handling issues at Gatwick airport station, and are considering the issues identified in BAA's safety assessment. Given that the RUS proposals aim to improve the performance and reliability of train services on the Brighton Main Line, making services more attractive to passengers, it is not expected to have an adverse effect on road congestion. The views raised in consultation will be taken into account before the final Brighton Main Line Route Utilisation Strategy is issued.

Penalty Payments

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he plans to waive penalty payments for train operating companies involved in industrial disputes. [221006]

Mr. McNulty: Penalty payments are one aspect of franchising. Under the Railways Bill, responsibility for passenger rail franchising would pass to the Secretary of State for Transport and Scottish Ministers as appropriate. Whether and how these specific powers will be used in the future is an issue we will want to consider once Parliament has completed its consideration of the Bill.

Railways

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many recorded *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries there were on railway lines resulting from trespass in (i) Leicester and (ii) England and Wales in each year since 1997. [222892]

Mr. McNulty: The Health and Safety Executive's Railway Inspectorate (HMRI) advises that between 1997 and 2004 there was one fatality (a confirmed suicide in 2000–01), but the provision of more specific detailed information in the form requested would entail disproportionate cost.

Details of the number of fatalities and injuries resulting from railway trespass in Great Britain since 1997 are set out in the following table. HMRI advises that the provision of trespass data for England and Wales since 1997 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Railway fatalities: Trespass and Suicides Great Britain, 1 April 1997 to 31 December 2004

	Trespassers		*Suicides*		*Grand total*	
	Fatal	*Injured*	*Fatal*	*Injured*	*Fatal*	*Injured*
1997–98	108	115	157	21	265	136
1998–99	132	130	115	19	247	149
1999–2000	141	115	133	29	274	144
2000–01	168	148	132	29	300	177
2001–02	147	145	124	34	271	179
2002–03	141	111	117	26	258	137
2003–04	149	113	98	29	247	142
2004[1]	157	—	36	—	193	—

[1] Covers the period 1 April 2004 to 31 December 2004 only; and is provisional and may be subject to change.

Roadside Accidents

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* seriously injured in road accidents involving car occupants unexpectedly requiring to leave their vehicle at the roadside in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [222255]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is not available.

Traffic Commissioners

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many traffic commissioners have undertaken training with the Judicial Studies Board in each year since 2000. [223116]

Mr. Jamieson: All newly appointed traffic commissioners and deputy traffic commissioners attend the Tribunal Skills Development Programme organised by the Judicial Studies Board.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what disciplinary procedures apply when claims of misconduct against a traffic commissioner are substantiated. [223117]

Mr. Jamieson: Paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 to the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 provides that a Traffic Commissioner may be removed from office by the Secretary of State for Transport on the grounds of inability or misbehaviour.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what role his Department's legal team plays in reviewing and deciding what information is to be released to the Law Society in respect of a complaint against a traffic commissioner relating to the commissioner's conduct. [223119]

Mr. Jamieson: Where a body such as the Law Society makes a request for the release of information from the Department, the request will be considered on a case by case basis. The Department's legal team may be requested to advice as necessary.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether it is his Department's practice to indemnify traffic commissioners in any actions brought against them for damages. [223120]

Mr. Jamieson: It is the policy of my Department to indemnify traffic commissioners in any actions brought against them in relation to the exercise of their statutory functions.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether traffic commissioners are required to notify their Department if they have business connections or other involvement with *(a)* haulage contractors, *(b)* coach operators and *(c)* transport consultants. [223121]

Mr. Jamieson: Paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981 provides that if a traffic commissioner acquires a financial interest in a transport undertaking which carries passengers or goods by road within Great Britain, he or she must notify the Secretary of State for Transport within four weeks of the acquisition.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many accidents occurred at the House of Commons premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of the House of Commons Service and *(b)* members of the public. [222565]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Service records and analyses information on the numbers and types of recorded injury accidents affecting those who work on or visit the Houses of Parliament. The following table outlines the statistics for the House of Commons for the past five years:

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
All injury accidents	304	198	155	155	138
House of Commons Service staff	207	143	117	128	99
Members of the public	13	8	2	1	6

The slight increase in injury accidents to members of the public in 2004 may reflect the large increase in numbers of visitors on organised public tours.

Jon Trickett: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission whether the Commission publishes the data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Office; and if he will make a statement. [222580]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Since the House adopted a health and safety risk management strategy in 1999, accident rates have fallen steadily. An annual figure of 372 injury accidents in 2000 dropped to 172 in 2004. During the same period the number of injuries resulting in lost time from work fell from 43 to 15 incidents, indicating that more recent accidents are generally of lesser severity. A number of initiatives are under way to target hazards which may lead to accidents.

Statistical information on the numbers and types of recorded injury accidents for the House of Commons is available from Parliament's Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Service, and is reported to the House's Health and Safety Committee on a quarterly basis. The Committee analyses the information for trends and considers options of future strategy to help improve safety performance and further reduce accident figures. An article on accident statistics over the past five years is scheduled to be published in the next issue of the Parliamentary staff magazine, 'In House'.

Jon Trickett: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of House staff are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222630]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: All injury accidents are required to be recorded on Parliament's Incident Reporting Form in line with accident reporting procedures. Once reported an accident investigation takes place to identify root causes and put in place any reasonably practicable measures to prevent or reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Copies of each accident report are sent to the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Service (OHSWS). OHSWS produce reports and statistical analysis of injury accidents on a quarterly, annual and rolling basis for the House's Health and Safety Committee. Trend analysis and risk assessment further identifies problem areas and helps development of appropriate strategy to improve safety performance and reduce future accident figures.

Early-day Motions

Lembit Öpik: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the marginal cost is of processing an early day motion; and how this figure is calculated. [222678]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Costs of processing Early Day Motions (EDMs) include the time of Clerks in vetting the motion, costs of staff entering the data and costs of printing and publication, which depend on the number of times motions are reprinted. EDMs vary in size and complexity and the number of names added to them may be one or many. Processing and printing EDMs is

only one of a number of tasks carried out by the staff involved and no realistic disaggregation can be made which can give a cost, marginal or otherwise, of all aspects of processing a single EDM. The best estimate available of the overall costs of printing and publishing Early Day Motions in 2003–04 is £573,000, giving an average cost per EDM of £263.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance his Department is giving to the Government of Kyrgyzstan to help it establish a framework for dealing with mentally ill patients in psychiatric institutions. [223201]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) is part of a multi-donor effort to help the Kyrgyz Government develop and fund a health sector strategy for the next 10 years. This comprehensive strategy will include work on mental health.

This assistance is part of DFID's broader programme of support to the Kyrgyz Republic that includes: technical assistance to support the reform of public administration; support for combating HIV/AIDS; strengthening poverty statistics; support for rural livelihoods, water and sanitation.

Oil Extraction (Third World)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assessment he has made of the impact on *(a)* the economies and *(b)* the environment of Third World countries of oil extraction; and if he will make a statement; [222622]

(2) what support his Department gives to Third World countries with regard to oil extraction; and if he will make a statement. [222623]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not directly fund oil extraction in developing countries. We do support the World Bank's involvement in the extractive industries. The oil and gas extractive industries form a very small part of World Bank Group's lending portfolio. Investments are subject to high social and environmental safeguards that set a standard for the industry at large, as set out in the World Bank Extractive Industries Review published in 2004.

We recognise that revenues from oil and gas resources can potentially support economic growth and social development that may lead to reduction in poverty. In some countries, however, the large revenues generated from oil and gas production have been associated with corruption, conflict and increased poverty.

The Prime Minister launched the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in September 2002. It seeks to increase the transparency of payments to Governments by oil, gas, and mining companies; and the transparency in use of revenues by Governments. DFID has led an international coalition of Governments, industry and international organisations, both within and outside countries hosting significant extractive industries, to improve transparency and reporting of revenues. Nine developing countries have committed themselves to implementing the principles of the EITI, with a further four African countries making new commitments at a London conference on 17 March 2005. The World Bank is actively participating.

DFID monitors and comments on the environmental and social impacts of projects and programmes funded by the World Bank and other International Financial Institutions (IFIs), where we have stakeholder obligations as contributors. In some cases we have commissioned independent studies to improve our understanding of key economic and environmental issues and evaluate how they are being addressed. One example is the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline. We have also kept in close touch with the issues raised by the proposed Sakhalin Island 2 oil pipeline development in Russia.

DFID is working with others (including the IFIs) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on improved environmental assessment procedures for use at the planning stages of new projects and programmes. This will include the application of such procedures to large-scale projects in oil extraction, where these are funded by the IFIs.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 14 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [222546]

Margaret Beckett: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Secretary, and I represented the United Kingdom at the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Brussels on 14 March 2005. Ministers responsible for fisheries and agriculture in Northern Ireland and Scotland were also present.

The Council agreed a proposal concerning establishment of an EU Fisheries Control Agency, which the European Council had previously agreed to sit in Spain. We were able to support a compromise proposal for commission representation on the Agency's administrative board.

The Commission reported progress in negotiations with the Russian Federation to agree certain plant and animal health controls. While the UK has not so far been among the member states most affected by Russian requirements, it was encouraging that progress was being made to resolve the remaining differences.

The main item for discussion at this Council was Rural Development. The presidency focused discussion on a small number of issues in the current proposal to revise the Rural Development Regulation, principally

focusing on the LEADER reserve and inviting ments on the Rural Development Strategy which it is planned to table in June. I reiterated the importance we attach to devoting at least half of the financial resources under the Regulation to environmental work, expressed some doubt as to the level of the LEADER reserve proposed and supported others in giving a general welcome to the likely shape of the strategy framework.

The Commission presented a progress report on implementation of the EU forestry strategy. Member states took note.

The Commission also presented proposals for EU measures to address market crises through new risk management techniques in the industry. This was a brief presentation, with substantial discussion planned for later in the year. The Commission made it clear that it opposed extending any kind of generalised safety net provision such as that found in the current beef regime. It also indicated that the use of any modulated funds would only be possible in the context of rural development programmes and measures that were compatible with the WTO Green Box.

Under Any Other Business, we raised the question of cetacean by catches and the need for greater protection of dolphins. The Commission undertook to call for international research on the subject to be accelerated. Portugal drew attention to the difficulties that prolonged drought had caused in its rural areas.

Over lunch, the Commission updated Ministers on the WTO agriculture negotiations. I welcomed recent progress and reminded the Council of the importance of making progress in good time for the Hong Kong Ministerial in December.

Environment Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Environment Council on 10 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [221922]

Mr. Morley: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State attended the Environment Council on 10 March 2005.

The main outcome of the Council was the adoption of two sets of conclusions. One set forms a contribution from the Environment Council to the Spring European Council (scheduled for the 22 and 23 March 2005) and is a response to four Commission communications: the Mid-Term Review of the Lisbon Strategy, the 2004 Environmental Policy Review, an initial review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy and a report on implementation of the Environmental Technologies Action Plan. The second set of conclusions represents the Environment Council's recommendations to the Spring European Council on climate change, specifically medium to long term emission reduction strategies and targets.

Council conclusions on the Environment Council's contribution to the Spring European Council were adopted after a full discussion. Almost all delegations supported the presidency text and emphasised that environmental protection and economic growth went hand in hand. The Secretary of State supported the idea of a statement of principles for sustainable development, but emphasised that these should be integrated into the revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy. In this context, the Secretary of State referred to the recently published UK Sustainable Development Strategy, an executive summary of which was circulated to delegations.

Council conclusions on climate change were adopted following a debate. The conclusions reaffirm the December 2004 Environment Council conclusions, referring to the global nature of climate change and the requirement for international co-operation, and to recent scientific research under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations required to meet the 2 degrees centigrade objective. Drawing on this research, the conclusions suggest the consideration of pathways to 2020 and 2050 for greenhouse gas emission reduction in developed countries. The agreed text makes clear that the EU wishes to explore the future framework with others and that the language on emissions reductions is an evidence-based assessment rather than a prescriptive call for action. The conclusions also invite the European Commission to continue its analysis of costs and benefits of reduction strategies, including the costs of inaction.

Council adopted a Decision on a negotiating mandate for the second Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention on access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters, which is scheduled for 25–27 May 2005 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Council also adopted a negotiating mandate in preparation for the second meeting of the parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, scheduled for 30 May-3 June 2005 in Montreal. The negotiating mandate was adopted under qualified majority voting procedures, following a presidency compromise which included the addition of UK-proposed wording.

Council conclusions were adopted in preparation for the first conference of the parties to the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants, which is scheduled for 2–6 May 2005 in Punta del Este, Uruguay. The presidency thanked the UK for chairing the preparatory work for this conference on its behalf. Council conclusions were agreed unanimously following a small amendment to reflect the concerns of two delegations.

Minister John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), Chair of the 13th Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD 13), briefed the Council on preparations for the next session which will take place on 11–22 April 2005. An exchange of views followed, in

which member states and the Commission stressed the importance of links between CSD 13 and the Millennium Review Summit to be held in September.

Under Other Business, the presidency gave an update on negotiations on the REACH chemicals strategy and Belgium presented items on the import of wild birds and illegal logging. Germany raised the proposed Services Directive, arguing that country of origin rules presented a threat to national environmental standards, and should not result in levelling down, a view which was supported by some other member states. The Commission referred ministers to the recent statements to the Competitiveness Council and European Parliament on this issue, and other delegations took the view it was too early for Environment Council to discuss the scope of this measure. Austria, with support from a number of member states, raised an issue concerning the Commission's approach to national safeguard actions in relation to GM maize variety MON 810. The Netherlands set out concerns about the possible dilution of EU standards in a current review of the automotive industry ('CARS 21') and the Czech Republic announced a forthcoming conference on Acid Deposition.

Environmental Standards

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she takes to ensure that regulatory impact assessments of new policies accurately reflect the economic effects of high environmental standards. [222385]

Mr. Morley: Since 1 April 2004 all new policies have been accompanied by a regulatory impact assessment (RIA). The RIA replaced the integrated policy appraisal (IPA). All RIAs must include an assessment of the environmental and social costs and benefits, in addition to the economic costs and benefits of a new regulation. The full RIA for all policies which affect businesses must also include an assessment of the impact on competition within UK markets.

The majority of UK environmental legislation derives from Europe. Defra and the UK Government are promoting the Better Regulation agenda in Europe, including the use of detailed impact assessments for all policy proposals. The UK will be using its EU presidency to advance this work.

Fisheries

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 171W, on fisheries, what the weights were of the discards estimates. [215340]

Mr. Bradshaw: The tonnage equivalents of the percentages given in response to the hon. Member's previous question are set out in the following table.

Estimates (in tonnes) of discards for the Scottish North Sea fleet and for a representative sample of the English North Sea fleet

Species	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
England			
Cod	1,300	1,350	635
Haddock	3,709	1,073	588
Whiting	7,061	2,642	4,676
Scotland			
Cod	4,440	1,519	1,086
Haddock	86,297	32,196	18,555
Whiting	8,869	8,315	5,931

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make the reduction of cetacean deaths in European fisheries a priority for the UK's Presidency of the European Union. [222859]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK objectives for its Presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2005 include promoting action to protect vulnerable species and habitats with a view to the long term management of healthy fish stocks and the protection of the marine environment. We will also seek to further integrate environmental considerations into fisheries management. These objectives should provide opportunities to address cetacean deaths in fisheries.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK fishing vessels are expected to start the deployment of pingers to prevent porpoise deaths in set net fisheries in the North Sea in June; and if she will bring forward the mandatory deployment of pingers to prevent porpoise deaths in set net fisheries in the English Channel and Celtic Sea. [222860]

Mr. Bradshaw: Council Regulation (EC) no. 812/2004 requires, "inter alia", pinger usage from 1 June 2005 on vessels of 12 metres and over in the North Sea (ICES division IV) when using bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets where the mesh size used is greater than or equal to 220 mm.

The number of vessels that are expected to fall into this category is eight. This figure is based on those involved in the fishery in 2004 but does not take into account movements into and out of the fishery.

The Council Regulation requires the mandatory usage of pingers in the English Channel and Celtic Sea with effect from 1 January 2006 and 1 January 2007 respectively.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much her Department is spending this year and how much was spent in each of the past three years on deployment trials to test the practicality and durability of various pinger models in gillnet and tangle net fisheries off southwest England; and when results are expected from these trials. [222888]

Mr. Bradshaw: A total of over £88,000 has been committed to funding for pingers trials. This was £12,000 in 2003–04 provided by the Sea Fish Industry Authority and £76,000 in 2004–05 with £19,000 from SFIA.

Results are expected by the end of August 2005.

Irradiated Material (Caithness)

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she plans to take to address concerns about potential health risks from irradiated material to people living near Sandside Bay, Caithness. [221739]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* This is a devolved issue concerning a site in Scotland and therefore a matter for the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA).

Nuclear Waste

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of publishing the original Nirex list of potential sites' suitability for the burial of nuclear waste. [222083]

Mr. Morley: The Nirex site list information comes from a historic and abandoned programme. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) does not hold the Nirex site list information. Future policy for the long-term management of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste is currently being considered under the "Managing Radioactive Waste Safety" programme.

River Dove

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress of the preparation of a fluvial strategy for the River Dove. [222179]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is undertaking a flood risk management strategy for the River Dove catchment.

I understand that following consultation on the scoping report in April 2004, the Environment Agency undertook a preliminary strategic review (PSR) of the current flooding situation on the River Dove. This enabled further studies to focus on areas at risk of flooding and key issues.

The PSR highlighted a number of flooding problems in the catchment as well as the potential need for a flood defence scheme at Scopton and Hatton. It also questioned the limitations of the existing hydraulic model and surveys of the river.

In response to this, the Environment Agency is currently undertaking an aerial survey of the river. This will enable improved modelling of the flood plain between Rochester and the confluence with the River Trent, including key tributaries. The agency expect the model to be available from August 2005. It will be used to assess the viability of catchment wide strategic solutions to the flooding problems.

The updated hydraulic model will also be used by the Environment Agency's development control and flood warning teams in their ongoing programmes of continual improvements to their standards of service.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many sites of special scientific interest there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223149]

Mr. Bradshaw: The figures for the number of sites of special scientific interest in Shrewsbury and Atcham borough in each year since 1997 are:

	Number
1997	[1]25
1998	26
1999	26
2000	28
2001	28
2002	28
2003	28
2004	28
2005	28

[1] One more than previously reported in 2001 due to improved mapping and boundary definition.

Wildlife and Countryside Act

Mr. Banks: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many licences have been issued under *(a)* section 16(1)(k) and *(b)* section 16(3)(h) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 in each of the last 10 years. [220243]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The number of licences issued under *(a)* section 16(1)(k)[1] and *(b)* section 16(3)(h)[2] of the Wildlife and presented in the following table.

[1] For the purposes of preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber, [fisheries or inland waters],

[2] For the purposes of preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property or to fisheries.

	(a)	*(b)*	*Total*
2001	100	216	316
2002	112	297	409
2003	176	405	581
2004	281	260	541
2005	118	61	[1]179

[1] Up to 18 March

The analysis of licences issued during the previous five years involves a disproportionate cost and has not been supplied.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Civil Contingencies

Mr. Allan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assistance is being provided by his Department to local authorities to enable them to carry out their duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 in respect of *(a)* local business continuity and *(b)* threats to telecommunications networks. [222235]

Mr. Miliband: I have been asked to reply.

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 requires relevant local authorities to put in place internal business continuity plans and to provide advice and assistance to local businesses and voluntary organisations in relation to business continuity management. The Government held a public consultation on the supporting regulations and guidance between December to March, and will publish the revised package shortly.

The National Infrastructure Security Co-ordination Centre (NISCC) provides guidance to local authorities about the threats to telecommunications systems and building their resilience. The NISCC guidance enables local authorities to make informed decisions about resilience in their dealings with telecommunications service providers.

Housing

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the 2,000 homes for key workers announced under English Partnerships' London-wide Initiative are included in the 15,000 homes being built under the First Time Buyer Initiative. [223280]

Keith Hill: Of the 2,000 affordable homes for sale to be delivered under English Partnerships London-wide Initiative pilot, 1,000 will be made available under the First Time Buyers Initiative announced in January.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many social rented homes have been *(a)* built and *(b)* acquired through the private finance initiative mechanism that will be expanded under Sustainable Communities: Homes for all. [223282]

Keith Hill: Through the private finance initiative (PFI) so far 51 social rented homes have been built and 150 homes have been acquired. Within the next three years the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects a further 387 social rented homes to be built through PFI schemes that reached contract signature in 2004.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects the first property constructed under the First Time Buyers Initiative to be completed. [223289]

Keith Hill: English Partnerships are currently developing the business plan that will underpin the delivery of 15,000 homes under the First Time Buyers Initiative.

It is envisaged that the first homes constructed under the scheme will be completed in 2006.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will establish criteria for the First Time Buyers Initiative that ensure the homes are prioritised for key workers and others on incomes at or below the average for the region. [223292]

Keith Hill: I refer the hon. Member to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Public Service Plan 'Homes for All', presented to the House on 24 January of this year. Paragraphs 4.7 and 4.8 set out our proposals regarding decisions on eligibility criteria for the First Time Buyers Initiative. Copies of the Plan are available in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers *(a)* regional housing boards and *(b)* regional chambers will have to set (i) targets and (ii) policy for the demolition of homes in their regional strategies. [216651]

Keith Hill: None. However it is essential that the evidence base and analysis that underpins the regional housing and spatial strategies reflect the levels of demolition needed to tackle problems of over-supply or obsolete stock.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many council houses there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223148]

Keith Hill: The following information is provided from Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council's housing investment programmes as required by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (and its predecessors) for the relevant years.

	LA housing stock as of 1 April
1997–98	6,080
1998–99	5,972
1999–2000	5,843
2000–01	5,693

Shrewsbury and Atcham borough council undertook a large scale voluntary transfer of its housing stock to a registered social landlord on the 1 October 2001. Therefore, figures for subsequent years are not available.

Property Conference

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister in what capacity he is attending the MIPIM Property Conference in Cannes on 8–11 March; what estimate he has made of his *(a)* travel costs and *(b)* accommodation costs for the conference; and which officials will accompany him. [221440]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister attended the MIPIM Property Conference to engage some of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's most important stakeholders in helping to create sustainable communities, and deliver affordable housing.

Since 1999 the Government have published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Information for 2004–05 will be published in due course.

Social Housing

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will list those local authorities which have undertaken *(a)* arm's length management organisation, *(b)* large scale voluntary transfer and *(c)* private finance initiative programmes with regard to their social housing provision; [223049]

(2) how many and what percentage of local authorities have not yet chosen their preferred route for meeting the Decent Homes Standard; and if he will list them; [223050]

(3) which local authorities are still undertaking Options Appraisals. [223051]

Keith Hill: Lists have been made available in the Library of the House that show which authorities have chosen an arms length management organisation (ALMO), stock transfer, a private finance initiative (PFI) scheme, or retention, with regard to their social housing provision. Not all of these authorities have implemented their chosen option yet, or are on an approved programme

135 authorities are yet to have their options appraisal, determining their preferred route for meeting the decent homes standard, signed off. A list of these authorities has also been made available in the Library of the House.

Some authorities appear in more than one list as they have chosen multiple solutions for their stock.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his recent decision to relax performance requirements for housing associations for access to gap funding will affect the applications from *(a)* Tower Hamlets and *(b)* North East Lincolnshire. [223209]

Keith Hill: The change will not affect applications for gap funding from North East Lincolnshire and Tower Hamlets. A gap funding agreement has been signed with Shoreline Housing Partnership in respect of the housing transferring from North East Lincolnshire council. Discussions will take place with housing associations who have sought gap funding to support the transfer of housing from the London borough of Tower Hamlets.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the new social rented homes that will be delivered through the expanded private finance initiative by 2007–08 will be provided in each Government Office region. [223281]

Keith Hill: The 2004 Spending Review allocated £1.22 billion private finance initiative (PFI) credits to the Housing PFI programme. As yet the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not know where the provision of new social rented homes will be in the regions. The assessment of bids for the SR04 allocation is still underway but an announcement on the outcome is scheduled in spring 2005.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of social rented homes which will be built in 2004–05 with the proportion of capital receipts from Right to Buy sales retained by local authorities. [223284]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not keep information on the use to which the proportion of capital receipts from Right to Buy sales retained by local authorities is put. Local authorities may use these receipts for any capital purpose they see fit.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his decision to withdraw support from the private finance initiative scheme to bring part of the council housing stock in the London borough of Camden up to the Decent Homes Standard. [223285]

Keith Hill: The reasons for the decision was a lack of confidence that there was effective management of costs or timetable and that the project did not represent value for money. The evidence was:

substantial overrun in the procurement timetable

four-fold increase in the funding requirement (£119 million in PFI credits in 2005 up from £30 million in 2000)

a large part of the negotiations were with a single bidder

the possibility of further cost increases contract signature.

The project still has an allocation of £55 million PFI funding available.

Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are working with Camden on the way forward.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the costs incurred by *(a)* the London borough of Camden and *(b)* his Department in the four years of preparatory development work on the Decent Homes Standard private finance initiative in that authority. [223286]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no estimate of these costs. The London borough of Camden estimated that it had spent £1.6 million on preparing for the housing private finance initiative (PFI) scheme for the Chalcots Estate in its press release on 23 February this year. We do not apportion costs to individual PFI casework.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 433W, on council housing, how much of the £2,687 million generated from the sale of council housing in those areas in 2003–04 with-debt local authorities *(a)* were required to set aside and *(b)* were allowed to use. [223298]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on the value of housing capital receipts set-aside in 2003–04 as a result of Right To Buy disposals.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Auditors

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Solicitor-General what assessment she has made of the implications for UK audit practices of European Court of Justice Case C-255/01, reference OJ C300 vol 47 of 4 December 2004, with particular reference to equivalence of professional qualifications for professional auditors dealing with European Community funds. [207105]

The Solicitor-General: The Department of Trade and Industry has taken up the issues raised by the case with the European Commission in the context of the new proposed 8th Company Law Directive on Statutory Audit of Annual Accounts and Consolidated Accounts. It hopes to resolve these issues, which could potentially affect a small number of auditors in the UK and from other EU member states, in this context.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Solicitor-General how many complaints were received by her Department about decisions of the Crown Prosecution Service in 2004. [218708]

The Solicitor-General: The Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers established a correspondence unit on 1 November 2004 to handle the large amount of correspondence it receives.

It is not possible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy what proportion of the correspondence received relates to complaints about CPS decisions. Individual files would have to be checked for content which would incur disproportionate costs.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Solicitor-General what records are kept of the proportion of cases submitted by the police to the Crown Prosecution Service that are deemed not to have a realistic prospect of successful prosecution. [218709]

The Solicitor-General: Since April 2004, the Crown Prosecution Service has recorded, for each case subject to a pre-charge decision in which the final decision was not to prosecute, the reason for that decision. Table 1 shows this information for the period April-December 2004, divided into evidential reasons and public interest reasons, together with the more exact reason allocated within each of these general categories.

Similarly, the Crown Prosecution Service records the reason for its decision to drop prosecutions after a defendant has been charged. This information is shown at Table 2, which covers the period January-December 2004. As well as cases in which either evidential or public interest reasons weighed against a prosecution, Table 2 also shows the number of cases in which a prosecution could not proceed, for example because the victim retracted or refused to give evidence, and a number of other reasons.

On both tables cases deemed not to have a realistic prospect of conviction are those shown under evidential reasons.

Table 1: Reasons for no prosecution 2004

	Number	*Percentage*
Evidential reasons		
Key witness does not support case	1,545	1.5
Unreliable/lack of identification	5,424	5.3
Inadmissible evidence—Breach of PACE	462	0.5
Inadmissible evidence—other than Breach of PACE	704	0.7
Unreliable confession	256	0.2
Conflict of evidence	18,321	17.8
Essential medical evidence missing	617	0.6
Essential forensic evidence missing	1,442	1.4
Essential legal element missing	44,275	43.1
Unreliable witness or witnesses	7,345	7.2
Key victim does not support case	5,100	5.0
Total evidential reasons	85,491	83.3
Public interest reasons		
Effect on victim's physical or mental health	425	0.4
Defendant elderly or in significant ill health	417	0.4
Loss or harm minor and single incident	2,098	2.0
Loss or harm put right	572	0.6
Long delay between offence/charge or trial	748	0.7
Very small or nominal penalty	2,263	2.2
Other indictment/sentence	1,748	1.7
Informer or other public interest immunity issues	368	0.4
Caution more suitable	6,793	6.6
Youth of offender	1,717	1.7
Total public interest reasons	17,149	16.7
Total reasons for no prosecution	102,640	

Table 2: Reasons CPS dropped prosecution: 2004

	Number	*Percentage*
Evidential reasons		
Key witness does not support case	1,331	0.6
Unreliable/lack of identification	7,208	3.4
Inadmissible evidence—Breach of PACE	405	0.2
Inadmissible evidence—other than Breach of PACE	1,267	0.6
Unreliable confession	154	0.1
Conflict of evidence	6,488	3.0
Essential medical evidence missing	527	0.2
Essential forensic evidence missing	1,444	0.7
Essential legal element missing	30,312	14.1
Unreliable witness or witnesses	3,695	1.7
Key victim does not support case	3,696	1.7
Total evidential reasons	56,527	26.3
Public interest reasons		
Effect on victim's physical or mental health	481	0.2
Defendant elderly or in significant ill health	1,287	0.6
Loss or harm minor and single incident	576	0.3
Loss or harm put right	1,162	0.5
Long delay between offence/charge or trial	2,587	1.2
Very small or nominal penalty	3,114	1.4
Other indictment/sentence	9,046	4.2
Informer or other public interest immunity issues	1,852	0.9
Caution more suitable	5,286	2.5
Youth of offender	159	0.1
Total public interest reasons	25,550	11.9
Prosecution could not proceed		
Administrative finalisation	50,502	23.5
File not received from police—adjournment refused	2,096	1.0
CPS not ready—adjournment refused	1,780	0.8
Offence taken into consideration	559	0.3
Victim refuses to give evidence or retracts	10,994	5.1
Other witness refuses to give evidence or retracts	1,370	0.6
Victim fails to attend unexpectedly	4,479	2.1
Other civilian witness fails to attend unexpectedly	1,719	0.8
Police witness fails to attend unexpectedly	1,389	0.6
Victim intimidation	28	0.0
Other civilian witness intimidation	41	0.0
Documents produced at court	9,629	4.5
Total prosecution could not proceed	84,586	39.3
Other reasons		
Bind over acceptable	17,240	8.0
Other	31,231	14.5
Total other reasons	48,471	22.5
Total reasons for prosecution dropped	215,134	

Freedom of Information

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will list the *(a)* documents and *(b)* other written material released to date by her Department under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and what categories of information her Office has refused to release. [220637]

The Solicitor-General: To date my Department has released the following documents:

(1) In relation to my noble and learned Friend the Attorney-General's advice on the legality of the use of force against Iraq:

(a) A letter from me to Graham Allen MP, 25 October 2002;

(b) A letter from the Prime Minister to Charles Kennedy MP, 14 March 2003;

(c) A letter dated 14 March 2003 from the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers to the Prime Minister's Private Secretary;

(d) A letter dated 15 March 2003 from the Prime Minister's Private Secretary to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers;

(e) A letter dated 21 March 2003 from a judge at the Manchester Crown court;

(f) A letter dated 15 April 2003 sent on behalf of the Attorney-General to the Crown court judge;

(g) A letter dated 16 April 2003 from the Crown court judge;

(h) A letter dated 9 May 2003 from Lord Alexander QC;

(i) A letter dated 21 May 2003 in reply to Lord Alexander;

(j) A letter from the Attorney-General to David Hughes, 29 July 2003;

(k) A letter from me to Tam Dalyell MP, 27 August 2003;

(l) A letter from the Attorney-General to Graham Allen MP, 29 August 2003;

(m) A letter from the Attorney-General to Graham Allen MP, 3 November 2003;

(n) A letter from the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers to the PS/Foreign Secretary, 4 November 2003;

(o) A letter from Baroness Symons to Baroness Williams, 15 November 2004;

(p) A letter from the Attorney-General to Benedict Birnberg, 14 December 2004

(q) A statement by the Attorney-General of 25 February 2005 on the process leading up to the Attorney-General's written answer to Parliament on 17 March 2003;

(2) In relation to the Attorney's appearance before the Butler Review:

(a) An extract from a briefing note prepared for the Attorney-General's oral evidence session, 4 May 2004, on the resignation of Ms Elizabeth Wilmshurst from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office;

(b) An extract from a document entitled Key Extracts from Butler Report to Draw On (undated), on the same subject;

(c) A note submitted to the Review entitled Procedures for the Provision of Law Officers' Advice to the Government;

(3) A paper setting out my noble and learned Friend the Attorney-General's Ministerial Superintendence of the Army Prosecuting Authority;

(4) An extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Attorney-General with the Serious Fraud Office;

(5) A copy of the Attorney-General's submissions to the House of Lords in the case of A and Others *v.* Secretary of State for the Home Department, in which the House of Lords gave judgment on 16 December 2004 (UKHL [2004] 56).

My Office has not released information which we have judged exempt from disclosure under the Act, notably but not exclusively in relation to Sections 23 (information supplied by or related to bodies dealing with security matters), 27 (international relations), 35 (formulation or development of Government policy, including the specific exemption at Section 33(1)(c) for Law Officers' advice) and 42 (legal professional privilege).

HOME DEPARTMENT

Airguns

Jeff Ennis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* injuries and *(b)* deaths have been reported as a direct result of airgun incidents in each of the last eight years. [221784]

Caroline Flint: Statistics on the number of crimes recorded by the police in which an air weapon was reported to have caused injury are contained in Table 2.06 of Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/05 'Crime in England and Wales 2003–04: Supplementary Volume 1: Homicide and Gun Crime'. Table 2b of that publication gives the available statistics on fatal injuries reported to have been caused by an air weapon. Copies of this publication are available in the Library and it is also available on the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/hosb0205.pdf

Civil Servants

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many civil servants worked at *(a)* Prison Service headquarters, *(b)* Probation headquarters and *(c)* National Offender Management Service headquarters on 31 December 2004; what the estimated numbers are for 31 December 2005; and if he will make a statement. [220390]

Paul Goggins: The new National Offender Management Service (NOMS) headquarters, alongside the National Probation Directorate and the Prison Service headquarters, is being redesigned. Comparable information on staff numbers across all three headquarters on 31 December 2004 is not available; but on 22 November 2004 there were 641 full-time equivalent posts in NOMS headquarters, 2,250 in Prison Service headquarters, and 305 in the National Probation Directorate. The number of civil servants within each total is not separately identified.

A proposal, including the allocation of staff to directorates, has been put forward to staff and trade unions for their comments.

The new headquarters is being planned for April 2005, and I will write to my hon. and learned Friend once the design of the new headquarters has been agreed.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what functions within the National Offender Management Service were not previously carried out by either the prison or probation services; and if he will make a statement. [220473]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has been established within the existing legislative framework of the Prison and Probation Services. While NOMS has no new statutory functions, a provision in the recently published Management of Offenders and Sentencing Bill will establish sentence planning and review as a core offender management function.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff working for the National Offender Management Services (NOMS) are situated at *(a)* NOMS headquarters, *(b)* Prison Service headquarters and *(c)* Probation Service headquarters. [220475]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service headquarters and the National Probation Directorate both form parts of the National Offender Management Service.

The new National Offender Management Service headquarters, alongside the Prison Service and Probation Service headquarters, is being redesigned. A proposal, including the allocation of staff to Directorates, has been put forward to staff and trade unions for their comments. The new headquarters is being planned for April 2005 and I will write to the hon. Member once the design of the new headquarters has been agreed.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff have been transferred from *(a)* Her Majesty's Prison Service and *(b)* the Probation Service to the National Offender Management Service. [220478]

Paul Goggins: The new National Offender Management Service (NOMS) headquarters, alongside the Prison Service and Probation Service headquarters, is being redesigned. A proposal, including the allocation of staff to directorates, has been put forward to staff and trade unions for their comments. The new headquarters is being planned for April 2005.

It is intended to effect formal staff transfers from the Prison Service and from the National Probation Directorate into NOMS headquarters on 31 March. I will write to the hon. Member once the design of the new headquarters has been agreed.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff based at *(a)* Prison Service and *(b)* Probation Service Headquarters work for the National Offender Management Service. [220516]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service headquarters and the National Probation Directorate both form parts of the National Offender Management Service.

The new National Offender Management Service headquarters, alongside the Prison Service and Probation Service headquarters, is being redesigned. A proposal, including the allocation of staff to Directorates, has been put forward to staff and trade unions for their comments. The new headquarters is being planned for April 2005 and I will write to my hon. Friend once the design of the new headquarters has been agreed.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for developing the responsibilities of regional offender managers under the National Offender Management Service; and what the timetable is for that development. [218794]

Paul Goggins: Regional Offender Managers (ROMs) will be key figures in the line of accountability running from those actually managing offenders to the National Offender Manager. They will have a crucial role to play in commissioning services needed to reduce re-offending.

ROMs are already working with local probation boards in establishing the offender management model for community sentences and overseeing the separation of offender management and interventions within probation areas. Budgets for 2006–07 for offender management in probation areas will be agreed by the ROMs; budgets for 2006–07 for public sector intervention services in probation areas will be agreed by the director of probation and the ROMs; budget allocation for prisons for 2006–07 within each NOMS region will be agreed by the director general of prisons and the ROMs. The ROMs are working with a range of stakeholders to put in place regional reducing re-offending strategies during 2005

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what administrative support there will be for regional offender managers in each regional area under the National Offender Management Service structure. [218795]

Paul Goggins: The Regional Offender Managers will initially have two staff to provide administrative support. As their role and responsibilities grow, the staffing requirements will be reviewed.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effects of the introduction of the National Offender Management Service on *(a)* the level of centralised control, *(b)* community engagement and *(c)* accountability in the Probation Service. [222508]

Paul Goggins: The establishment of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) now provides clear leadership and accountability for the performance of all the correctional services and for reducing re-offending. The effectiveness of the service will depend upon relationships between NOMS and its various partners at the local, regional and national level. This is a key feature of the feasibility work currently under way on organisational models for NOMS.

In addition, the creation of NOMS offers a unique opportunity to sustain and expand existing community sector work with offenders. A draft strategy "The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the National Offender Management Service" has recently been published for consultation and is available on the Home Office website.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) where each regional offender manager will be based; and if he will make a statement; [221580]

(2) what work has been undertaken to identify possible office sites for each of the regional offender managers; and if he will make a statement. [221581]

Paul Goggins: It is intended that the offices for the Regional Offender Managers will provide the best possible access for their region, and deliver best value for money. They may be co-located with other parts of the National Offender Management Service, other government offices or at new locations.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated annual cost is for the operation of the Office of the National Offender Manager; and if he will make a statement. [221583]

Paul Goggins: The budget for the Office of the National Offender Manager (not including the budgets for the Regional Offender Managers) for 2005–06 is yet to be finalised but the indicative budget for 2005–06 has been set at £0.214 million resource.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 8 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Ayesha Siddiqui. [212276]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 3 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1008W.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter dated 17 November from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Thembelani Chinyoka; [212282]

(2) when he will reply to the letter dated 17 November 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. Thembelani Chinyoka. [215106]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 822–23W.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 1 November from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Lily Beverley. [212283]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 822–23W.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 6 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. Sama Manzoor Ahmed. [215108]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 823W.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 30 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Dwight Swanson. [217047]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 85W.

Criminal Cases Review Commission

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in enabling the Criminal Cases Review Commission *(a)* to obtain documents and information from abroad and *(b)* to interview witnesses overseas. [218713]

Paul Goggins: This issue has been considered, but there is currently no statutory basis on which the Criminal Cases Review Commission can request evidence from overseas. Legislation would therefore be required.

Cycling

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1098W, on cycling, if he will make it his policy to record centrally how many cyclists involved in road accidents were reported as cycling without lights. [221684]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

Personal injury road accident data in Great Britain are collected by the police and reported to the Department for Transport using the STATS 19 accident report format. From the 1 January 2005 the police were asked to record contributory factors to road accidents as part of the STATS 19 form. Among the factors included are "Impairment or Distraction—Not displaying lights at night or in poor visibility" and "Impairment or Distraction—Cyclist wearing dark clothing at night". The contributory factor data will become available in the summer of 2006.

Dangerous Driving

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to make available the resources needed to implement the Government's policy of increasing the maximum penalty for dangerous driving from two to five years' imprisonment. [222348]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Government have a commitment arising from the Review of Road Traffic Penalties to increase the maximum penalty for dangerous driving.

It is our intention to implement this measure as part of a package of measures arising from the Consultation on the Review of Road Traffic Offences involving Bad Driving. This Consultation paper was published on 3 February and the consultation exercise will close on 6 May.

The funding for, and implementation of, this package will be agreed once the assessment of the consultation has been completed later this year.

Departmental Contracts

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many contracts in his Department have been granted to *(a)* EDS, *(b)* Fujitsu and *(c)* EDS and Fujitsu jointly in each of the last two years; whether they were open to competition; for what they were granted; for how much, and over what period of time; and if he will make a statement. [211620]

Fiona Mactaggart: *(a)* The Home Office has not awarded any contracts to EDS in the financial years 2002–03, 2003–04 or 2004-YTD.

(b) Information held by the Home Office on contracts awarded to Fujitsu in the financial years 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004-YTD is as follows:

NCIS awarded two consultancy contracts to Fujitsu following a competitive tender exercise under the OGC S-CAT Framework Agreement. Details are as follows:

April 2002-September 2003 Project Mercury—which was a project to deliver the roll out of windows 2000 across NCIS. The total amount of expenditure over the period with Fujitsu for their delivery of services to the project was £597,375.

A feasibility study for a fire arms tracking database over 2002–03 was commissioned but this was funded via Concerted Inter-agency Drug Action (CIDA) totalling £32,630. (three month project February 2003-April 2003)

The Commercial Directorate placed two orders for various IT hardware via the G-CAT framework on behalf of the National Technical Assistance Centre (NTAC):

21 October 2002. Total value including VAT: £92,217.

01 July 2003. Total value including VAT: £6,286.

The Commercial Directorate awarded a consultancy contract for the production of Test and Validation Strategy for Mental Health Unit (MHU) Case-working Application on behalf of the Information Management and Technology Unit (IMTU). This was competed via the S-CAT framework, details are as follows:

Purchase Order: PO4390201 Award of contract: 07 September 2004 Delivery on/by 15 September 2004

Total value including VAT: £9,743.

The Commercial Directorate placed an order for various IT hardware via the Suspect Index (S.I.) Supply Agreement on behalf of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND). Details are as follows:

Purchase Order: PO5419301 Award of contract: 11 January 2005 Delivery on/by: 22 February 2005

Total value including VAT: £675,042.

The Prison Service awarded a contract for the provision of IT equipment and software for the Prison Service's Technical Architects Solution Centre in 2004–05. The total cost was £35,000 and was procured through a competition with G-Cat suppliers.

(c) The Home office did not grant any joint contracts to EDS and Fujitsu in the financial years 2002–03, 2003–04 or 2004-YTD.

Departmental Dress Code

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the kirpan by Sikh employees. [222540]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Criminal Justice Act 1988 makes it an offence for a person in a public place to have a bladed or sharply pointed article—other than a small folding pocket knife—without good reason. The onus is on the knife carrier to show they have a good reason for carrying it. However, the Act exempts Sikhs from criminal prosecution on the ground that the kirpan is a religious article. Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Human Rights Act also protect the right of individuals to follow their chosen religion.

Sikh employees are permitted to wear the kirpan.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned on the variation in the rate of successful completion of drug treatment and testing orders between participants maintained on *(a)* methadone and *(b)* buprenorphine in (i) Somerset and (ii) England. [222527]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Unfortunately, this information cannot be provided as there are no records held centrally relating to this research.

However, in April 2005 The National Treatment Agency (NTA) will publish detailed information on clients in structured drug treatment during 2003–04. Although, not relating specifically to Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTO) this research will give an accurate overview of the completion rates of individuals who have been engaged in different types of drug treatment and will include those on DTTOs.

Drugs Crime (Leeds)

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug dealers have been prosecuted in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Leeds West in the last 12 months; and how many of these were part of Operation Crackdown. [222238]

Caroline Flint: Data on drug offenders are collected at police force area only and are therefore not available in the format requested. The most recent Drug Offenders statistics, relating to 2003, were published on 1 March 2005 and are available on the Home Office website.

Operation Crackdown was launched on 10 January 2005 and in this limited timeframe few of the people arrested and charged as a result of the operation will have completed their passage through the criminal justice system. Information on prosecutions following Operation Crackdown is therefore not available.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug dealers from *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Leeds West have been jailed in each of the last 10 years, broken down by type of drug; and if he will make a statement. [222246]

Caroline Flint: Information on the number of offenders receiving custodial sentences for dealing offences is only available for England and Wales as a whole and not for individual constituencies. Data on trends in the number of drug dealers in England and Wales being imprisoned between 1994 and 2003 are provided in the table.

Number of persons imprisoned for specified drug dealing offences in England and Wales, 1994 to 2003

	Unlawful supply	*Possession with intent to supply*
1994	1,330	2,140
1995	1,750	2,980
1996	2,460	3,730
1997	2,790	4,170
1998	2,930	4,100
1999	1,830	3,830
2000	2,780	3,530

Number of persons imprisoned for specified drug dealing offences in England and Wales, 1994 to 2003

	Unlawful supply	Possession with intent to supply
2001	2,690	3,500
2002	2,710	3,270
2003	2,890	3,480

Source:
Supplementary Tables of Drug Offenders in England and Wales 2003.

Escaped Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who absconded from Kirkham open prison in 2004 remain unlawfully at large. [205628]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 20 December 2004]:* 158 prisoners absconded from Kirkham open prison in 2004. Of these, 17 remain unlawfully at large.

HMP The Weare

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the future of HMP The Weare. [219709]

Paul Goggins: The decision about the future of HMP The Weare was announced on 9 March.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost of carrying out the maintenance and repairs to HM Prison Weare which would ensure it received its next certificate of seaworthiness. [222535]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Work to refit and repaint HMP The Weare was in the existing maintenance programme and was scheduled to begin later this year. This work had been estimated to cost around £1.1 million and was due to be completed in time for the next inspection for the certificate of seaworthiness in May 2006. This work is now on hold as a result of the announcement to close HMP The Weare.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the maintenance costs for HM Prison Weare were in each year since 1997. [222536]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The maintenance costs for The Weare prison since 1997 are comprised of three discrete elements; the vessel-specific facilities management contract, local maintenance allocation and other major maintenance costs. The first two can be broken down as follows:

£000

	Facilities management	Local maintenance[1]
1997–98	[2]187	[2]129
1998–99	[2]187	129
1999–2000	187	129
2000–01	192	129
2001–02	198	129
2002–03	219	129
2003–04	251	129
2004–05	257	129

[1] Has been increased in certain years through allocation from Prison Service area funding.
[2] Actual figures estimated as not readily available.

There have also been other major maintenance requirements at The Weare since 1997. These include re-painting, preservation work, a link span modification and the refit for the previous sea-worthiness certificate. In total these maintenance costs were in the order of £1 million over this period.

Adolescent Rehabilitation

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what sources of Government funding other than National Offender Management Services regional funding are available for *(a)* the Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation and *(b)* other organisations undertaking similar work in support of Government objectives. [220525]

Paul Goggins: The Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation (C-FAR) has had central grant funding of £720,000 committed by the Home Office.

In 2001 £20,000 was provided towards the cost of evaluation. In 2002 and 2003 £150,000 was provided in grant each year and in 2004 a grant of £400,000 was agreed, with £250,000 to be paid in 2004–05 and, a further £150,000 in 2005–06. C-FAR has also received funding from Supporting People, which is a central Government fund administered through the Devon county council and from housing benefit. C-FAR has also applied for or planned to apply for funding from the Learning and Skills Council (Department for Education and Skills and Jobcentre Plus (Department for Work and Pensions), the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has a grant programmes for organisations working in rural areas.

Other organisations undertaking similar work in support of Government objectives working on a regional basis would be eligible to apply for funding from most of the above sources. The exception would be NOMS central funding as organisations working at a regional or local level would normally be expected toapply for funding from the prison or probation service regionally or locally.

Persistent Offenders

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department is taking to target persistent offenders. [222552]

Paul Goggins: The Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO) Strategy is at the heart of the Government's efforts to reduce crime and disorder.

This strategy, which was launched by the Prime Minister in March last year, looks to target not only existing prolific offenders but also those young people who are on the cusp of a prolific offending lifestyle. The strategy has three strands:

prevent and deter—to stop young people becoming prolific offenders;

catch and convict—tackling those who are already prolific offenders; and

rehabilitate and resettle—working to increase the number of offenders who stop offending by offering a range of supportive interventions.

This multi-agency approach to offender management built on, and replaced, the previous persistent offender scheme. Since September 2004 PRO schemes have been established across all parts of England and Wales. These schemes allow local partners, like the police, prisons and probation to concentrate their joint efforts on monitoring and rehabilitating the relatively small number of people who have been identified locally as causing most harm to their communities and to themselves.

Over 9,000 existing prolific offenders have been identified by schemes across England and Wales. In addition, around 5,000 young people have been identified as suitable for support as part of the prevent and deter strand.

Prisons

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what average weekly pay was available to prisoners serving a prison sentence was in England and Wales in 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [218206]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held centrally and can only be obtained at disproportional cost. It is for Governors to set the rates of pay for their establishment, against national criteria and minimum rates of pay, in a way that reflects their regime priorities.

These rates are set out in Prison Service Order 4460. The minimum employed rate of pay is £4 per week.

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on recent incidents of prisoners absconding from HMP Prescoed; whether any of them were sex offenders; whether each has been recaptured; and whether any committed offences while out of prison. [221876]

Paul Goggins: Since 1 October 2004 three prisoners have absconded from Frescoed prison. One prisoner, who absconded on 6 October 2004, was a sex offender and was recaptured the next day without having committed any offences. Two prisoners absconded on 25 February 2005. Neither was a sex offender, and one has been recaptured. There is no indication that the recaptured prisoner committed any further offence.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of expenditure per person on lunches for prisoners being held in prisons in England in each year from 1991–92 to 2005–06; what proportion of the food utilised was UK produce in each year; and if he will make a statement. [222147]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The following table shows the best estimated figures for daily food costs per prisoner in public sector prisons, based on average national figures. Information relating to the daily food costs in private sector prisons is not collated.

Financial year	*Average public sector prisons daily food (cost per prisoner) (£)*	*Estimated public sector prisons daily lunch (cost per prisoner) (pence)*
1991–92	1.11	44
1992–93	1.12	45
1993–94	1.28	51
1994–95	1.35	54
1995–96	1.38	55
1996–97	1.41	56
1997–98	1.43	57
1998–99	1.44	58
1999–2000	1.46	58
2000–01	1.64	66
2001–02	1.74	70
2002–03	1.72	69
2003–04	1.81	72
2004–05	1.82	73
2005–06	[1]	[1]

[1] Not known.

No discrete data are held for the period in question on the proportion of food provided in prisoners' lunches that is produced in the United Kingdom. The majority of food supplied (representing a fund of £38.1 million) is purchased from centrally-arranged contracts awarded to manufacturers and distributors. It is not possible to define the proportion of UK-produced food incorporated in prisoner's lunches, as products purchased include a combination of food, raw materials and packaging.

Key product areas included in the £38.1 million fund include frozen food and meat, fresh and UHT milk, bread, fresh salad, fruit and vegetables. Of these, 100 per cent. of eggs, bread, milk and potatoes and 80 per cent. of root crops are UK-produced.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the 2004–05 budget is for prison education; what the budgets are for each year until 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [222671]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Department for Education and Skills has a specified and non-transferable budget for offenders' learning and skills of £136 million in 2004–05, which rises to £152.5 million for each of the years 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08. This covers learning and skills in prison as well as for offenders in the community.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what levels of drug use in prisons have been in each of the last five years. [220920]

Paul Goggins: The best measure of overall drug misuse in prisons in England and Wales is provided by the random mandatory drug testing (RMDT) programme. The following table sets out aggregate figures for prisoners who have tested positive under the programme in each of the last five financial years.

	Percentage of positive readings from randomly tested prisoners
1999–2000	14.4
2000–01	12.2
2001–02	11.6
2002–03	11.7
2003–04	12.5

Probation

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes in the role of the probation service he expects there to be by 2007. [221252]

Paul Goggins: The role of the National Probation Service is clearly reflected in the Management of Offenders and Sentencing Bill currently before Parliament, which will, for the first time, provide a formal link between the role of the probation and prison services. The Bill clearly states that the aims of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) are:

(a) The protection of the public;

(b) The reduction of re-offending;

(c) The proper punishment of offenders;

(d) Ensuring offenders' awareness of the effects of crime on victims and the public;

(e) The rehabilitation of offenders.

The prisons and probation services are developing the core offender management function, which will improve the management of offenders moving between custody and community supervision, and are preparing themselves for future introduction of contestability. These changes to the current role of the National Probation Service will serve to break down the current organisational barriers identified in the Cater Report between prisons and probation and therefore contribute to reductions in re-offending, which has been at the centre of the work of the National Probation Service since its creation in 2001.

Sentencing Guidelines Council

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Sentencing Guidelines Council has begun considering the establishment of mechanisms for the independent assessment of prevalence. [222651]

Paul Goggins: The Sentencing Guidelines Council has no plans to set up any mechanism for the independent assessment of prevalence. This issue would form part of the sentencing argument in each particular case taking into account the guideline on seriousness.

That guideline states that generally the seriousness of an individual case should be judged on its own dimensions of harm and culpability rather than as part of a collective social harm. There may be exceptional local circumstances that arise which may lead a court to decide that prevalence should influence sentencing levels. But the guideline says that it is essential that sentencers both have supporting evidence from an external source (for example the local Criminal Justice Board) to justify claims that a particular crime is prevalent in their area and are satisfied that there is a compelling need to treat the offence more seriously than elsewhere. Sentencers must sentence within the guidelines once the prevalence has been addressed.

Prison Population

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the Department's policy to seek a reduction in the prison population. [213346]

Paul Goggins: The Government have not set any target for the size of the prison population. The recently published population projections indicate that we expect the prison numbers to increase over the next five years and prison places will rise to 80,000.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the numbers of sexual assault referral centres in England and Wales. [215574]

Paul Goggins: £4 million of additional funding has been identified to support services for the victims of sexual offences in 2004–05 and 2005–06.

A portion of this money will be used to assist with the establishment of new Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs) and the development of services in existing centres; this brings the total number of SARCs to 15. The areas benefiting from the funding available in this financial year was announced on Tuesday 22 February 2005.

Stop it Now! Surrey

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will reintroduce funding for Stop it Now! Surrey. [222167]

Paul Goggins: The national probation directorate has been the principal funder since 2001–02 for the Surrey Stop It Now! helpline. The nationally agreed pilot project funding will come to an end as planned on 31 March. Stop It Now! Surrey have been advised that they should put in place alternative funding arrangements in line with other comparable local Stop It Now! projects and the recommendations of an independent evaluation by de Montfort university that they should build local strategic partnerships to further the development and funding of area based projects.

Exceptionally, national probation directorate have advised Stop It Now! Surrey that continuation funding of more than £250,000 will continue to be available for the year 2005–06 to cover the costs of the national helpline service, but the Home Office is unable to provide further grant aid contribution to the local project once the pilot phase has ended.

Witness Prepartion

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how his Department monitors the methods used by witness preparation companies contracted to his Department; [220931]

(2) what publicly-funded pre-trial training to witnesses in court cases entails; and how his Department ensures the prevention of witness contamination; [220932]

(3) which witness preparation companies have contracts with his Department. [220933]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The Home Department has no contracts with witness preparation companies to provide pre-trial training to witnesses in court cases. It does fund Victim Support's Witness Service through Grant-in-aid, but this is to

provide practical and emotional support to witnesses; the Witness Service does not discuss a witness's evidence.

Witness Statements

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy *(a)* to allow a witness to submit the text of a witness statement to the police by e-mail and *(b)* to make amendments to it by e-mail prior to the witness attending a police station to sign the final document. [208275]

Paul Goggins: Section 9 of the Criminal Justice Act 1967 sets out the requirements that a witness statement must fulfil in order to be admissible in court. These include that it must be signed by the maker and contain a declaration by the maker that it is true to the best of his knowledge and belief. There is no provision in the Act governing the method or means by which that written statement is arrived at. As a matter of law, therefore, there is nothing to constrain police forces from adopting a policy whereby the text of a statement could be submitted or amended by e-mail.

Such an approach would however usually be inadvisable and inappropriate where a statement was likely to be challenged in court, which is the majority of cases. For example, a police officer may need to interview a witness in person to find out whether an offence has actually been committed and the legal elements. The process of interview also enables the officer to assess the quality of the evidence which a witness would be likely to give in court and inform the prosecutor as may be necessary. Finally, it could be difficult for the police to assess whether statements given by e-mail were influenced by pressure or intimidation exerted on a witness by the alleged offender or their associates.

Young Offenders

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the contribution of the Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation to meeting Government targets for the reduction of reoffending rates among young adult offenders. [220527]

Paul Goggins: C-FAR offer a residential training programme for young adult male offenders. It received £520,000 in funding from the Home Office between 2002 and 2004, of which £20,000 was towards evaluation. A further £150,000 was committed to support places on the programme in 2005–06. 262 trainees have entered C-FAR's Life Change programme since June 2000. C-FAR estimates that about 50 per cent. have not re-offended within a two years of conviction. However, C-FAR's figures have not been substantiated by independent research.

There have been two independent evaluations of C-FAR. The first concluded that due to low numbers of trainees it was not possible to confirm C-FAR's claim. The second was an ethnographic evaluation and the researchers did not look at rates of re-offending among the group studied.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Crosshill Quarry

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what date the railway carriages were relocated within Crosshill Quarry in Crumlin, County Antrim. [221616]

Angela Smith: The Department of the Environment does not have specific dates when the 18 railway carriages were relocated within Crossbill Quarry. The contractors intended to complete this work during November and December 2003. However, I understand that, once work had commenced it was found that the weight of the waterlogged carriages required them to be cut into three sections to facilitate their movement and relocation. As a result, the work took longer than originally anticipated. Departmental staff visited the site on 13 February 2004 and recorded that the work was complete.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether any release of asbestos at Crosshill Quarry was notified by the site operator to *(a)* the Health and Safety Executive, *(b)* the Environment and Heritage Service and *(c)* Antrim borough council. [221618]

Angela Smith: The Health and Safety Executive, the Environment and Heritage Service and Antrim borough council have not been notified by the site operator of any release of asbestos at Crosshill Quarry.

Employment Support Programme

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when future funding will be available for the Employment Support Programme for people with disabilities in Northern Ireland to access supported employment. [222870]

Mr. Gardiner: The Employment Support Scheme was closed to new applicants from September to December 2004. Existing participants were not affected. The Scheme re-opened to new applicants from January 2005.

Further Education Colleges

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to consult on the review of area based further education colleges in Northern Ireland. [222871]

Mr. Gardiner: The position remains the same as advised in my earlier response of 17 January 2005—the Department for Employment and Learning published its proposals for the future of further education in Northern Ireland in March 2004. Consultation on those proposals was completed in June 2004 and found firm support for the creation of a smaller number of area based colleges, linking the existing campuses. In taking forward these proposals the Department has commissioned further work on those aspects of the proposals that relate to the future size and structure of the FE sector. The outcome of this further work will be presented to a steering group comprised of representatives of further education colleges. In the light

of the above I will be considering how best to engage with the local representatives on how the proposed changes may be best implemented.

Grammar Schools

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will introduce measures similar to those adopted in England to allow parents of pupils attending primary schools which are feeder schools of a local grammar school to vote on whether they wish the principle of academic selection for admission to the grammar school to be retained. [223271]

Mr. Gardiner: There are no plans to introduce similar measures.

After 2008–09, the current system of academic selection at age 11 will be replaced by a system of informed parental and pupil choice. Grammar schools will continue to exist and to offer an academic curricular emphasis.

National Assets

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1000–02W, on national assets, what his estimate is of the net receipts that each department will gain from the disposal of assets in each of the next three financial years. [217056]

Mr. Pearson: The following table provides a current estimate of the net receipts that the Northern Ireland Office and the 11 Northern Ireland Departments will gain from the disposal of assets in each of the next three financial years.

£000

	Financial year		
Department	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
NIO		3,600	
DARD	1,223	70	—
DCAL	13	—	—
DE		8	
DEL	—	—	1,000
DETI	—	—	—
DFP	220	1,901	—
DHSSPS	3,015	6,820	430
DOE	—	—	—
DRD	—	—	—
DSD			
OFMDFM	[1]—	—	—

[1] It is proposed that the former Royal Irish Regiment base in Magherafelt will be disposed of within the public sector hence no receipts will be generated.

I regret that in my previous answer, the number of vehicles recorded for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development was incorrect. The Department intends to dispose of four vehicles in total (one Landrover and three Renault vans) and not eight as previously shown.

Primary/Secondary Education

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of post-primary schools in Northern Ireland which are capable of meeting the proposed Entitlement Framework set out in the Costello Report. [223224]

Mr. Gardiner: It is not the intention that individual schools should offer access to the full Entitlement Framework entirely on their own, though a few may be capable of doing so. Rather, schools will need to develop arrangements to collaborate with other schools and with the Further Education sector so as to provide enhanced choice. The Entitlement Framework will be introduced on a phased basis to allow schools time to develop the necessary collaboration.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost was of producing the Costello Report on post-primary education in Northern Ireland. [223229]

Mr. Gardiner: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Strangford (Mrs. Robinson) on 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 577W.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland why primary school profiles currently being tested in the Province exclude academic ability and potential. [221769]

Mr. Gardiner: A Pupil Profile will be completed each year for each child throughout their primary and post-primary education, replacing the current Annual Pupil Report. It will provide clear and objective information about a pupil's progress and achievements across a range of curricular areas, including Literacy, Numeracy and ICT, an assessment of their attitude to learning, their aptitude for learning and their particular interests, and indicate areas for development and future learning. The information in the Pupil Profile will be based on ongoing teacher assessment, which will be moderated within and across schools.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will reintroduce performance league tables for the secondary school sector in the Province. [221771]

Mr. Gardiner: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave on 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1300W.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what name will be used to describe grammar schools after the end of academic selection between the primary and secondary sector in the Province. [221772]

Mr. Gardiner: There are no plans to change the terminology applied to grammar schools after academic selection ends in Northern Ireland.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost is to date of the *(a)* Burns Report and *(b)* Costello Report and what the cost is of accompanying consultation exercises linked to each report. [221774]

Mr. Gardiner: The Post-primary Review was completed on 26 January 2004 when the Government announced it had accepted and was implementing the recommendations of the Post-primary Review Working Group (the Costello Report). Arising from that Report, a public consultation on new admissions arrangements and criteria is under way.

The costs to date are as follows:

(a) £830,000 on research, the Post-Primary Review Body costs and the publication of the Burns Report;

(b) £419,000 on consultation about the recommendations of the Burns Report; and

(c) £215,000 on the Post-primary Review Working Group and the publication and distribution of the Costello Report.

(d) £25,000 (to date) on consultation about new admissions arrangements and criteria arising from the recommendations of the Costello Report.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the present consultation process on admissions criteria between primary and secondary schools is restricted to parents who have access to a computer. [221775]

Mr. Gardiner: This is not the case. A paper copy of the Consultation Document on New Admissions Arrangements and the Response Booklet is available by contacting the Department by telephone, in writing, by fax and by e-mail. The document can also be viewed and downloaded from the Department of Education website, and responses to the consultation can be made on-line. Over 17,000 copies of the Consultation Document have been issued to the main education interests including schools, churches, political parties, community and voluntary groups and, on request, parents.

All schools were sent leaflets to pass to parents of school-age children to provide details of the consultation and how they can respond. Advertisements were placed in the three main newspapers (*Belfast Telegraph*, *News Letter*, *Irish News*) giving details of the consultation and the different ways in which people can obtain a copy.

The Department is encouraging everyone to consider carefully the issues raised in the Consultation Document and to respond to this important issue.

Smoking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the merits of extending beyond 25 March the consultation period on proposals to ban smoking in enclosed public places. [223274]

Angela Smith: Three months is the standard period for a public consultation. There are no plans to extend the period beyond 25 March 2005.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons the consultation period on proposals to ban smoking in enclosed public places was limited to three months. [223275]

Angela Smith: The three month consultation on the proposals to ban smoking in enclosed public places is the standard period for a consultation as set out in the 'Guide to Consultation Methods for Northern Ireland Public Authorities.'

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220941]

Mr. Paul Murphy: There were no items of surplus stock, belonging to the Northern Ireland Office (excluding its Agencies and NDPBs), sold on the eBay auction website in each year since 2000–01.

University Admissions

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what proportion of school leavers in Northern Ireland entered higher education in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [222856]

Mr. Gardiner: Figures for 2003/04 are not yet available. The most recent available figures are for 2001/02 school leavers.

Parliamentary constituency	*Proportion of school leavers entering institutions of higher education*	
	1997	*2002*
Belfast East	28.7	35.1
Belfast North	18.3	23.6
Belfast South	37.6	44.1
Belfast West	15.5	22.0
East Antrim	27.4	34.7
East Londonderry	29.4	32.9
Fernamagh and south Tyrone	33.1	43.2
Foyle	27.3	34.1
Lagan Valley	31.2	40.0
Mid Ulster	31.1	35.5
Newry and Armagh	24.9	34.1
North Antrim	27.8	34.1
North Down	38.7	42.1
South Antrim	28.4	33.9
South Down	24.6	35.1
Strangford	31.1	35.3
Upper Bann	28.5	34.1
West Tyrne	29.1	40.6

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Avient

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry with regard to the recent statement by the National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines on Avient, what assessment she has made of what is covered by the term military company. [200494]

Mr. Alexander: The core business of Avient is cargo transport and logistics, in the context of the UN report, predominantly mining equipment. The NCP has seen no evidence that Avient supplied arms of any description.

Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan Pipeline

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many breaches of World Bank guidelines by the monitoring consultants for the Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline during implementation have been identified and reported to her Department. [218274]

Mr. Alexander: The independent environmental consultant to the lender group (D'Appolonia) has identified four significant breaches of project standards. These were all rectified by BTC Co. within a reasonable

period as required and defined by the project's Social Action Plan and the Export Credits Guarantee Department loan agreement.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many incidents of land being used outside the 28-metre Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline corridor have been reported to her; [218280]

(2) whether the use of unexpropriated land outside the 28-metre corridor in relation to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project constitutes a breach of loan agreements. [218281]

Mr. Alexander: The use of unexpropriated land outside the 28-metre pipeline corridor would represent a breach of the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) loan agreement for the project, if it were considered to have a material effect on the project. Breaches not rectified within a reasonable period, in accordance with the project's Environment and Social Action Plan and the ECGD loan agreement, would constitute an incident for which an event of default could be called.

In its second site visit report (June-July 2004) the lender group's independent environmental consultant, D'Appolonia, reported that there had been unplanned use of land outside of the 28 metre pipeline corridor in Turkey on an unspecified number of occasions. However, these breaches of ECGD's loan agreement were rectified within the required period.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what requirements she places on project sponsors to provide her with relevant reports on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project. [218295]

Mr. Alexander: BTC Co. is required, in line with project documentation, to provide the lending group with the following reports:

monthly construction and operating reports;

financial statements;

shareholder communications;

budgets; and

cash flows.

The lender group's independent consultants also provide reports on the technical aspects of the project.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what reports she has received regarding compliance by *(a)* BOTAS and *(b)* its subcontractors with appropriate standards on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [218553]

Mr. Alexander: The lenders to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project, including the Export Credits Guarantee Department, received reports from WorleyParsons, (the lender group's independent engineering consultant), and D'Appolonia (the independent environmental consultant) during the construction of the pipeline. These reports highlight any concerns regarding compliance by any of the BTC contractors and subcontractors with the appropriate standards.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether BP has informed her of the concerns raised by its operations department with regard to certifying the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline as fit for purpose. [218555]

Mr. Alexander: The Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has not been informed by BP or BTC Co. of any concerns raised by BP's operations department. The lender group's independent technical consultant (WorleyParsons) has also advised that it has not seen any information to suggest that BP's operations department has such concerns.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she was first informed that the cathodic protection system used on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was vulnerable to being rendered inoperative by coating corrosion. [218556]

Mr. Alexander: It is the Export Credits Guarantee Department's understanding that the pipeline coating protects the underlying metal pipe from the surrounding corrosive environment and it will not itself corrode.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) whether she has monitored the expropriation of land for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project in Turkey using emergency powers under Article 27 of the Turkish Expropriation Law; [218560]

(2) what monitoring she has undertaken of compliance by BTC with the agreed resettlement action plan for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project. [218561]

Mr. Alexander: A Social and Resettlement Action Plan (SRAP) Monitoring Panel, made up of international resettlement and social development experts, has been monitoring the implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan including the expropriation of land for the project. The SRAP panel's reports are sent to the lender group and are also published on the project website at: www.caspiandevelopmentandexport.com

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she was first informed by the Export Credits Guarantee Department that SPC 2888, proposed to be used on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, had not previously been used on a pipeline with polyethylene coating. [218562]

Mr. Alexander: ECGD informed the then Minister for Trade's office on 8 July 2004 that SPC 2888 had not previously been used on a pipeline with polyethylene coating.

BNFL (Prosecutions)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many prosecutions of BNFL have occurred since 1 May 1997 excluding ongoing cases; on what date; and for what offence. [221676]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: BNFL has been subject to the following prosecutions since 1 May 1997.

Date of hearing	Offences
26 September 1997	Discharge of Caustic Soda into River Calder at Sellafield Water Resources Act 1991 sections 85 (i) and 85 (vi) Environmental Protection Act 1990 sections 6 (i), 23 (i) and 23 (ii) Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 section 4 (i) Authorisation Number AS5601 Conditions 1.1 and 1.4
2 September 1998	Solvent release into River Ribble at Springfields Failure to comply with Condition 1.4 Integrated Pollution Control Authorisation AS4494 Failure to comply with Condition 3.2 of the said authorisation
2 June 2000	Nitric Acid Spill at Sellafield Health and Safety at Work Act 1974—section 2(1) and 33(1)(a)
20 September 2000	Breach of Site Discharge Authorisation at Chapelcross Radioactive Substances Act
5 October 2000	Failing to comply with Improvement Notice (s33 HSWA) Failing to leak test radioactive source (Reg. 27 IRR '99) Failing to account for radioactive sources × 2 (Reg. 28 IRR '99)
5 April 2001	Failing to register as a user of Mobile Radioactive Apparatus (s9 RSA '93)—BNFL Sellafield Failure to register radioactive material (sources) (s6 RSA '93) at Barrow Marine Terminal
6 March 2002	Contamination event—Sellafield Regulation 8, Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999 Regulation 7, Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (section 3 (1), section 33 (1)(a) and section 33 (1a)
29 March 2003	Arm injury to employee—Sellafield Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 sections 33 (1)(a) and 33 (1a)
30 January 2004	Dive Boat Incident—Sellafield Health and Safety at Work Act 1974—section 2
27 May 2004	Calder Hall—unsuitable floor Regulation 12(1) of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 Section 33(1)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Business Closures (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have ceased trading in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223181]

Nigel Griffiths: DTI figures based solely on VAT de-registrations for Shrewsbury and Atcham local authority are shown as follows for 1997 to 2003.

VAT de-registrations

	Shrewsbury and Atcham
1997	230
1998	225
1999	220
2000	245
2001	205
2002	220
2003	240

Source:
VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2003, Small Business Service, available from: http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

Data for 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

Construction Industry

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent studies her Department has made of the use of agency labour within the construction industry. [219954]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department has undertaken no recent studies of the use of agency labour within the construction industry. However, employment agencies and employment businesses that supply labour to the construction industry are covered by the provisions of the Employment Agencies Act 1973 and associated legislation. The DTI's Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate is responsible for enforcing the legislation and in the course of normal business inspects a wide variety of employment agencies and businesses, including a number that supply workers to the construction industry.

Data Protection

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what guidance her Department is offering to *(a)* banks and *(b)* the Post Office to encourage greater scrutiny of applications for bank accounts and post office box numbers to prevent their use by bogus data production agencies. [220080]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

My Department does not publish any guidance to this end. The number of operational bogus data protection agencies has diminished very considerably following the actions of the Information Commissioner with the Police, the Office of Fair Trading, and Trading Standards Departments throughout the country, and most have been closed down. Banks and Post Offices can access the information on bogus data protection agencies posted on the Information Commissioner's

website, should they receive an application for a bank account or box number from a company offering data protection notification services as their business activity.

Energy Act

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether lawyers *(a)* from and *(b)* contracted to work for her Department have made an assessment of the compatibility of the Energy Act 2004 with European Directive 2001/77/EC article 7. [222942]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is content that the Energy Act 2004 is compatible with article 7 of European Directive 2001/77/EC.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch Presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee on opening up public contracts met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [214295]

Mr. Alexander: The Advisory Committee on opening up public contracts met as follows:

(a) under the Italian presidency on 9 October and 16 December 2003;

(b) under the Irish presidency on 3 March 2004; and

(c) under the Dutch presidency on 6 July and 28 October 2004.

In each case the meetings were held in Brussels and were attended by UK Government officials.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for the development of the internal market in postal services and the improvement of the quality service met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [214297]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The EU Postal Directive Committee meets twice a year in Brussels: and had its sixth meeting on 8 December 2004. A representative from the DTI or the Postal Services Commission (Postcomm) attends the meetings. In addition, the Consumer Council for Postal Services (Postwatch) made a presentation to the Committee on 1 July 2004 on the treatment of complaints concerning cross-border mail services.

EU Markets (Third World Access)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what recent discussions she has had with European Union counterparts on improving *(a)* trade with and *(b)* access to EU markets for Third World countries; and if she will make a statement; [200720]

(2) what recent discussions she has had with the Governments of Third World countries about improving access to EU markets; and if she will make a statement. [200721]

Mr. Alexander: The Government are committed to securing an ambitious outcome to the Doha Development Agenda, including increasing market access for developing country exports/Ministers and officials regularly discuss the ongoing negotiations with their opposite numbers around the world.

In addition, the European Union is currently developing its Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), which gives preferential access for developing countries to the EU market, for the period 2006–08. The UK has discussed the Commission's proposals for the new scheme with other member states on a regular basis, and with a number of developing country interlocutors.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions since 5 November 2004 *(a)* the Export Credits Guarantee Department has accepted an applicant's request not to provide the name and address of an agent when proceeding with an application and *(b)* applicants have asked the ECGD to proceed with an application without providing the name and address of an agent or intermediary. [220896]

Mr. Alexander: The information is as follows:

(a) None.

(b) None.

House Purchases

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received about applying the Sale of Goods Act 1979 to new house purchases; and if she will make a statement. [222718]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Sale of Goods Act 1979 does not apply to new house purchases. I have received no representations about applying the Sale of Goods Act to new house purchases.

Israel

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans she has to develop the trade relationship between the UK and Israel; [222884]

(2) if she will make a statement on bi-lateral trade between the UK and Israel. [222885]

Mr. Alexander: UK Trade and Investment has developed a programme of trade development and inward investment activities with Israel in sectors which present real and specific opportunities for UK industry. UKTI has identified opportunities particularly in the high tech and financial services industries, as well as seeking to attract significant Israeli investment into the UK. 2004 trade figures for UK exports to Israel are £1.394 billion (£1.377 billion in 2003) and £943 million for Israeli imports to the UK (£882 million in 2003).

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of bilateral trade relations between the UK and Israel *(a)* from 1997 to 2001 and *(b)* since June 2001. [223020]

Mr. Alexander: The bilateral trade relationship between the UK and Israel has been fruitful for both sides for many years and continues to thrive.

Statistically this can be measured in four-year blocks; in 1997–2000 (inclusive) £5.085 billion of goods was exported from the UK to Israel, and in 2001–04 (inclusive) this had risen by 10 per cent. to £5.576 billion. Imports from Israel in the same periods fell slightly from £3.802 to £3.711.

Lyons Review

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what decisions have been made to relocate to north-east Scotland jobs in the Department in the oil and gas sector as set out in the recommendations of the Lyons Review. [207635]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 10 January 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to his question number 207634, on 12 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 579W.

Maternity Leave

Mr. Crausby: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Bolton, North-East have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [203369]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Labour Force Survey provides statistics on the number of women who are on maternity leave at a single point in time (spring) every year. However it does not record the total number of women on maternity leave each year or the duration of leave taken. Due to concerns about data confidentiality, the Office for National Statistics does not release figures at constituency level. The smallest area for which data are available is Greater Manchester.

Over the eight years between 1997 and 2004, there were on average 6,000 women on maternity leave around spring in Greater Manchester. This represents approximately 1.2 per cent. of women in employment, and 0.5 per cent. of all women, in the Greater Manchester area.

MG Rover

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with representatives from China on a bid to rescue MG Rover. [217354]

Jacqui Smith: The Government supports the proposed joint venture between MG Rover and Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC) as the best route to achieving a sustainable future for manufacturing at Longbridge. A number of Ministers, including my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, have expressed this support both in writing and in face-to-face meetings with representatives of SAIC and the Chinese Government.

Miners Compensation (Midlothian)

David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in Midlothian were paid compensation under the Coal Industry Pneumoconiosis Compensation Scheme in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [220072]

Nigel Griffiths: In 2003, 10 people in Midlothian were paid compensation under the Coal Industry Pneumoconiosis Scheme and in 2004, three people in Midlothian were paid compensation under the scheme and 3,292 individual payments worth £20.5 million were made in Midlothian under the Chronic Obstruction Pulmonary Disease scheme.

Newspaper Distribution Regulations

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the Office of Fair Trading about the review of newspaper distribution regulations; and if she will make a statement. [216652]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 21 February 2005]:* In response to a request from certain parties in the newspaper and magazine supply chain, the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has been undertaking an informal consideration of the arrangements for distribution of newspapers and magazines. This is a matter for the OFT. OFT has, however, sought to keep DTI officials informed about the process. I understand the OFT will announce its findings shortly.

Paternity Rights

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she will take to enhance the paternity rights enjoyed by fathers to bring them into line with the maternity rights enjoyed by mothers. [222355]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* In 2003, we introduced a new right for fathers to take two weeks' paternity leave with statutory paternity pay, paid at the same standard rate as statutory maternity pay.

In addition to this, fathers benefit from other provisions provided for working parents in the same way as mothers. The right to request flexible working, the right to parental leave and the right to time off for dependants all apply to fathers as well as mothers.

Our recent consultation document, "Work and Families: Choice and Flexibility", seeks views on options for a new scheme which would enable a father to take a proportion of the statutory maternity leave and pay which is currently available to the mother.

Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the Libraries of the House. It is also available to download at www.dti.gov.uk/workandfamilies or to order from DTI Publications orderline on 0845 015 0010.

Pensions (Coal Industry)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many miners have been adversely affected by the changes of spring 1987 to the pension scheme relating to canteen workers in the coal industry and the continued payments of pensions to the husbands and deceased pensioners. [222727]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The issue raised is a matter for the Trustees of the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme. DTO does not hold any personal information on MPS members and I have asked the Trustees to respond to the hon. Member.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how regional development agencies (RDAs) choose which company to support when multiple companies across multiple RDAs are competing for the same export business. [203951]

Mr. Alexander: Support for exporters in England is the responsibility of UK Trade & Investment, which has agreed with the RDAs to operate as their international trade arm. UK Trade & Investment seeks to support all companies which approach them for help with exporting in accordance with each company's needs. It is for individual companies to decide as to which export business they might pursue.

Regional Selective Assistance (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much regional selective assistance has been invested in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223240]

Mr. Alexander: I have asked the Chief Executive of Advantage West Midlands to write to the hon. Member: a copy of that letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Renewable Energy

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the potential for promoting renewable energy in urban areas; and on what funding support is available to promote such schemes. [222217]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI's "It's only Natural Campaign" is a national campaign to promote renewable technologies across all regions.

The objectives of the campaign are to:

Raise awareness of renewable energy and its benefits among planners, councillors, investors and wider public audience.

Inform and educate key audiences to enable them to make informed decisions.

The DTI also has two grant support mechanisms to encourage the installation of small-scale renewables; Clear Skies, which as a £12.5 million budget, and the PV Demonstration Programme, which has a budget of £31 million. Both Programmes promote renewable technologies as well as providing grants.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of European Parliament Directive 2001/77/EC article 7, on transmission and distribution fees and electricity from renewable energy sources; and what assessment she has made of whether the new transmission charging regime under British Electricity Trading and Transmission Arrangements contravenes the Directive. [222941]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State exercised her powers under the Energy Act 2004 to designate licence conditions requiring the system operator to devise a GB transmission charging methodology under BETTA. Approval of that methodology is a matter for the independent industry regulator, Ofgem. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State also took a power in the Energy Act to enable her to adjust transmission charges for renewable generators in a specified area, if those charges would otherwise deter renewable generation in that area. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is content that, in taking these powers, and exercising her power to designate licence conditions, she has acted in a way that is compatible with Article 7 of the Directive.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many drums of plutonium-contaminated processing waste are held at Sellafield; and what the *(a)* maximum and *(b)* average plutonium content of each drum is. [221567]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* I am advised by BNFL that there are over 35,000 drums of plutonium contaminated waste held in storage at Sellafield. For drums of plutonium contaminated waste arising from the last 40 years of operations at the site the best estimate maximum plutonium content is around 170 g with an average plutonium content of a few grams.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on which dates since 1 May 1997, Euratom Safeguard and accountancy treaties have been breached on the Sellafield site; and in what ways the treaties were breached in each case. [221675]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The European Commission announced on 30 March 2004 its decision to launch infraction proceedings regarding aspects of Euratom safeguards implementation at the Sellafield B30 plant. There have been no other Euratom safeguards infraction proceedings in respect of the Sellafield site.

Solar Photovoltaics

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she will take to support UK solar PV manufacturing and design once funding under the 2002 to 2012 demonstration programme ends later this year. [220378]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The major PV demonstration programme is due to end in March 2006. Grants are expected to be paid up to March 2007.

The Department will continue its support for PV through a "low carbon buildings" programme. The low carbon buildings programme is currently under development and there will be formal consultation on this later this year. The programme is expected to begin operating in 2006–07.

South West Regional Development Agency

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many members of staff there are in the south west regional Development Agency; and how many have been in post for *(a)* less than one year, *(b)* between one and two years and *(c)* more than two years. [223054]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* As at 17 March 2005 there were 251 staff employed in establishment posts in the agency.

Of these, 32 have less than one years service, 42 have between one and two years service and 177 have more than two years service.

Telecom Services

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if her Department will publish figures for the mis-selling of fixed line telecom services, indicating the companies involved; and what discussions she has had with Ofcom on this matter. [222170]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Regulator, the Office of Communications (Ofcom). Accordingly, my officials have asked the chief executive of Ofcom to reply directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of Houses.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff are employed in the London office of UK Trade & Investment; and what plans she has for reducing London-based staff at UK Trade & Investment over the next 12 months. [203908]

Mr. Alexander: UK Trade & Investment currently has some 600 civil service staff in London and 70 staff in Glasgow. The total work force also includes temporary and agency staff who cover vacant civil service posts and provide certain specialist skills.

In line with reductions in resource envisaged in its SR 2004 settlement, UK Trade & Investment is reducing the number of posts in its London and Glasgow offices. It expects, by April 2008, to have achieved a reduction of 200 in the total number of established posts.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprentices (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Government-funded apprentices there were in City of York in each year since 1996–97. [222228]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The available local information on Government-funded apprentices is at Local Learning and Skills Council (LLSC) area, and prior to the creation of the LSC, Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) area. The following table shows the number of learners on apprenticeships in the north Yorkshire TEC area in October of each year from 1996 to 2000, as well as the number of learners on apprenticeships in north Yorkshire LLSC in October of each year since 2001.

Learners on apprenticeships in north Yorkshire TEC/LSC by programme and month

Month	*Advanced apprenticeships*	*Apprenticeships at level 2*
North Yorkshire TEC		
October 1996	700	—
October 1997	1,400	—
October 1998	1,700	600
October 1999	1,800	1,800
October 2000	1,900	3,000
North Yorkshire LLSC		
October 2001	1,500	3,000
October 2002	1,200	3,000
October 2003	1,300	3,400
October 2004	1,200	2,600

Notes:
1. The definition of in-learning changed in 2003/04. The old method only counted those in learning on the last working day of the month. The new method counts those in learning at any point during the month.
2. The reduction in 2004 is due to the transfer of significant contracts from north Yorkshire LLSC to the LSC National Contracting Service.

Sources:
TEC Management information
LSC Individualised Learner Record

Catering Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent on *(a)* entertainment lunches involving civil servants and guests and *(b)* working lunches, in each year since 1997. [215039]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the answer provided on 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 816W. The Department's accounting system does not differentiate between entertainment lunches and working lunches. All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting.

Child Care

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the role of the provision of culturally sensitive child care in facilitating Muslim women's ability to work outside the home. [220804]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are fully committed to ensuring that regular reviews of provision are undertaken locally and nationally to ensure services are inclusive and sensitive to the needs of all communities, including the Muslim community.

We have taken a proactive stance to identify the issues, consider their underlying causes, explore potential solutions and establish successful approaches to all communities where they are needed.

Available information seems to show that Bangladeshi and Pakistani families are the least likely to be using childcare and the most likely to have very low levels of maternal employment.

We have commissioned a secondary analysis of the Parents Demand for Childcare Survey datasets to explore further ethnic minority group parents' use of, demand for and views on childcare over the period 1999–2001 by examining combined data from the baseline and repeat surveys. This research report is due to be published by the Department on Thursday 31 March.

As the data are not collected by faith groups, we will need to use the ethnic definitions of Bangladeshi and Pakistani groupings. Although the analysed data were collected in 1999 and 2001, we will be examining the findings closely to help us better understand why Muslim families seem to be less engaged with local formal childcare services.

Various studies as well as practice feedback that we have had from the experience of many Sure Start local programmes and other local childcare services show that when childcare provision is culturally sensitive Muslim families are much more likely to access services.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps the Government are taking to ensure that additional child care places will expand the provision of child care within and for Muslim communities in a culturally sensitive way. [220805]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are committed to ensuring that all its policies, practices and services are totally inclusive, and do not discriminate against any individual. This principle underpins our strategic guidance to local authorities. Local authorities are also required to adhere to and implement equality and inclusion policies, procedures and practices when developing early years education and childcare services. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 sets out the requirements with which all listed public authorities must comply.

My Department funded four projects in local authorities during 2003–04 to improve understanding of the practical steps Local authorities and childcare settings can take to ensure childcare provision is responsive to the needs of local black and minority ethnic families and is used by them. A report of findings was produced and distributed to all local authorities. Training has been made available to Children's Information Services and to early years staff to improve their practice. A very wide range of information and resources on topics such as purchasing and using culturally sensitive toys and books and resources for staff about the Muslim culture is available via links on our website to those of other organisations.

The information from these projects is already informing the design and implementation of our current and future childcare initiatives. The Sure Start Unit's own work on childcare is part of the wider DfES plans to ensure that all education services engage with Muslim communities.

In particular, we will ensure that, through the significant expansion of provision in the Government's 10-year strategy on child care, we and our local authority partners work hard to further improve access to culturally sensitive childcare for Muslim families. Finally, our support and inspection arrangements for local authority childcare activities will assess that local authorities ensure local services respond sensitively to the Muslim communities in their area.

It is vital that the Muslim community and Muslim organisations help to shape policies and programmes to tackle the issues particular to their communities, both at a national and local level. In developing childcare, therefore, we will continue to ensure there is consultation and involvement of the community at local and national level.

Departmental Expenditure Breakdown

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list miscellaneous programmes under the headings *(a)* schools, *(b)* support for children, young people and families, *(c)* higher education, *(d)* further education, adult learning and skills and lifelong learning and *(e)* activities to support all functions in her Department's expenditure plans for 2004. [221223]

Derek Twigg: A list showing all the programmes included as miscellaneous entries in the Departmental Annual Report is as follows.

(a) Schools

Assisted Places Scheme—Providing financial assistance to able pupils studying in independent schools.

Music Ballet Scheme—Supporting training for exceptional pupils in Music and Dance.

City Technology Colleges—providing support for City technology Colleges.

Academies (Capital)—Supporting the implementation of the Academies.

Specialist Schools—Promoting the specialist schools initiative.

Curriculum—Promoting a broad and rich curriculum.

Cybrarian Fund—assisting access to internet for disabled and disadvantaged.

Sustainable Development—developing a Sustainable Development framework for schools in support of the Government's Sustainable Development strategy.

Schools Council Pensions—residual pension payments.

ex-FAS properties—residual property costs of the Funding Agency for Schools.

GM Schools—meeting remaining costs of capital projects of former grant maintained schools.

Innovation Funds—Supporting innovative school programmes to improve student outcomes.

Diversity path finders—To raise standards for all pupils by creating a more diverse secondary education system where schools collaborate to share effective practice.

Performance Tables—Providing school performance information to allow parents to make improved choices about where to send their children.

Baseline Assessment—Supporting assessments of children at the end of the Foundation Stage (usually aged 5).

Creativity/Cultural Entitlement—Providing access to a wider range of cultural and artistic opportunities.

Modern Foreign Languages—Delivering the National Languages Strategy.

Refugees and Embassy Mother Tongue—Raising minority ethnic achievement.

Behaviour: Central support and development—Supporting initiatives to improve pupil behaviour and reduce bullying and exclusions.

School Intervention—Fresh Start.

Independent State School Partnerships—Supporting cross-sector collaboration with the independent sector aimed at sharing expertise and raising standards.

School Travel Advisers—Developing school travel plans to reduce car journeys.

Governors/Admission—School admissions, governance and organisation

(b) Support for children

E-Learning Strategy Unit Innovations Fund—Supporting DfES' cross cutting e-strategy.

Community Industry Pensions—residual pension payments.

Special Educational Needs—supports, regional partnerships, national advisers, disability tribunal, teacher training and developmental work.

Parenting—To support families through the Parenting Fund and Parenting Plus.

Family Support—To support families through the Family Support Grant.

Marriage and Relationship Support—Supporting voluntary organisations to establish activities to improve relationships between partners.

Grants to the Voluntary Sector

(c) Higher Education

Development and promotion of Foundation Degrees

Bursaries and Subscriptions for the European University Institute (Florence), the College of Europe (Bruges) and Fellowships at the Bologna Centre of the John Hopkins University.

Other HE International—providing advice and information for international students studying in the UK.

HE Innovations Fund—Supporting policy development and innovative ideas on improving graduate employability, admissions to HE and the quality of regulation.

Office of the HE Independent Adjudicator

Other HE Funding and evaluation—Small HE liabilities and evaluation costs for Aim Higher

(d) Further education, adult learning and skills and lifelong learning

Inward Investment—encouraging investment in Britain by multi-nationals.

ex-Training and Enterprise Council properties—residual property costs of TECs.

Sector Skills Development Agency

Learndirect—information advice and guidance on learning for adults.

Investors In People UK

Further Education Teaching and Learning—improving standards and bursaries for trainee FE teachers.

Skills Strategy support—National marketing, communication, development and delivery of the skills strategy.

Invest to Save Budget (Derby FE College)

(e) Activities to support all functions

Corporate Internet Presence—providing public access to information.

Community Champions—neighbourhood renewal through support of community, projects.

Invest to Save Budget (Savings)

Supporting Enterprise Communities—funding projects that support local community initiatives.

Stakeholder Management—supports corporate, ministerial and board stakeholder management activity to promote effective communications.

Business Development Unit Fund—To develop long term relationships with businesses to secure sponsorship.

e-Portals—facilities for communicating with the education sector.

Evaluation and Research—To evaluate policy and inform spending reviews.

Pension Transfer Values—costs associated with transferring pensions.

Data Services—To provide detailed, robust information to ministers and policy makers.

Dudley College

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the financial implications for Dudley college of the funding gap with school sixth forms; and if she will make a statement on when she expects the funding gap to be narrowed. [222731]

Dr. Howells: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council. The Department does not collect or hold information at the level requested.

Government recognise that there are differences in the funding allocated to school sixth forms and further education colleges and have taken action to address this. We have brought up funding levels for further education colleges as we said we would without penalising schools. Our policy has been to continue to bring up the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether her Department will fully fund courses for adults at Level 3 at Dudley College in 2005/06; [222732]

(2) whether she expects fees for courses above Level 2 for adults to rise at Dudley College in 2005/06. [222734]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. There will be no change in the fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all which covers the largest part of the cost of courses but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005/06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to ensure that fee concessions remain in place for those aged 60 years who wish to attend Dudley College. [222733]

Dr. Howells: Older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. Learners of any age will also continue to have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges such as Dudley will continue to have considerable discretion in setting fees, and although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Education Funding

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what discussions she has had with the Learning and Skills Council on its recent decision on changing the way in which GNVQs are funded; [222159]

(2) if she will ask the Learning and Skills Council to fund GNVQs at the same rate in schools and colleges in 2005/06; and if she will make a statement. [222160]

Dr. Howells: My Department has not discussed with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) its decision to change GNVQ funding rates for further education providers for 2005/06. I have no plans to ask the LSC to change the way it funds GNVQs. Decisions about funding rates in schools and colleges are a matter for the LSC. I understand that changes similar to those made for colleges will apply to school sixth-forms in 2006/07.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment her Department has made of the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Leeds; what the timetable is for taking steps to close the gap; and if she will make a statement. [222881]

Dr. Howells: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council. The Department does not collect or hold information at the level requested.

Government recognise that there are differences in the funding allocated to school sixth forms and further education colleges and has taken action to address this. We have brought up funding levels for further education colleges as we said we would without penalising schools. Our policy has been to continue to bring up the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* England have received education maintenance allowance. [222779]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: By the end of February 2005 1,605 young people resident in the South Tyneside local authority area had received one or more EMA payments. 18,803 young people in the North East of England and 284,002 young people across the whole of England had received one or more EMA payments. We do not analyse data at constituency level.

English Examinations (Key Stage 3)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of the total number of scripts for Key Stage 3 examinations in English for 2004 were sent abroad to be marked. [223198]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* No Key Stage 3 English tests were sent abroad to be marked in 2004.

Further Education (Blyth Valley)

Mr. Ronnie Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether she expects fees for courses above level 2 for adults to rise in Blyth Valley in 2005/06; [223123]

(2) if her Department will fully fund courses for adults at level 3 in Blyth Valley in 2005/06. [223124]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. There will be no change in the fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all which covers the largest part of the cost of courses but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005/06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Mr. Ronnie Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she will take to ensure that fee concessions remain in place for those aged over 60 years who wish to study in further education colleges in Blyth Valley. [223125]

Dr. Howells: Older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. Learners of any age will also continue to have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges such as those in the Blyth Valley will continue to have considerable discretion in setting fees, and although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Geography Teaching

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what response she has made to the Ofsted report on geography teaching. [223415]

Derek Twigg: In April 2004 Ministers set up a Development Fund to support the teaching and learning of geography in schools. A joint contract has been awarded to the Royal Geographical Society and the Geographical Association to develop resources and support for schools and teachers. We have also set up a high-level focus group with schools, further and higher education, professions, media, heritage, international and business interests represented. The group aims to identify pragmatic and realistic ways to support the subject and raise its profile.

Higher Education Funding

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the change in funding for universities in England will be in 2005–06. [222984]

Dr. Howells: The Government provide funding for higher education through the Higher Education and Funding Council for England (HEFCE). £6,332 million in recurrent funding has been allocated for universities and colleges in England for 2005–06. The total grant, which represents an overall increase of 5.6 per cent. compared with 2004–05, provides an above inflation increase for teaching, £120 million more for research and an extra 26,000 student places.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research the Department evaluated prior to selecting the minimum standard bursary and other bursary schemes as mechanisms by which to minimise the deterrent effects of tuition fees. [222992]

Dr. Howells: In framing the variable fees policy, including the bursaries policy, we looked at overseas experience, especially in Australia and Ontario. We also looked at the results of offering Opportunity Bursaries to potential university students from poor backgrounds in selected parts of England.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the percentage of total fee income which the payment of minimum standard bursaries will represent for *(a)* Russell Group universities and *(b)* mainstream universities. [222993]

Dr. Howells: Exactly how much the minimum standard bursaries cost any university each year will depend on what fees they decide to charge, and on the make-up of their student body in that year. We have said in the letter of guidance from the Secretary of State to the Director for Fair Access that the minimum requirement should not cost any institution more than around 10 per cent. of their extra fee income.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued on the role of the Office of Fair Access in advising higher education institutions on levels of expenditure in relation to attracting under-represented students. [222994]

Dr. Howells: The letter of guidance from the Secretary of State to the Director for Fair Access was published in October 2004, and is available on the DfES website. It suggests (section 6.1) that the director should expect the most, in terms of bursaries and financial support, from institutions whose records suggest that they have the farthest to go in terms of securing a broadly based intake of students. However, it also makes clear that it is for institutions to make proposals, and for the director to decide whether to approve them.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills at what point in the academic year 2006–07 she expects *(a)* universities will be in receipt of additional fee income and *(b)* students will be in receipt of minimum standard bursaries. [223010]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The arrangements for the payment of fee income from 2006–07, where students decide to defer payment of their fees by taking out a fee loan, are still being finalised. The SLC currently pays fee income from the fee remission grant to institutions in February. From 2006–07, fee income may be paid in more than one instalment. How and when universities and colleges choose to pay bursaries to students is their decision.

Peter Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of *(a)* tuition fees and *(b)* bursaries and grants for students are proposed by each higher education institution in England from 2006. [223409]

Dr. Howells: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Learndirect

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 755W, on learndirect, how many learners ceased to participate in learndirect without completing the course. [222974]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: On the basis of information provided by Ufi, 1.55 million learners have enrolled on learndirect courses since April 2000. 624,000 of these learners did not complete their course. The learndirect Winter Barometer Report 2005 identified lack of time (23 per cent.), work commitments (16 per cent.), problems accessing course (15 per cent.) and family/personal circumstances (15 per cent.) as the key reasons for non-completion. Current learner satisfaction is at an all time high of 90 per cent.

Local Network Fund

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what plans she has to move the management of the Local Network Fund from the voluntary to the statutory sector; [223003]

(2) what steps she will take to ensure that voluntary and community groups in Devon have equality of access to the Local Network Fund after 1 April 2006; [223004]

(3) what safeguards are in place to ensure that children's trust funds previously earmarked for the Local Network Fund are not reallocated to other programmes from April 2006; [223005]

(4) what steps she will take to ensure there is consistency in the delivery of the Local Network Fund during the 2006 to 2008 transition period. [223006]

Margaret Hodge: A decision to extend the Local Network Fund for Children and Young People to cover the period 2006–08 was taken last year. The programme will continue to be available, solely for voluntary and community groups working with vulnerable 0 to 19-year-olds.

The Local Network Fund is an important part of the Change for Children programme which involves the creation of local children's trusts to plan and commission services for young people. We are currently finalising our advice and planning guidance to local authorities and other partners on the establishment and development of children's trusts. This will include transitional arrangements for programmes such as the Local Network Fund. We will take account of the success of the current management and delivery arrangements for the Local Network Fund in finalising the transitional arrangements.

Mature Students

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many mature students were resident in each London borough in each year since 2001. [221241]

Dr. Howells: Information on the term time address of students is not held centrally. The closest available information shows the number of students from each local education authority in London, based on their address prior to entering HE study, and this is given in the table.

UK domiciled undergraduates from London aged 21 or over

	Academic year:		
Home LEA of student:[1]	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
City of London	210	235	225
Camden	3,910	4,235	4,385
Greenwich	3,580	3,900	4,275
Hackney	4,250	4,590	4,880
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,590	2,795	3,020
Islington	3,610	3,930	4,175
Kensington and Chelsea	2,405	2,595	2,645
Lambeth	5,475	5,955	6,265
Lewisham	5,015	5,475	5,870
Southwark	5,675	6,135	6,565
Tower Hamlets	2,860	3,355	3,555
Wandsworth	4,315	4,750	5,080
City of Westminster	3,305	3,705	3,805
Barking	1,560	1,970	2,205
Barnet	5,775	6,290	6,545
Bexley	2,360	2,495	2,770
Brent	5,185	5,605	5,850
Bromley	3,730	4,030	4,350
Croydon	4,595	5,115	5,515
Ealing	5,535	5,735	6,060
Enfield	4,380	4,770	4,980
Haringey	4,785	5,195	5,205
Harrow	3,740	3,990	4,190
Havering	1,925	2,190	2,370
Hillingdon	3,190	3,345	3,510
Hounslow	3,085	3,230	3,485
Kingston-upon-Thames	2,205	2,425	2,585
Merton	2,795	3,085	3,330
Newham	4,660	5,450	5,690
Redbridge	3,845	4,345	4,600
Richmond-upon-Thames	2,645	2,755	2,930
Sutton	2,010	2,200	2,295
Waltham Forest	3,835	4,385	4,655

[1] The home LEA indicates the student's normal area of residence, but this will not necessarily be the same as the LEA in which they live during their period of study.

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5.

Medical Schools

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the university medical schools which have admitted students for training which will lead to qualifications as a doctor with less than the equivalent of three Cs at A level; how many such students have been admitted in each year since 1997; and which university medical schools plan to admit such students in the future under the auspices of the widening participation scheme. [222596]

Dr. Howells: The following table provides information on the numbers of undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine courses within the UK, with less than the equivalent of three Cs at 'A' level.

The admission and selection of students is a matter for individual institutions. Therefore the decision on whether or not to recruit such students rests with the universities, and they would take such decisions according to the merit and potential of the individual applicants. Although there are currently no Government programmes for widening participation aimed specifically at medicine, Aimhigher, a national outreach programme operating most intensively in disadvantaged areas, enables local partnerships to design and deliver a range of activities to raise the aspiration and attainment levels of young people.

Alongside this, Aimhigher runs nine pilot schemes aimed at the health and social care professions to encourage wider participation from a broad range of social and ethnic backgrounds.

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine with less than three Cs (or equivalent)[1,2] *at A level*

HESA institution identifier	*1997/98*	*1998/99*	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*
University of Leicester	[3]	[3]	10	[3]	5	5	25
University of Warwick	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	[3]	[3]	25
University of East Anglia	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	25
Queen Mary and Westfield College	[3]	5	5	[3]	[3]	5	15
University of Glasgow	15	10	15	15	20	10	15
University of Nottingham	[3]	5	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	15
University of Plymouth (Peninsular Medical School)[4]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	15
University of Dundee	5	10	5	10	25	5	10
University of Leeds	5	[3]	5	[3]	20	15	10
King's College London	[3]	10	5	5	5	5	10
University of Aberdeen	5	15	10	15	10	10	10
University of St Andrews	[3]	5	15	[3]	10	10	10
St. George's Hospital Medical School	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	10
University of Exeter (Peninsular Medical School) (3)	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5
University of Durham	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	[3]	5
University of Sussex (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5
University College London	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	5
University of Edinburgh	5	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	5
University of Brighton	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5
Victoria University of Manchester	[3]	5	[3]	5	10	10	5

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine with less than three Cs (or equivalent) [1,2] *at A level*

HESA institution identifier	*1997/98*	*1998/99*	*1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*	*2002/03*	*2003/04*
University of Birmingham	5	[3]	5	5	5	10	[3]
University of Sheffield	[3]	[3]	5	5	5	5	[3]
University of York[5]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Imperial College of Science, Technology & Medicine	5	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Cambridge	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Oxford	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Bristol	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Hull[5]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Queen's University of Belfast	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Liverpool	5	5	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	[3]	[3]	5	[3]	5	5	[3]
University of Southampton	5	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	[3]
University of Wales, Cardiff	[3]	[3]	[3]	5	[3]	[3]	[3]
Total	70	70	90	70	120	120	235

[1] Based upon students obtaining A level qualifications.
[2] For years up to and including 2001/02, figures are based upon students with A level qualifications and a points score of between 1 and 17 A level points. For 2002/03 onwards the figures are based upon the students' tariff score from A level qualifications and includes students with 1 to 239 tariff points.
[3] Signifies 0, 1 or 2.
[4] Delivery of the Undergraduate Programme began in autumn 2002.
[5] First intake of students accepted in 2003.
Note:
Figures rounded to the nearest 5 and are a snapshot as at 1 December.
Source:
HESA

Mobile Phones

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of staff mobile phone bills was in each year since 1997. [214885]

Derek Twigg: The answer is given in the following table.

	Total cost £
1997/98	170,045.78
1998/99	168,298.72
1999/00	218,889.09
2000/01	329,196.99
2001/02	374,248.87
2002/03	353,955.78
2003/04	270,547.63
2004/05	—

Non-school Playgrounds

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support the Government provided for non-school playgrounds in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04; and what future funding allocations have been made. [221351]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

ODPM and DfES have provided funding for non-school playgrounds/playing fields as follows:

ODPM

ODPM through its New Deal for Communities partnerships has spent £4,775 (2001–02); £1,711,010 (2002–03) and £857,548 (2003–04). Future funding allocations have not yet been finalised.

ODPM also provides funding for non-school playgrounds through sponsorship of Groundwork, who deliver projects led by or for children and young people and through the Living Spaces scheme which is funding improvements to spaces, including play areas, parks, kick-about areas and skate parks. However, it is not possible to aggregate out support for these play areas from the general project funding that is provided.

DfES

Outdoor playground facilities have been funded from the Local Network Fund. Records show that grants totalling £250,000 have been awarded to 31 voluntary groups for external play grounds. These grants are broken down as follows:

	£
2001/02	68,000
2002/03	82,000
2003/04	100,000

The Local Network Fund runs until 2008 with a yearly allocation of £40 million. It is not possible to predict at this stage how much of that future funding will go to non- school playgrounds.

Outdoor Learning

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects to publish guidance on outdoor learning trips, to which Press Notice 0021 of 15 February refers. [221271]

Derek Twigg: We aim to publish the guidance outlined in the Department's Press Notice of 15 February in the summer.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to question 215722, tabled on 7 February to the right hon. Member for Bromley and Chislehurst. [223341]

Derek Twigg: A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 21 March.

Pelham Infant School

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what representations she has received relating to the potential use of the former Pelham Infant School, Immingham, North East Lincolnshire as a children's centre; [223480]

(2) if she will make a statement on the sale of the former Pelham Infant School, Immingham, North East Lincolnshire. [223481]

Margaret Hodge: In September 2004 St. Andrew's Junior School and Pelham Infants School, which were both located on the same campus site, amalgamated to form the Canon Peter Hall School. A part of the former Pelham Infant School site now forms part of the new amalgamated primary school but the remainder of the Pelham Infant School site is currently not in use.

Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires any council wishing to sell any land that falls within the definition of school playing fields to first seek the consent of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. North East Lincolnshire council has submitted an application to sell part of the former Pelham Infant School site and this application is currently under consideration. The Department has also received a representation from the Canon Peter Hall School, which outlines that school's desire to establish an outdoor play area on a part of the site to be sold. This representation will be taken into account when considering the local authority's application.

The Department for Education and Skills has not received any representations from any party relating to the potential use of the Pelham Infant School, Immingham, North East Lincolnshire as a children's centre. However, officials are aware of the local community's desire for a children's centre and that the site is within an area that is defined by the local authority as a pocket of deprivation. In accordance with the Government's strategy for the delivery of children's centres it should therefore be one of the first areas where children's centres are developed. However, it is for local authorities to decide where to locate children's centres in order to best serve their communities.

Staff Surveys

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was paid to consultants carrying out staff surveys in the Department and its predecessors in each year since 1997. [213658]

Derek Twigg: My Department completes a staff survey approximately every eighteen months. The surveys are administered and evaluated by an external partner who provides analysis and technical support.

Costs from 1999 are shown in the following table:

	£
1999	67,563
2000	53,043
2001	59,097
2003	60,403

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of staff surveys in the Department and its predecessors was in each year since 1997. [213678]

Derek Twigg: My Department completes a staff survey every eighteen months. The survey is a powerful tool which highlights trends in staff views, areas of good practice and areas of development. The survey enables the Department to compare opinion in the Department over time and to benchmark ourselves against other UK organisations in both the public and private sector.

From 1999 the Department's staff surveys have been administered and evaluated by an external partner. Previous surveys were completed in-house.

Costs from 1999 are shown in the following table:

	£
1999	67,563
2000	53,043
2001	59,097
2003	60,403

Student Encouragement

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Government spent in 2004 on *(a)* schemes and *(b)* advertising to encourage (i) prospective undergraduates and (ii) prospective graduates to participate in further education. [221242]

Dr. Howells: The Government is keen to ensure that all those with the potential to benefit from higher education (HE) are able and willing to do so. By 2010, we want to increase participation in HE towards 50 per cent. of those aged 18 to 30. Within that we want to see a broader cross-section of people being able and willing to go into HE. To that effect we support the Aimhigher Programme which seeks to raise attainment, aspiration and application levels of people from backgrounds currently under-represented in HE. The total budget for Aimhigher for the 2004/05 academic year is £128 million. This funding enables partnerships of schools, colleges and universities to design and deliver a range of activities in support of the Programme's aims. This budget does not include any amounts for national advertising.

In addition to the Aimhigher Programme the Department for Education and Skills is running two advertising campaigns during 2004/05.

The Foundation Degrees campaign is aimed at 18 to 30-year-olds and employers in order to raise awareness of Foundation Degrees as a higher education qualification. The cost of this advertising in 2004/05 is £542,000.

The Student Finance campaign is aimed at potential higher education students and their parents to inform them of the student support package available to them in HE and how to apply for it. The cost of this advertising in 2004/05 is £1.05million.

There are no national schemes or advertising aimed at encouraging or enabling prospective undergraduates to stay in education at post-graduate level.

All costs exclude VAT.

Students

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the total sum which higher education institutions are proposing to spend to support students from under-represented groups. [222694]

Dr. Howells: Full details about university access agreements approved by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), including details of bursaries, scholarships and other financial support largely for students from poorer backgrounds, are available on the OFFA website, www.offa.org.uk. The Government and their partners also contribute significantly to the widening participation agenda through the Aimhigher programme, which has a budget this year of £128 million.

Sure Start

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created by the Sure Start Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative in each year that the scheme has been in operation. [221199]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* The Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative was launched in 2001. It had a target of creating 45,000 new child care and early education places in 1,000 nurseries for children aged 0 to 5 in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged areas in England by March 2004. £100 million of capital funding from the New Opportunities Fund (now the Big Lottery Fund), £28 million Sure Start capital and £243 million of revenue funding from the Sure Start Unit was made available to 142 local authorities to support the development and delivery of these places. Places have been developed through a diverse range of local and national providers and are intended to be responsive to local needs and preferences. By March 2004, 1,000 neighbourhood nurseries had been created providing approximately 36,000 new child care places. By August 2004, 1,279 neighbourhood nurseries had been opened providing 45,000 places.

The Sure Start Unit's on-going monitoring of progress towards the 45,000 places target shows that the number of places created by 31 March in each year was as follows:

Financial year	*Number of places created*
2001–02	516
2002–03	4,004
2003–04	31,728
2004–05	8,859

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of midwives required for the Sure Start programme in the North West. [221412]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* No estimate has been made of the number of midwives required for the Sure Start programme in the North West region. This would be for local discussion and agreement. Ante-natal and post-natal services, undertaken by midwives and health visitors, are a key element within the core health service activities undertaken by Sure Start local programmes and they will be part of the core services that will be offered in children's centres serving the most disadvantaged communities. These services are provided in different ways—through the direct employment of midwives to work with families living within the catchment area of a local programme, through secondment opportunities, and in partnership with primary care trusts.

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will announce the funding allocations to local authorities for Sure Start for 2006–07 and 2007–08. [222674]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Spending on Sure Start will reach £1.8 billion in 2007–08, more than double the figure for 2004–05. This represents an annual average increase of 24 per cent. in real terms.

£1,660 million of this total is available for allocation to local authorities in 2006–07, and £1,780 million in 2007–08.

We will very shortly be allocating money to local authorities for the second wave of children's centres and for extended schools. Both will be for the period 2006–08. A further allocation, covering the remaining elements of General Sure Start Grant for 2006–08, will be made in the autumn. This gives us the opportunity to consult with local authorities on how best to allocate money for sustainable child care places, and the new Transformation Fund.

I am pleased to say that the Chancellor announced in his Budget speech on 16 March that local authorities will now be able to recover VAT on investment in children's centres and child care. This removes what has become a significant barrier to some authorities moving forward with the Government's 10-year strategy for child care.

University Admissions

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance she has issued to the Office for Fair Access ensuring that universities do not discriminate against female candidates in the allocation of places. [223231]

Dr. Howells: The Director for Fair Access has no remit over any admissions decision by a university. In our guidance to the Director, we have suggested that he discuss questions of under-representation in higher education with the Equal Opportunities Commission and other similar bodies, and work with them to help institutions understand best practice.

Work-based Learning Report

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what response the Government have made to the Adult Learning Inspectorate's recent report on work-based learning. [223422]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We welcome the annual report from the Chief Inspector of the Adult Learning Inspectorate, published on 24 November 2004. The reported improvements in the work-based learning sector are particularly welcome. The report also makes clear, though, that there is still more to do. We will continue to work closely with a range of partners to drive up standards in all parts of the sector and for all learners.

CABINET

"Every Child Matters"

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to "Every Child Matters" and family court proceedings; what his objectives were in so doing; and what the outcome of his actions was. [222258]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Office are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222620]

Mr. Milburn: The Duchy of Lancaster Office, as required by the Health and Safety Legislation, maintains an accident record book within the office and would report any accidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 Regulations (RIDDOR), as required.

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to preparing asylum seekers' children to be taught in English; what his objectives were in so doing; and what the outcome was of his actions. [222257]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to teaching of English to adult asylum seekers in the UK; what his objectives were in so doing; and what the outcome of his actions was. [222263]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Clerk of Council

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what role the Clerk of Council has in relation to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and if he will make a statement. [222926]

Mr. Milburn: The Clerk of the Council is the Chief Executive Officer of the Duchy of Lancaster and is answerable to me as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He is the executive member of Council to which I have granted a revocable delegation of authority.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what role the Duchy Council plays in relation to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Clerk of Council; and if he will make a statement. [222927]

Mr. Milburn: The Council of the Duchy of Lancaster is a board of seven people to which I have revokably delegated authority to undertake the general running of the Duchy in relation, in particular, to the financial assets and performance of the Duchy. The Clerk of the Council is the executive member of Council.

Consultants (Expenditure)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how much the Duchy has spent on *(a)* press advisers and *(b)* other consultants since January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [222929]

Mr. Milburn: The Duchy of Lancaster is not a Government Department and as such not supported by public funds. Since January 2005, the Duchy of Lancaster office has spent £1,920 on a press adviser. The Duchy of Lancaster has not employed any other consultants during this period.

Divorce

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to the impact of divorce law and family breakdown on children's educational attainment; what his objectives were in so doing; and what the outcome was of his actions. [222256]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Night-time Economy

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will make a statement on the steps he has taken to co-ordinate Government policy in relation to the impact of licensing legislation on policing the night-time economy; what his objectives were in so doing; and what the outcome was of his actions. [222264]

Mr. Milburn: None.

Press Releases

Pete Wishart: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many press releases have been issued by the Duchy in each month since January 2005; and if he will make a statement. [222928]

Mr. Milburn: The Duchy of Lancaster office issued two press releases in 2005 both in January; the first in relation to the appointment of two new Council members and the second in respect of Tutbury Castle.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether his Office sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220945]

Mr. Miliband: No.

TREASURY

Age Exemption Forms

Sir John Butterfill: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what arrangements he is making for the provision of age exemption forms for people in Bournemouth who continue working after their pension age and no longer have to pay national insurance contributions; and if he will make a statement. [223056]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* When a person makes a claim for state retirement pension and intends to continue working, they can ask for a Certificate of Age Exception by ticking the box on the claim form. Otherwise certificates can be obtained by contacting the Inland Revenue National Insurance Contributions Office, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Benefits Claimants

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many economically inactive claimants of benefits were of working age in each year since 1979. [222606]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Frank Field, dated 22 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the number of economically inactive people receiving benefits. I am replying in his absence. (222606)

Data on the numbers of people who receive working age benefits has been provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. The attached table shows the number of people of working age claiming out-of-work benefits. Those benefits which are in the great majority of cases claimed by economically inactive people, have been distinguished in the table from Jobseeker's Allowance benefit claimants, who are required to be actively seeking work as a condition of their entitlement. The figures, which relate to the May quarter in each year from 1995 to 2004, are taken from a five per cent. sample of benefit records and are therefore subject to sampling variability. No data are available prior to 1995.

Working age claimants of out-of-work benefits[1] by statistical group[2]

Thousand

	Inactive benefit claimants				*Active benefit claimants*	
Quarter May:	*Sick and disabled*	*Lone parent*	*Other*	*Total*	*[3]People claiming JSA*	*Total*
1995	2,493.5	1,020.2	344.0	3,857.7	2,218.5	6,076.2
1996	2,562.4	1,023.5	336.6	3,922.5	2,069.0	5,991.5
1997	2,616.6	992.7	283.0	3,892.4	1,573.9	5,466.3
1998	2,633.5	940.9	256.8	3,831.2	1,292.6	5,123.8
1999	2,651.9	916.8	245.6	3,814.3	1,208.0	5,022.3
2000	2,679.1	890.8	231.8	3,801.7	1,024.4	4,826.1
2001	2,746.5	867.6	204.8	3,819.0	925.4	4,744.4
2002	3,753.4	836.1	195.8	3,785.3	880.3	4,665.6
2003	2,768.5	825.8	190.0	3,784.3	883.2	4,667.5
2004	2,771.1	787.7	194.2	3,753.0	797.2	4,550.2

[1] Inactive benefits included in the table are income support (IS), incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA).
[2] Sick and disabled claiming IB, SDA or IS with a disability premium; lone parents claiming IS and not receiving a disability premium; and Other (IS claimants not in any other group, eg asylum seekers, carers).
[3] JSA = jobseeker's allowance.
Source:
DWP 5 per cent. sample

Burmese Imports

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value of imports from Burma was in 2004; and what the value was of each category of import. [223426]

John Healey: The total value of imports from Burma in 2004 was £74 million. The value broken down by category is available from HM Customs and Excise's website www.uktradeinfo.com and is shown in the following table:

Imports from Burma into the United Kingdom, 2004

SITC[1] division	*Goods*	*Statistical value (£)[2]*
03	Fish, crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic invertebrates and preparations thereof	4,716,492
05	Vegetables and fruit	239,601
24	Cork and wood	749,090
33	Petroleum, petroleum products and related materials	7,513
59	Chemical materials and products (NES)	3,352
61	Leather, leather manufactures (NES) and dressed fur skins	5,181
62	Rubber manufactures (NES)	44,357
63	Cork and wood manufactures (excluding furniture)	179,437
64	Paper, paperboard and manufactures thereof	179,095
65	Textile yarn, fabrics, made up articles etc.	64,693
66	Non-metallic mineral manufactures (NES)	81,825
69	Manufactures of metal (NES)	527,006
71	Power generating machinery and equipment	2,193
72	Machinery specialized for particular industries	198,660
74	General industrial machinery and equipment and machine parts (NES)	392,739
75	Office machinery (NES) and adp machinery (NES)	119,837
76	Telecommunications and sound recording and reproducing apparatus and equipment	388,747
77	Electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances and electrical parts thereof (NES)	401,167
78	Road vehicles (including air cushion vehicles)	69,635
79	Other transport equipment	7,965
81	Prefabricated buildings; sanitary, plumbing, heating and lighting fixtures and fittings	35,337
82	Furniture and parts thereof; bedding, mattresses etc	3,176,896
83	Travel goods, handbags and similar containers	20,266
84	Articles of apparel and clothing accessories	61,282,989
85	Footwear	9,887

Imports from Burma into the United Kingdom, 2004

SITC[1] division	*Goods*	*Statistical value (£)[2]*
88	Photographic and optical goods, (NES); watches and clocks	18,461
89	Miscellaneous manufactured articles (NES)	649,087
91	Postal packages not classified according to kind	266,383
Total		73,837,891

NES = not elsewhere specified
[1] Commodities as classified according to the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) Rev. 3 system.
[2] Figures are provisional.
Source:
Overseas Trade Statistics, HM Customs and Excise.

Buses

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what definition of local he uses in his proposals for providing free local bus travel for pensioners; whether he has costed the extension of this provision to ferries plying between points within the United Kingdom; and whether his proposals will apply to nations for which local transport is a devolved matter. [223306]

Mr. Timms: The definition of local is set out in the Transport Act 2000. We have not costed extending this provision to ferries. It is for the devolved Administrations and Northern Ireland Ministers to determine policies in this area.

Child Trust Fund

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on his Department's projections of the cost of the Child Trust Fund in each year from 2005–06 to 2010–11. [223032]

Mr. Timms: The AME accruals cost to the Exchequer of the Child Trust Fund is forecast at £240 million in each of the fiscal years 2005–06 to 2010–11.

Correspondence

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will instruct the Tax Credit Office to reply to the letter of 28 January from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding his constituent, Mr. A. Palla of Peterhead, passed to it by Inland Revenue Scotland. [221621]

Dawn Primarolo: The Tax Credit Office (TCO) replied to the hon. Member's constituency office address on 22 February 2005. I have asked the TCO to send him a copy of their reply.

Hon. Members can call the TCO's MP Hotline, details of which are available on the parliamentary website, if they wish to discuss an individual constituent's tax credits claim.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will instruct the Tax Credit Office to reply to the letter of 7 December 2004 from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan regarding his constituent, Mr. E. Mustoe of Fraserburgh. [221622]

Dawn Primarolo: The Tax Credit Office (TCO) replied to the hon. Members office address on 12 January 2005. I have asked the TCO to send him a copy of their reply.

Hon. Members can call the TCO's MP Hotline, details of which are available on the Parliamentary website, if they wish to discuss an individual constituent's tax credits claim.

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will ask Mr. Rushton, Assistant Director of the Tax Credits Office, to respond to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Normanton sent on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. C. of Kirkhamgate, Wakefield and their claim for tax credits outstanding from September 2004. [221882]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Inland Revenue replied to my hon. Friend on 14 March 2005. Hon. Members can call the Tax Credit Office MP Hotline, details of which are available on the parliamentary website, if they wish to discuss an individual constituent's tax credits claim.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on which dates the Inland Revenue sent a substantive reply to each communication received from *(a)* the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight and *(b)* his constituents in relation to case no. 2004/08001519; whether the targets set for replying to letters were met in each case; what arrangements are in place to compensate constituents for financial loss and distress arising from delayed or erroneous handling of claims; and if he will make a statement. [222935]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The Inland Revenue aims to reply to 80 per cent. of letters within 15 working days and 95 per cent. within 40 working days.

The Inland Revenue replied to the hon. Member regarding case no. 2004/08001519 on the following dates:

9 September 2004—within the 15 day target

4 March 2005—outside the above targets

They also wrote to his constituent on the following dates as a result of telephone contact with her:

26 August 2004—within 15 day target

10 February 2005—within 15 day target

The Department aims to reply to the hon. Member's most recent letter within target.

The Revenue's approach to paying compensation is outlined in their Code of Practice 1, 'Putting things right', which is available on the Department's website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk and a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Defence

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the additional £400 million defence spending announced in his Budget statement of 16 March *(a)* a provision for the cost of operations and *(b)* an addition to the Ministry of Defence's Request for Resources 1. [223404]

Mr. Boateng: The £400 million has been added to the special reserve for the costs of military conflict in Iraq and other international obligations, as set out in paragraph 6.10 of Budget 2005 (HC 372).

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Ministry of Defence's departmental expenditure limit is for 2005–06. [223405]

Mr. Boateng: The latest departmental expenditure limit figures for the Ministry of Defence for 2005–06 are in Table C13 of the Financial Statement and Budget Report 2005 (HC 372).

These figures do not include the cost of current major operations.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Ministry of Defence's near cash departmental expenditure limit is for 2005–06. [223406]

Mr. Boateng: Table 13.1 of the 2004 Spending review (Cm 6237) sets out the "cash equivalent" of the Ministry of Defence's DEL.

The figures in the table do not include the cost of current major operations.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the reasons are for the difference between the figures given for the special reserve provision in paragraph A137, page 202 and in table C13, page 261 of the Budget 2005 (HC 372). [223407]

Mr. Boateng: Paragraph A137 sets out the additional provision that was allocated to the Special Reserve in Budget 2005. The line entitled "Unallocated special reserve" in Table C13 shows what remains in the special reserve after allocations to Departments.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the reasons are for the difference between the figures given for the Ministry of Defence's reserve budget in Spending Review 2004 (Cm 6237) and the Budget 2005 (HC 372). [223408]

Mr. Boateng: There is no reserve budget specifically for the Ministry of Defence. However, since Spending Review 2004, the Government has added additional resources to its special reserve to make prudent provision for the costs of the military conflict in Iraq and its other international obligations.

These additions are explained in paragraph 6.7 of Cm 6408 (Pre-Budget Report 2004) and paragraph 6.10 of HC372 (Budget 2005).

eBay

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220953]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* It has never been the practice of the Chancellor's Departments to dispose of surplus stock on the eBay website.

Employment

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people resident in each parliamentary constituency *(a)* in June 1997 and *(b)* on the latest date for which information is available were in employment. [222844]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Brian Wilson, dated 22 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about employment in each Parliamentary Constituency in the UK. I am replying in his absence. (222844)

The attached three tables show the estimates of the numbers of people in employment, in each Parliamentary Constituency, respectively in England, Wales and Scotland in 1997 and 2004, the latest date for which information is available. These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Since the information in these tables is so extensive, copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Similar information for Parliamentary Constituencies in Northern Ireland is not available.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Edinburgh, North and Leith in the last seven years. [222904]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Lazarowicz, dated 22 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about long term unemployment in Edinburgh North and Leith. (222904)

Information on the number of people who are unemployed is calculated from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, the LFS sample size for the Edinburgh North and Leith Parliamentary Constituency is too small to provide estimates on long-term unemployment.

The Office for National Statistics also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. The table overleaf gives the annual average number of young people aged 18 to 24 years old and adults (aged 25 and over) resident in the Edinburgh North and Leith Parliamentary Constituency claiming JSA benefits for over 12 months in each year from 1998 to 2004.

JSA claimants resident in the Edinburgh North and Leigh constituency claiming for 12 months or more

Annual averages	*Youth claimants (aged 18 to 24)*	*Adult claimants (aged 25 and over)*
1998	60	445
1999	15	500
2000	5	405
2001	5	255
2002	5	160
2003	5	220
2004	10	230

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

European Anti-Fraud Office

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions representatives of the European Anti-Fraud Office have visited the UK in the last two years. [222986]

Mr. Timms: The European Anti-Fraud Office makes visits to a number of Government Departments in the UK, but no record of these visits is held centrally.

Pilots (Flat Rate Expenses)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate his Department has made of the cost of the flat rate expenses allowance for pilots which was proposed to his Department in 2004; and if he will make it his policy to instruct the Inland Revenue to implement the proposed allowance. [223336]

Dawn Primarolo: The hon. Member's question concerns a particular case. It is subject to the normal rules of confidentiality that apply where taxpayers' affairs are concerned. Flat rate expense allowances are agreed with individual employers to reflect individual circumstances. The Inland Revenue is in discussion with the airline concerned to agree a flat rate expense allowance that reflects the appropriate level of expenses in line with the qualifying conditions set by tax law.

Income Tax

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the increase in revenue to the Exchequer of the introduction of a 49 per cent. rate of income tax on all incomes in excess of £100,000 for *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07, *(c)* 2007–08, *(d)* 2008–09 and *(e)* 2009–10. [223263]

Dawn Primarolo: Comprehensive information on income tax has been placed in the Library of the House, in the tables 'Additional full-year yield from the introduction of additional higher rates of tax on TAXABLE incomes over a specific amount in 2005–06' and 'Additional full-year yield from the introduction of additional higher rates of tax on GROSS incomes over a specific amount in 2005–06'.

The income tax information is based upon the 2002–03 Survey of Personal Incomes and December 2004 pre-Budget assumptions and excludes any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change.

Information for future years is currently unavailable but figures for 2006–07 will be available at the House of Commons Library by the end of April.

Motorcycles

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to apply the 1 per cent. discount for environmentally friendly company cars to environmentally friendly motorcycles; and if he will make a statement. [223352]

John Healey: The additional 1 per cent. discount will apply to the emissions-based company car tax system. This system does not apply to employer-provided motorcycles.

MRSA

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths from MRSA there have been in Coventry in each of the last five years. [222947]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Cunningham, dated 22 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths from MRSA there have been in Coventry in each of the last five years. (222947)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2003. Numbers of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor are given in the table below.

Number of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor,[1] Coventry,[2] 1999–2003[3]

	Number of deaths where MRSA was a contributory factor
1999	10
2000	6
2001	5
2002	[4]
2003	[4]

[1] Identified using the methodology described in Griffiths C, Lamagni TL, Crowcroft NS, Duckworth G and Rooney C (2004) Trends in MRSA in England and Wales: analysis of morbidity and mortality data for 1993–2002. "Health Statistics Quarterly" 21, 15–22.
[2] Deaths to residents of this area
[3] Figures are for deaths occurring in the years 1999 to 2003.
[4] Fewer than 5 deaths
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Northern Ireland

Lady Hermon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the aspects of his Budget which extend to Northern Ireland. [223268]

Mr. Boateng: The Northern Ireland economy is continuing to prosper through the Government's sound management of the economy with steady growth, low inflation and low unemployment. The Chancellor announced on 16 March a series of measures that further promote stability, higher productivity, employment, fairness and improved public services in Northern Ireland, including raising the threshold for stamp duty land tax from £60,000 to £120,000, and an increase in the child element of the child tax credit. The Chancellor also provided an additional £88 million for Northern Ireland departments as a consequence of English spending increases. It will be for Northern Ireland Ministers to decide how to allocate these sums. In addition £24 million was provided including to finance a £200 payment to over 65 pensioner ratepayer households equivalent to that in Great Britain. Further details of the Budget can be found in the Budget 2005 Report (HC 372).

Private Equity Industry

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how he intends to differentiate between private equity houses working in collaboration, and non-collaborating

private investors as part of the recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules. [222090]

Dawn Primarolo: Whether persons act together or independently is a matter of fact to be considered in the circumstances of any particular case.

Red Diesel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the responses to the recent consultation on red diesel use for excepted vehicles. [222977]

John Healey: This consultation has only recently closed and responses are currently being analysed. A summary of responses to the consultation will be published in due course.

Stamp Duty

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the reduction in stamp duty yield from residential property which would result from raising the threshold at which one per cent. stamp duty starts from £120,000 to £150,000. [223264]

Mr. Timms: The estimated revenue cost in 2005–06 of restructuring stamp duty on residential property sales by raising the threshold from £120,000 to £150,000 is £210 million. This does not include any allowance for behavioural changes.

Mr. Flight: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what projections he has made of revenue from stamp duty on *(a)* property and *(b)* share transactions in each of the next three financial years. [223514]

Mr. Timms: Estimated and projected revenues for total stamp taxes in 2004–05 and 2005–06 are published in table C8 of the Budget 2005 report. The breakdown between duty on land and property (stamp duty land tax) and share transactions is given in the following table:

£ billion

	2004–05	*2005–06*
Stamp duty land tax	6.3	6.7
Stamp taxes on shares	2.6	3.0

Stamp Duty/Air Passenger Duty

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much revenue was raised by *(a)* stamp duty on the purchase of residential properties and *(b)* air passenger duty on commercial flights departing from a UK airport in each tax year from 1994–95 to 2003–04. [223035]

Mr. Timms: Stamp duty receipts from residential property transactions are given in Table 15.2 of Inland Revenue Statistics: http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/stamp_duty/table15_2_october04.pdf. Historic Air Passenger Duty revenue figures can be found in table 2.1D of Financial Statistics published by the Office for National Statistics, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the expected revenue from *(a)* stamp duty on the purchase of residential properties and *(b)* air passenger duty is in 2004–05. [223036]

Mr. Timms: Stamp duties are forecast to raise £8.9 billion in 2004–05.

Stamp duty Land Tax receipts from residential property for 2004–05 will be published later this year.

Air passenger duty is forecast to raise £0.9 billion in 2004–05.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many purchases of residential properties stamp duty has been charged in each tax year from 1994–95 to 2003–04. [223037]

Mr. Timms: The number of residential property purchases that were charged stamp duty in England and Wales from 1994–95 to 2003–04 is estimated in the following table.

Estimated number of residential property transactions charged stamp duty

	Thousand
1994–05	445
1995–06	374
1996–97	482
1997–98	570
1998–99	589
1999–2000	773
2000–01	748
2001–02	866
2002–03	975
2003–04	926

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many passengers were exempt from paying air passenger duty on commercial flights departing from a UK airport in each tax year from 1994–95 to 2003–04; [223038]

(2) how many passengers were charged air passenger duty on flights departing from a UK airport in each tax year from 1994–95 to 2003–04; [223039]

(3) what estimate he has made of revenue lost to the Treasury in each year from 1994–95 to 2003–04 due to the exemption from air passenger duty of transit and transfer passengers on flights departing from a UK airport. [223040]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise does not collect figures on the number of passengers departing from UK airports who are exempt from paying the air passenger duty. It is therefore not possible to estimate the revenue loss from exempting from the air passenger duty transit and transfer passengers on flights departing from UK airports.

Historic figures on the numbers of passengers travelling in each air passenger duty category are published in the air passenger duty bulletin, a copy of which can be found on the UK trade information website www.uktradeinfo.com.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220962]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is as follows.

Inland Revenue

£000

	Land and buildings	Computers and office equipment	Vehicles	Total
2000–01				
Net book value	1,164	2,458	6,107	9,729
Proceeds of disposal	—	—	—	17,954
2001–02				
Net book value	0	2,749	2,825	5,574
Proceeds of disposal	—	—	—	3,032
2002–03				
Net book value	225	3,709	5,227	9,161
Proceeds of disposal	—	—	—	5,718
2003–04				
Net book value	377	1,223	1,087	2,687
Proceeds of disposal	—	—	—	1,263

HM Customs and Excise

£000

	Freehold properties	Vessels	Motor vehicles	Total
2000–01				
Cost	—	—	2,384	2,384
Depn	—	—	-2,646	-2,646
NBV	—	—	-262	-262
Proceeds	—	—	73	73
2001–02				
Cost	1,000	—	2,150	3,150
Depn	-184	—	-1,553	-1,737
NBV	816	—	597	1,413
Proceeds	1,450	—	780	2,230
2002–03				
Cost	827	—	2,666	3,493
Depn	-100	—	-2,322	-2,422
NBV	727	—	344	1,071
Proceeds	1,400	—	220	1,620
2003–04				
Cost	—	4,855	3,286	8,141
Depn	—	-4,290	-3,087	-7,377
NBV	—	565	199	764
Proceeds	—	443	272	715
2004–05				
Cost	—	1,862	7,276	9,138
Depn	—	-1,554	-7,894	-9,448
NBV	—	308	618	926
Proceeds	—	200	468	668

HM Treasury

See information as follows taken from the published HM Treasury's Resource Accounts refer to Schedule 4—Cash Flow Statement and associated notes:

	Department	Asset type	Proceeds (£ million)
2000–01	HMT	Post-privatisation investments (BT £102.6 million and PUK £25 million)	127.6
	HMT and OGC	Misc. fixed assets	0.035
	OGC	Surplus freehold property	8.16
2001–02	HMT	Royal Mint PDC	1.5
	HMT	Misc. fixed assets	0.083
	OGC	Surplus freehold property	41.99
	OGC		0.014
2002–03	HMT	Post-privatisation investments (includes Powergen £19.7 million, Innogy £2.1 million and Railtrack £1.3 million)	14.2
	HMT	Misc. fixed assets	0.4
	OGC	Misc. fixed assets	1.59
	OGC	Surplus freehold property	74.09
2003–04	HMT	Misc. fixed assets	0.016
2004–05	HMT	1 Parliament street	22
	HMT	Post-privatisation investments (includes International Pwr £1.2 million)	1.68
	OGC	No material items expected	

[1] Schedule 4 does not include £3.5 million not received till 2003–04 (see schedule 1)

Tax (Administration Costs)

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the administration costs associated with each tax and duty were in the last year for which figures are available; and what percentage of revenues raised by each tax and duty was accounted for by administration costs. [222909]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue's estimated gross administration costs by tax and duty in 2003–04 were as follows.

	£ million
Income tax	1,671.4
Corporation tax	348.5
National insurance contributions	315.3
Petroleum revenue tax	2.1
Capital gains tax	47.4
Inheritance tax	31.4
Stamp taxes	32.6

These taxes are all collected by the Inland Revenue and incur administration costs.

The cost of collection of these taxes in 2003–04, expressed as pence per pound collected, is available from Table 1, Appendix 1 of the Inland Revenue Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2004.

HM Customs and Excise does not routinely collect information on the costs of its activities by each tax and duty stream and I am not able therefore to provide the detailed cost information you request. Information on aggregate resource usage against each of the Department's high-level objectives and on the costs of the operations of HM Customs and Excise is available in the published Annual Report and Accounts.

Tax Credits

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credits payments have been calculated and paid manually in each month in the current tax year. [221127]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Around 334,000 such payments were made from April 2004 to February 2005 broken down:

Month	*No of Payments (£000)*
April 2004	35
May 2004	20
June 2004	20
July 2004	30
August 2004	30
September 2004	30
October 2004	35
November2004	40
December2004	40
January 2005	30
February 2005	35

The allocation of payments to precise payment dates requires a degree of estimation and are therefore rounded to the nearest 5,000.

Mrs. May: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the statistics relating to tax credits, which, since 1997 *(a)* are no longer collected by his Department and *(b)* have had the way in which the figures are compiled changed. [221795]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax credits were first introduced in 1999. Therefore prior to this the Inland Revenue did not collect or compile any statistics relating to tax credits. In April 2003, working families tax credit (WFTC) and disabled persons tax credit (DPTC) were replaced by child and working tax credits. Statistics on WFTC and DPTC (for the period 1999–2003) and child and working tax credits (from 2003 onwards) are published on the Inland Revenue website at www.ir.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in how many cases where compensation has been awarded to a tax credit claimant for overpayment the compensation was worth *(a)* zero to 5 per cent., *(b)* 5 to 10 per cent., *(c)* 10 to 15 per cent., *(d)* 15 to 20 per cent., *(e)* 20 to 25 per cent., *(f)* 25 to 30 per cent., *(g)* 30 to 35 per cent., *(h)* 35 to 40 per cent., *(i)* 45 to 50 per cent. and *(j)* over 50 per cent. of the total overpayment. [222608]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The information is not available.

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what criteria are used for charging interest where an individual has been overpaid tax credits. [222713]

Dawn Primarolo: Interest is charged only where an overpayment of tax credits has arisen due to fraud or neglect on the part of the person or persons making the claim.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many households experienced changes in circumstances resulting in a mid-year adjustment to a tax credits award in 2003–04; and what estimate the Inland Revenue has made of the number of households which are likely to have experienced a change in circumstances in the 2004–05 tax year. [222783]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* This information is not available.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research has been undertaken by the Inland Revenue into the likelihood of claimants reporting changes in circumstances affecting a tax credit award. [222784]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* I refer my right hon. Friend to the HM Treasury Document "The Child and Working Tax Credits", "The Modernisation of Britain's Tax and Benefit System, Number Ten", April 2002, Chapter 4.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 85W, on tax credits, how many TC 846 forms for the *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 tax year have been returned. [222789]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The information requested is not available.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much has been paid out to date for each tax credit in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* England and *(d)* Wales; how many households are in receipt of each tax credit in each case; and what the administration costs associated with each tax credit to date are (i) in total and (ii) as a percentage of the expenditure on that tax credit. [222915]

Dawn Primarolo: Total UK payments for working tax credit and child tax credit appear in the Inland Revenue Annual and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2004. Exact figures for each country are not readily available.

Estimates of the numbers of in-work families in each country receiving working tax credit and child tax credit appear in "Child and Working Tax Credits. December 2004". This can be found on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm

The costs of managing and paying tax credits for 2003–04 are given in the Inland Revenue Annual and Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2004.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people with income greater than *(a)* £15,000, *(b)* £20,000, *(c)* £25,000 and *(d)* £30,000 are in receipt

of tax credits; what percentage of total expenditure on tax credits has gone to people in each category to date; and if he will make a statement. [222916]

Dawn Primarolo: "Child and Working Tax Credits: December 2004" contains analyses of families receiving tax credits at December 2004. It can be found on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm. Table 6.1 shows an analysis of in-work recipient families by band of income used to taper the awards. Estimates are based on a sample of cases and are subject to sampling uncertainty.

The figures for the bands requested, on the same basis and excluding those with awards tapered to zero at that date, are:

Thousands

	Numbers in receipt of tax credit
(a) greater than £15,000	3,112.1
(b) greater than £20,000	2,597.3
(c) greater than £25,000	2,011.4
(d) greater than £30,000	1,388.8

Analyses of the value of awards will be published on 31 May 2005.

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Inland Revenue expects to correct the payments of working tax credit to Vanessa Bates; and when he expects to reply to the correspondence from the hon. Member for Bassetlaw relating to her case. [222728]

Dawn Primarolo *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Inland Revenue replied to the hon. Member on 11 January 2005. They will send him a copy of their letter.

On 8 March 2005, the Department wrote to the hon. Member's constituent about her Working Tax Credit (WTC) and has since corrected her payments.

Terrorist Assets

Dr. Vis: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money suspected of being linked to terrorist assets *(a)* worldwide and *(b)* in the United Kingdom has been frozen since 11 September 2001. [223023]

Mr. Timms: Since 11 September 2001, 44 accounts totalling some £347,000 have been frozen in the UK. In total, 45 accounts, totalling some £378,000, are currently frozen by UK financial institutions. There is no global figure of the total assets frozen—monitoring frozen funds is a matter for individual jurisdictions.

All organisations and individuals whose assets have been frozen in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolutions, associated EC Regulations and domestic legislation are listed, by HM Treasury instruction, on the Bank of England's Financial Sanctions website. Asset freezing is an essential measure in countering the financing of terrorism by denying terrorists and their financiers access to funds across the world. Taking action not only freezes any funds in the UK but creates a hostile environment to deter terrorists from using the UK's financial system in future.

Transfer Pricing/Loan Relationship Rules

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules. [222095]

Dawn Primarolo: I made a written statement to the House on 4 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 97WS.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions took place with the private equity industry prior to the recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules; [222096]

(2) what discussions he has had with representatives of the private equity industry regarding recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules. [222121]

Dawn Primarolo: Following representations made by the British Venture Capital Association concerning the application of transfer pricing rules, officials from HM Treasury and Inland Revenue met representatives of the association on a number of occasions. Further meetings are being arranged.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the changes in tax revenue which will result from recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules. [222125]

Dawn Primarolo: The changes prevent tax avoidance that could otherwise have reduced current and future tax revenues of about £300 million a year.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of recent changes to *(a)* transfer pricing rules and *(b)* loan relationship rules on (i) the private equity industry and (ii) the City of London. [222127]

Dawn Primarolo: The changes ensure that the tax rules provide a level playing field for different investors. The UK will continue to be an alternative location for private equity investment and the private equity industry. The new rules are in line with those of our major competitors such as the USA and Germany.

VAT (Universities)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many universities do not comply with Customs and Excise's preferred partial exemption method for VAT. [219536]

Dawn Primarolo: Customs and Excise do not have a preferred partial exemption method for universities or for any other organisation. Partly exempt organisations can either operate the standard method of partial exemption or, if they feel this is not suitable for them, they can seek approval for a special method that is individually tailo[redacted]rcumstances. Most universities prefer t[redacted]l method. Customs will approve an[redacted] that is fair and reasonable.

There is no [redacted] the number of universities that [redacted]ption methods acceptable to Custom[redacted] each university's VAT affairs are specif[redacted]change continually.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Burmese Teak

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of whether national lottery grants have been awarded to projects using Burmese teak. [223424]

Estelle Morris: The Department's lottery awards database does not hold information about the materials used in lottery-supported construction projects.

Lottery distributors are obliged to take into account policy directions from the Secretary of State. These directions set out the framework for the wider aims of lottery funding, and include the need for the distributing bodies to further the objectives of sustainable development when awarding lottery grants. The lottery distributing bodies are strongly committed to sustainable development, including the procurement of timber from legal and sustainable sources.

Food Advertising

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what research she has commissioned on changes in the trends in food advertising on television and radio that have occurred since the publication of the White Paper on public health. [222178]

Estelle Morris: None. Ofcom's work on options for tightening the rules on broadcast food promotion to children will include original research on the volume, frequency and nature of food and drink advertising and the Department of Health and Food Standards Agency will look to establish success criteria for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of action to restrict further the promotion to children of foods high in fat, salt and sugar across media, consulting my Department and Ofcom as necessary.

Licensing

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the impact of the recent changes to licensing legislation on small licensed hotels and guest houses, with particular reference to costs. [223477]

Mr. Caborn: There were full public consultations with regard to the Licensing Bill, the draft fees and draft regulations. A full Regulatory Impact Assessment was provided to Parliament with the Bill and it is available in the Library of the House. I am satisfied that the fee regulations and order are proportionate and fair and that the 2003 Act will not place an undue burden on small businesses, such as small licensed hotels and guest houses. Indeed, I expect the combined effects of reduced bureaucracy in the new system—through integrating six existing licensing regimes into one—and the encouragement of a more diverse offer to tourists will greatly benefit this important sector.

Scanners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* MRI scanners, *(b)* CT scanners and *(c)* other scanners have been purchased for the NHS from monies provided by the New Opportunities Fund; which hospitals have received them; and in which year they were acquired. [222610]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The New Opportunities Fund has awarded funding to the following hospitals for MRI/CT and other scanners, in the years 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2004. The dates of purchase are not known centrally. No awards were made in 2000 or 2003.

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 1999

Hospital	*MRI*	*CT*	*Other*
Addenbrooke's Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	6
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	5
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHST	—	—	8
Barnsley District General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Barts and The London NHS Trust	—	—	6
Basildon and Thurrock General Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	0
Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull NHS Trust	—	—	2
Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	4
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	7
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	7
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Bury Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	1
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust	1	—	0
Carlisle Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	2
Christie Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	4
Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology NHS Trust	1	—	3
Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	1	—	0
Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	5
East Cheshire NHS Trust	—	—	2
East Gloucestershire NHS Trust	—	—	5
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	6
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	3
Forest Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 1999

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
Gateshead Health NHS Trust	—	—	5
Gloustershire Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	0
Good Hope Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	0
Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	2
Hammersmith Hospitals NHST	—	—	11
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Trust	1	—	4
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	4
James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	6
Kings Lynn and Wisbech Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	3
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	9
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	—	—	4
Medway NHS Trust	—	—	3
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Mid Essex Community and Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	3
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Milton Keynes General NHS Trust	—	—	3
Morecambe Bay Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	3
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	11
Norfolk and Norwich Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	1
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	4
North Cumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	3
North Durham Health Care NHS Trust	1	—	0
North East Lincolnshire NHS Trust	—	—	1
North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	4
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	3
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	—	—	7
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	8
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	3
Peterborough Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	2	—	4
Poole Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	5
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	4
Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	2
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	—	—	3
Queen Medical Centre Nottingham	1	—	0
Redditch and Bromsgrove Primary Care Trust	—	—	5
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Rotherham General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	3
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	6
Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	3
Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	2
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	1	—	0
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	7
Royal Shrewsbury Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	6
Royal United Hospital Bath NHST	—	—	1
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	1
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	5
Sandwell Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	3
Scunthorpe and Goole Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Sheffield Teaching Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	6
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust	—	—	3
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	2
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	9
South Tees Acute Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	0
South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	5
Southend Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	3
Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	4
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	7
St Helen's and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	—	—	3
Surrey Hampshire Borders NHST	—	—	5
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	—	—	4
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	1	—	3
The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	7
The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	6
The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	2	—	2

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 1999

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
The University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	1	—	0
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	8
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	8
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust	1	—	6
University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	1	—	10
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	—	—	4
University of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	—	—	2
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	3
West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	2
Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	3
Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Worthing and Southlands NHS Trust	—	—	5
York Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	3

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 2001

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
Addenbrooke's Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHST	—	—	1
Barnsley District General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
Barts and The London NHS Trust	—	—	1
Blackburn Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care NHS Trust	—	—	1
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Bradford Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	3
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Doncaster Royal Infirmary and Montagu Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
East Cheshire NHS Trust	—	—	1
East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Essex Rivers Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Gateshead Health NHS Trust	—	—	1
Hammersmith Hospitals NHST	—	—	2
Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust	—	—	1
Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
James Paget Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Kettering General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
Luton and Dunstable Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	3
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	—	—	2
Medway NHS Trust	—	—	2
Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Mid Staffordshire General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Norfolk and Norwich Health Care NHS Trust	1	—	—
Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
North Hampshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust	—	—	2
Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	2
Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Poole Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Redditch and Bromsgrove Primary Care Trust	—	—	1
Rotherham General Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	1
Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Royal Shrewsbury Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
South Buckinghamshire NHS Trust	—	—	1

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 2001

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	2
Southern Derbyshire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	—	—	1
Surrey Hampshire Borders NHS Trust	—	—	2
Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust	—	—	1
Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust	—	—	1
The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
The Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	3
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	3
United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	3
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust	—	—	1
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	—	—	1
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust	—	—	1
University of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	—	—	1
Walsall Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	1
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Wigan and Leigh Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	1
Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	1
Worthing and Southlands NHS Trust	—	—	2
York Health Services NHS Trust	—	—	2

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 2002

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
Barts and the London NHS Trust	1	—	—
Birmingham Heartlands and Solihull NHS Trust	1	—	—
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—
Bronglais General Hospital, Aberystwyth	—	—	1
Burnley Health Care NHS Trust	1	—	—
East Cheshire NHS Trust	1	—	—
East Somerset NHS Trust	1	—	—
Gateshead Health NHS Trust	1	—	—
Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	1	—	—
Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust	1	—	—
North Bristol NHS Trust	1	—	—
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—
Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport	—	—	1
Royal Shrewsbury Hospital NHS Trust	1	—	—
Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—
Singleton Hospital, Swansea	—	—	1
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	1	—	—
The Ulster Hospital, Dundonald, Belfast	—	1	—
University Hospital of North Staffordshire NHS Trust	1	—	—
University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust	1	—	—
Velindre Hospital, Cardiff	1	—	—
West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	1	—	—

Hospitals allocated funding for scanners by the New Opportunities Fund in 2004

Hospital	MRI	CT	Other
Aberdeen Royal Infirmary	—	1	—
Antrim Hospital, County Antrim	1	—	—
Borders General Hospital, Melrose	1	—	1
Craigavon Hospital, County Armagh	1	—	—
Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary	—	—	1
Falkirk and District Royal Infirmary	—	—	1
Lorn and Islands District General Hospital, Oban	—	—	1
Stirling Royal Infirmary	—	—	2
The Belford Hospital, Fort William	—	—	1
The Raigmore Hospital, Inverness	—	—	1
The Ulster Hospital, Dundonald, Belfast	1	—	—

In addition to the awards made, funding from the New Opportunities Fund totalling £4,986,197 has been allocated under the Coronary Heart Disease, Stroke and Cancer Programme Wales for the purchase of Angiography equipment for six NHS trusts in Wales. To date, only one trust, Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust, has purchased equipment, as most of the trusts have had to do a capital build to house equipment.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list local authority wards where 50 per cent. or more of children are in families receiving out-of-work means-tested benefits. [222387]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following table.

Children in families receiving income support (IS) or income-based jobseekers allowance (JSA) at August 2003: by local authority and census ward

Local authority	*Ward*	*Children 0 to 15 in families receiving IS or JSA*	*2001 census population aged 0 to 15*	*Percentage children (0 to 15) in families receiving either IS, JSA*
Allerdale	Moss Bay	520	977	53.2
Barking and Dagenham	Gascoigne	1,260	2,438	51.7
Barking and Dagenham	Thames	1,075	2,047	52.5
Birmingham	Nechells	4,210	8,058	52.2
Blackburn with Darwen	Shadsworth with Whitebirk	1,090	2,173	50.2
Brent	Harlesden	1,670	2,906	57.5
Brent	Stonebridge	2,240	4,413	50.8
Bridgend	Bettws	275	501	54.9
Bristol, City of	Lawrence Hill	1,565	2,131	73.4
Camden	Kilburn	865	1,729	50.0
Cardiff	Adamsdown	675	1,201	56.2
Cardiff	Butetown	455	869	52.4
Denbighshire	Rhyl West	495	850	58.2
East Ayrshire	Shortlees	540	1,032	52.3
Edinburgh, City of	Craigmillar	1,150	1,657	69.4
Glasgow City	Anderston	335	567	59.1
Glasgow City	Barlanark	1,105	1,935	57.1
Glasgow City	Braidfauld	880	1,554	56.6
Glasgow City	Bridgeton/Dalmarnock	610	992	61.5
Glasgow City	Glenwood	1,175	1,978	59.4
Glasgow City	Hutchesontown	675	1,014	66.6
Glasgow City	Ibrox	725	1,428	50.8
Glasgow City	Keppochhill	790	1,407	56.1
Glasgow City	Milton	800	1,503	53.2
Glasgow City	Parkhead	1,015	1,476	68.8
Glasgow City	Queenslie	890	1,477	60.3
Glasgow City	Summerhill	1,090	1,923	56.7
Glasgow City	Toryglen	655	1,310	50.0
Great Yarmouth	Nelson	845	1,538	54.9
Greenwich	Woolwich Riverside	1,655	3,213	51.5
Hackney	Chatham	1,335	2,385	56.0
Hackney	Haggerston	1,195	2,344	51.0
Hackney	Hoxton	1,090	2,111	51.6
Hackney	Queensbridge	1,170	2,219	52.7
Hackney	Victoria	1,400	2,788	50.2
Hackney	Wick	1,310	2,594	50.5
Halton	Windmill Hill	400	690	58.0
Hammersmith and Fulham	College Park and Old Oak	840	1,461	57.5
Hammersmith and Fulham	Wormholt and White City	1,405	2,728	51.5
Haringey	Noel Park	1,235	2,207	56.0
Haringey	Northumberland Park	1,815	3,302	55.0
Haringey	St. Ann's	1,225	2,367	51.8
Haringey	Tottenham Green	1,465	2,652	55.2
Haringey	Tottenham Hale	1,670	3,294	50.7
Haringey	White Hart Lane	1,720	3,176	54.2
Highland	Merkinch	415	732	56.7
Inverclyde	Ward 8	340	580	58.6
Islington	Bunhill	905	1,692	53.5
Islington	Finsbury Park	1,260	2,432	51.8
Islington	Holloway	1,015	1,911	53.1
Islington	Mildmay	1,095	2,182	50.2
Kingston upon Hull	Myton	990	1,792	55.2
Kingston upon Hull	Orchard Park and Greenwood	2,025	4,051	50.0
Kingston upon Hull	St. Andrew's	755	1,430	52.8

Children in families receiving income support (IS) or income-based jobseekers allowance (JSA) at August 2003: by local authority and census ward

Local authority	Ward	Children 0 to 15 in families receiving IS or JSA	2001 census population aged 0 to 15	Percentage children (0 to 15) in families receiving either IS, JSA
Knowsley	Cantril Farm	595	988	60.2
Knowsley	Cherryfield	715	1,283	55.7
Knowsley	Kirby Central	825	1,484	55.6
Knowsley	Longview	995	1,511	65.9
Knowsley	Northwood	525	1,014	51.8
Knowsley	Princess	1,210	1,718	70.4
Knowsley	Tower Hill	1,315	2,589	50.8
Lambeth	Tulse Hill	1,415	2,749	51.5
Leicester	Charnwood	1,510	3,014	50.1
Leicester	Freemen	1,165	2,272	51.3
Liverpool	Abercromby	860	1,307	65.8
Liverpool	Brecksfield	1,515	2,347	64.6
Liverpool	Everton	840	1,172	71.7
Liverpool	Granby	1,885	2,452	76.9
Liverpool	Kensington	1,340	2,523	53.1
Liverpool	Melrose	1,470	2,777	52.9
Liverpool	Pirrie	1,655	3,244	51.0
Liverpool	Smithdown	1,020	1,956	52.1
Liverpool	Speke	1,325	2,302	57.6
Liverpool	Vauxhall	900	1,359	66.2
Manchester	Ardwick	1,260	1,958	64.4
Manchester	Benchill	1,695	3,096	54.7
Manchester	Beswick and Clayton	1,485	2,314	64.2
Manchester	Blackley	1,240	2,327	53.3
Manchester	Bradford	1,485	2,120	70.0
Manchester	Central	950	1,609	59.0
Manchester	Cheetham	1,975	3,630	54.4
Manchester	Gorton South	1,725	2,985	57.8
Manchester	Harpurhey	1,545	2,017	76.6
Manchester	Hulme	1,080	1,500	72.0
Manchester	Moss Side	2,020	2,804	72.0
Manchester	Newton Heath	1,295	2,540	51.0
Merthyr Tydfil	Gurnos	630	1,221	51.6
Middlesbrough	Middlehaven	465	823	56.5
Middlesbrough	Park End	905	1,801	50.2
Middlesbrough	Thorntree	1,025	1,766	58.0
Newcastle upon Tyne	Byker	840	1,509	55.7
Newcastle upon Tyne	Elswick	1,000	1,948	51.3
Newcastle upon Tyne	Moorside	725	1,228	59.0
Newcastle upon Tyne	Walker	940	1,703	55.2
Newcastle upon Tyne	West City	635	888	71.5
Newham	Canning Town North	1,665	3,105	53.6
Newham	Canning Town South	1,940	2,987	64.9
Newham	Royal Docks	910	1,497	60.8
Newport	Pillgwenlly	775	1,437	53.9
Newport	Tredegar Park	540	1,070	50.5
North Lanarkshire	Craigneuk	465	925	50.3
Nottingham	Aspley	2,775	5,029	55.2
Nottingham	Bridge	830	1,607	51.6
Nottingham	St Ann's	1,445	2,458	58.8
Preston	Ribbleton	1,005	1,983	50.7
Redcar and Cleveland	Grangetown	990	1,880	52.7
Renfrewshire	Ferguslie	690	1,357	50.8
Renfrewshire	Paisley Central	225	375	60.0
Renfrewshire	St. James	320	486	65.8
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	Maerdy	360	702	51.3
Salford	Blackfriars	765	1,211	63.2
Salford	Ordsall	745	1,014	73.5
Salford	Pendleton	790	1,341	58.9
Sandwell	Soho and Victoria	1,185	2,129	55.7
Sefton	Linacre	1,815	3,418	53.1
Shepway	Folkestone Harvey Central	315	622	50.6
Southwark	Livesey	1,535	2,916	52.6
Stockton-on-Tees	Portrack and Tilery	540	1,052	51.3
Swansea	Penderry	1,545	2,804	55.1
Swansea	Townhill	1,220	2,216	55.1
Torfaen	Cwmyniscoy	145	248	58.5

Children in families receiving income support (IS) or income-based jobseekers allowance (JSA) at August 2003: by local authority and census ward

Local authority	Ward	Children 0 to 15 in families receiving IS or JSA	2001 census population aged 0 to 15	Percentage children (0 to 15) in families receiving either IS, JSA
Tower Hamlets	Blackwall and Cubitt Town	1,160	2,124	54.6
Tower Hamlets	Bow East	1,045	1,549	67.5
Tower Hamlets	Bromley-by-Bow	1,785	3,416	52.3
Tower Hamlets	East India and Lansbury	1,795	3,114	57.6
Tower Hamlets	Limehouse	1,540	2,903	53.0
Tower Hamlets	Mile End East St. Dunstan's and Stepney Green	1,530	2,809	54.5
Tower Hamlets		1,980	3,310	59.8
Wandsworth	Latchmere	1,245	2,475	50.3
Westminster	Church Street	1,300	1,297	100.2
Westminster	Harrow Road	990	1,640	60.4
Westminster	Queen's Park	1,470	2,018	72.8
Westminster	Westbourne	1,425	2,121	67.2
Wirral	Bidston	1,660	2,934	56.6
Wirral	Birkenhead	1,975	3,052	64.7
Wirral	Tranmere	1,910	3,171	60.2
Wrexham	Wynnstay	330	634	52.1

Notes:
1. All wards based on census wards—those current as at April 2003.
2. Income support (IS) and jobseekers allowance (JSA) data is based on the latest published data relating to August 2003.
3. JSA includes children within families claiming income based JSA only. IS includes children in all claims including those for minimum income guarantee.
4. All benefit counts at ward level are rounded to a multiple of 5 to protect the confidentiality of individual claimants and their families.
5. The total children aged 0 to 15 at ward level are based on the relevant 2001 census.
6. The anomaly in the data for Westminster, Church Street is caused by either population changes between 2001 (census data) and 2003 (benefit data) or undercounting in the census.

Source:
Information Directorate, Department for Work and Pensions.

Council Tax Assistance

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Morecambe and Lunesdale he expects will benefit from the £200 council tax assistance. [223478]

Malcolm Wicks: We estimate that about 13,000 pensioners in the Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency will benefit from the £200 council tax assistance.

Note:
Parliamentary constituencies are assigned by matching postcodes against the ONS postcode directory.

Source:
IAD Information Centre

Judicial Appointments

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time judicial appointments have been made to the Appeal Service and its predecessors in each year since 1975, broken down by gender. [223067]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

The gender split for full-time and part-time appointments to the appeals service for each year between 1999–2004 is set out in the following table. These figures are obtained from the Judicial Appointments Annual Report to Parliament for each of the financial years covering this period. The figures originate from the judicial database and reflect the information held on the database at the time of obtaining the statistical report.

Only partial figures between 1975 and 1998 are available, and those can be determined only at disproportionate cost.

Appointments to the appeals service—fee-paid judicial officers

1 April to 31 March:	Male	Female	Total
1999–2000	[1]1,371	[1]730	[1]2,101
2000–01	83	48	131
2001–02	52	37	89
2002–03	55	47	102
2003–04	32	11	43

[1] Figures include the appointment of in-post Independent Tribunal Service officers as judicial officers for the Appeal Service.

Salaried judicial officers

1 April to 31 March:	Male	Female	Total
1999–2000	—	—	—
2000–01	1	—	1
2001–02	2	5	7
2002–03	—	—	—
2003–04	5	7	12

Low-income Households

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* pensioners have and *(b)* children are in families with an income of less than (i) 40 per cent., (ii) 50 per cent. and (iii) 60 per cent. of average earnings in (A) the UK, (B) Scotland, (C) England and (D) Wales. [222914]

Mr. Pond: Robust estimates of the number of individuals in low income, within all countries of Great Britain, are not available. We have therefore presented all estimates as proportions.

The following table shows the proportion of pensioners living in households with income below thresholds of national mean income in Great Britain in 2002–03.

The proportion of pensioners with income below thresholds of GB mean income, for selected countries, 2002–03

	Thresholds Below 40 per cent. mean	*Below 50 per cent. mean*	*Below 60 per cent. mean*
Before housing costs			
UK	10	23	38
England	10	23	38
Scotland	8	22	40
Wales	8	20	37
After housing costs			
UK	9	23	40
England	10	24	40
Scotland	8	23	39
Wales	7	18	36

The following table shows the proportion of children living in households with income below thresholds of national mean income in Great Britain in 2002–03.

The proportion of children with income below thresholds of GB mean income, for selected countries, 2002–03

	Thresholds Below 40 per cent. mean	*Below 50 per cent. mean*	*Below 60 per cent. mean*
Before housing costs			
UK	10	22	36
England	10	22	35
Scotland	10	24	38
Wales	10	27	43
After housing costs			
UK	18	30	40
England	18	30	40
Scotland	16	27	40
Wales	19	34	45

Notes:
1. Figures in the 'below 40 per cent. mean' column should be treated with caution and are considered less robust than results using higher thresholds.
2. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, council tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response which is not corrected by the grossing regime.

Further information regarding low income for the United Kingdom is available in 'Households Below Average Income 1994–95 to 2002–03', a copy of which is held in the Library.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* England and *(d)* Wales live in households with income less than (i) £8,000, (ii) £10,000, (iii) £12,000, (iv) £14,000 and (v) £16,000. [222913]

Mr. Pond: The information available is in the tables.

Percentage of individuals 2002–03

Total household income at 2002–03 prices	*United Kingdom*
Less than	
£8,000	6
£10,000	12
£12,000	17
£14,000	23
£16,000	28

Source:
2002–03 Family Resources Survey, United Kingdom

Percentage of individuals, 2000–01 to 2002–03

Total household income at 2002–03 prices	*Scotland*	*England*	*Wales*
Less than			
£8,000	8	7	8
£10,000	14	12	14
£12,000	20	17	22
£14,000	27	23	28
£16,000	32	28	35

Notes:
1. All figures are estimates and are taken from the Family Resources Survey (FRS). Due to regional volatility, regional estimates are based on a three year average from 2000–01 to 2002–03. The UK estimate is for 2002–03 only, as the FRS did not cover Northern Ireland until 2002–03.
2. Results are presented as percentages as these can be estimated more reliably.
3. Figures are based on a total income at 2002–03 prices.
4. The FRS is not designed to collect information on annual income. Earnings figures are based on last usual pay. Annual income is estimated by assuming that the income for the relevant period applied for the whole year.
5. The figures relate to the percentage of individuals, including both adults and children, in households whose household income was in the band shown.
6. The estimates are based on sample counts that have been adjusted for non-response using multi-purpose grossing factors. Estimates are subject to sampling error and remaining response bias.
7. Total weekly household income consists of total income from all sources before deduction of income tax and national insurance. This includes all tax credits.
8. Total income has not been adjusted for family size.

Source:
2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 Family Resources Survey, Great Britain

Unemployment Programme

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Perth (Annabelle Ewing) of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 2021W, on Unemployment Programme, if he will provide the figures for the *(a)* new deal for lone parents, *(b)* new deal for 25 plus or long-term unemployed, *(c)* new deal for partners and *(d)* new deal for disabled people for each year since 1997. [223066]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is in table 7 on page 171 of the 2004 DWP departmental report, which is available in the Library.

Unemployment

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what he estimates the cost of benefits paid to people who were unemployed and seeking work in the City of York was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 2004–05, at 2004–05 prices. [222310]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The information for housing benefit and council tax benefit is not available at this level. The available information is in the table.

Jobseeker's allowance expenditure in City of York council area
£ million, real terms, 2004–05 prices

	1996–97	*2004–05*
Jobseeker's allowance		
Contribution based	2.9	1.2
Income based	4.2	2.7
Total jobseekers allowance benefits	7.1	3.9

Notes:
1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest £100,000.
2. The information relates to the City of York local authority area.
3. Figures are consistent with the pre-Budget report 2004 and with expenditure information published on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp (table 1)

Source:
Expenditure has been taken from departmental accounting systems and has been apportioned using 5 per cent. sample data for the relevant benefits.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Morecambe and Lunesdale received the winter fuel allowance in winter 2004–05. [223476]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of pensioners in Morecambe and Lunesdale who receive the winter fuel payment is in the Library.

HEALTH

MRI Scanners

14. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the co-ordination of national contracts for MRI scanners with individual NHS hospital trust MRI scanner provision. [223091]

Mr. Hutton: It is for strategic health authorities and primary care trusts to ensure that the additional capacity procured through this exercise fits with what is required locally, together with future investment in diagnostic services delivered by the national health service.

The independent sector procurement programme is already helping to deliver faster access to high quality diagnostic tests, including magnetic resonance imaging scans. This is excellent news for patients.

Neurological Intensive Care Beds

15. **Mr. Gibb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neurological intensive care beds there are in England. [223093]

Dr. Ladyman: As at 13 January 2005, there were 80 neurological intensive care beds in England.

The National Service Framework for Long Term Conditions, published on 10 March, sets out our vision for further improving access to health and social care for people with neurological conditions.

Dementia

16. **Mr. Greenway:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the availability of drugs to treat dementia. [223095]

Dr. John Reid: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has recently produced draft guidance on the use of drugs for Alzheimer's disease. This guidance is currently out for consultation. We will be responding shortly, and will seek to highlight the issues that we believe to be important.

Bluebell Surgery, Colchester

17. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make an official visit to the Bluebell surgery at Highwoods, Colchester to discuss the standard of accommodation. [223096]

Dr. Ladyman: I have no immediate plans to visit the Bluebell surgery in Colchester. However, I am advised that Colchester primary care trust has recently confirmed its commitment to building a new community facility that will also provide accommodation for staff and patients of the Bluebell surgery.

NHS Staff

18. **Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* other professionals in the NHS are foreign nationals or were trained abroad. [223097]

Mr. Hutton: Data of the nationality of doctors, nurse and other professionals working in the national health service are not held centrally.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses and *(c)* clinical staff were employed in (i) north and east Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority, (ii) Selby and York primary care trust and (iii) York hospitals NHS trust in (A) 1997 and (B) 2004. [222293]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table. Figures are not yet available for 2004.

National health service hospital and community health services: Non-medical staff by main staff group in the specified organisations as at 30 September each year

Headcount

	1997	*2003*
North and east Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority		
Professionally qualified clinical staff	14,596	17,532
Qualified nursing staff (including practice nurses)	9,347	10,598
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (ST and T)	2,453	3,310
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)[1]	999	1,115
Medical and dental staff[2]	1,349	1,884
Qualified ambulance staff	448	625
Support to clinical staff	7,141	9,470
Support to doctors and nurses	5,946	7,368
Support to ST and T	914	1,657
Support to ambulance staff	281	445
Of which:		
Selby and York primary care trust		
Professionally qualified clinical staff	n/a	1,295
Qualified nursing staff (including practice nurses)	n/a	807
Qualified ST and T	n/a	252
General medical practitioners (excluding retainers)[1]	n/a	205
Medical and dental staff[2]	n/a	31
Support to clinical staff	n/a	649
Support to doctors and nurses	n/a	610
Support to ST and T	n/a	39
York health services NHS trust total[3]		
Professionally qualified clinical staff	2,705	1,961
Qualified nursing staff	1,928	1,191
Qualified ST and T	506	469
Medical and dental staff[2]	271	301
Support to clinical staff	1,424	1,177
Support to doctors and nurses	1,263	907
Support to ST and T	161	270

n/a = Not applicable.

[1] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include general medical service (QMS) unrestricted principals, personal medical service (PMS) contracted general practitioners, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

[2] Excludes medical hospital practitioners and medical clinical assistants, most of whom are also GPs working part-time in hospitals GP and GP practice nurse data as at 1 October 1997 and 30 September 2003.

[3] Following the formation of Selby and York primary care trust (PCT) in 2001, the provision of mental health services transferred to the PCT from the York health services NHS trust. The transfer of staff is reflected in the drop in figures from 1997 to 2003.
Sources:
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health GMS and PMS statistics.

Primary Care

19. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the promotion of primary care to erode income-related health differentials. [223098]

Mr. Hutton: Last year, the Department announced 88 Spearhead primary care trusts, which are the 88 areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators. In the recent allocations round, Spearhead PCTs received above average growth. By 2007–08, Spearhead PCTs will be allocated £1552 per person, compared with an average for all PCTs of £1338 per person.

East Sussex Hospitals Trust

20. **Mr. Waterson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to reduce the number of cancelled operations in East Sussex hospitals trust. [223099]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I am aware that there are concerns about the recent number of cancelled operations at East Sussex hospitals NHS trust.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts, working with their strategic health authorities, councils and other stakeholders to plan, improve and sustain services for local people.

Leaders of the local health and social care organisations met early in March to discuss the operational problems faced by the hospital, and have agreed measures designed to help address these problems.

Solvent Abuse

21. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on levels of solvent abuse among young people. [223100]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The statistics on drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England 2003 indicate that 8 per cent. of young people aged 11–15 abused solvent in 2003 compared with 6 per cent. in 2002.

While deaths from solvent abuse have continued to decline over the past 10 years, the Government are keen to see these fall further. We have therefore been working with a wide range of stakeholders and other Government Departments to develop a framework for volatile substance abuse which will be published shortly.

Chiropody

22. **Mr. McLoughlin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients received chiropody treatment in 2003–04. [223101

Dr. Ladyman: The number of different persons seen in the year by national health service chiropody services in 2003–04 was 2.1 million.

Speech Therapists

23. **Chris Bryant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many speech therapists were practising in England in each year from 2000 to 2004. [223102]

Dr. Ladyman: The Health Professions Council holds information on the number of speech and language therapists registered to practice in the UK.

As at September 2004, there were 6,556 speech and language therapists employed in the NHS. This is an increase of 21 per cent. from 5,430 on September 2000.

Abortion

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many private abortion clinics have been closed down following inspection since 1991; [221742]

(2) what action is taken when private abortion clinics do not meet national standards. [221743]

(3) when the British Pregnancy Advisory Service Clinic in Leamington Spa was most recently inspected; [221744]

(4) how frequently private abortion clinics are inspected. [221745]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Private abortion clinics are inspected annually by the Healthcare Commission.

The British Pregnancy Advisory Service clinic in Leamington Spa was last inspected on 28 April 2004.

Action taken by the Healthcare Commission when clinics do not meet the national standards is proportionate to the level of concern. However, this includes the authority to cancel a clinic's registration, which may also lead to a withdrawal of approval under the Abortion Act.

Since 1991, one clinic has had its registration, and its approval under the Abortion Act 1967, withdrawn and one clinic chose to close voluntarily in order to give the provider time to comply with the requirements set.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the national abortion statistics for 2003 contain less detailed information than in the previous five years. [221747]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As stated in the statistical bulletin summary, "Abortion Statistics, England and Wales: 2003", the format of tables changed to reflect concerns over issues of privacy and confidentiality. These issues are now being considered in more detail and we have asked the National Statistician to provide

the Department and the new Health and Social Care Information Centre with guidelines for interpreting the national statistics code of practice and associated protocols in the handling of health statistics that balance data confidentiality risks with the public interest in the use of the figures. We expect to receive these in the summer.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research the Government have conducted on the likely effects on young women of reducing the time limit for legal abortion. [222983]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is not aware of any Government commissioned research on the effects on young women of reducing the time limit for legal abortion.

Advisory Committee on Cancer Prevention

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch Presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee on cancer prevention met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [216222]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1731W.

Alcohol

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children aged between 11 and 15 years were admitted to hospital in each strategic health authority owing to alcohol-related problems in each year since 2002–03. [221890]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* Episodes of children aged between 11 and 15 years admitted to hospital in each strategic health authority owing to alcohol-related problems in each year since 2001–02 are shown in the table.

Counts of finished in-year admissions where there was a primary diagnosis or cause code for alcohol related diseases. Age at admission: 11 to 15 years
National health service hospitals in strategic health authorities, England 2001–02 to 2003–04

	Strategic health authority	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Q01	Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	118	99	126
Q02	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	151	122	119
Q03	Essex	37	43	49
Q04	North West London	71	54	86
Q05	North Central London	47	66	63
Q06	North East London	43	58	80
Q07	South East London	43	59	69
Q08	South West London	127	122	140
Q09	Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	141	124	93
Q10	County Durham and Tees Valley	68	112	121
Q11	North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	167	109	196
Q12	West Yorkshire	167	156	159
Q13	Cumbria and Lancashire	152	206	184
Q14	Greater Manchester	227	254	276
Q15	Cheshire and Merseyside	265	264	321
Q16	Thames Valley	96	71	88
Q17	Hampshire and Isle of Wight	82	91	112
Q18	Kent and Medway	141	103	128
Q19	Surrey and Sussex	169	229	225
Q20	Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	99	106	142
Q21	South West Peninsula	91	100	152
Q22	Dorset and Somerset	90	69	64
Q23	South Yorkshire	99	89	94
Q24	Trent	168	150	125
Q25	Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	62	62	67
Q26	Shropshire and Staffordshire	112	122	138
Q27	Birmingham and the Black Country	209	167	222
Q28	West Midlands South	122	116	131
Y	Not known	313	—	—
	Total	3,679	3,323	3,770

Notes:

Alcohol-related diseases: These are defined by a primary diagnosis of mental and behavioural disorders due to alcohol (ICD10 code F10), alcoholic liver disease (K70) or toxic effect of alcohol (T51) or a cause code of accidental poisoning by and exposure to alcohol (X45).

Finished in-year admissions: A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data-year. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Diagnosis (primary diagnosis): The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Cause code: The cause code is a supplementary code that indicates the nature of any external cause of injury, poisoning or other adverse effects.

Grossing: Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing or invalid clinical data, except for 2002–03 and 2003–04, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Antibiotics (Farms)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on health of the use of antibiotics on farms; and if he will make a statement. [221687]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am advised by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that the use of antibiotics in human rather than veterinary medicines is thought to be the main source of resistant micro-organisms in the human population, but we recognise that transfer of resistant bacteria can also occur through the food chain. Action has been taken to phase out the use of antibiotic growth promoters in animals and to make sure that antibiotics are used responsibly in the treatment of sick animals. Measures to prevent food-borne disease, such as cooking, will also prevent the transmission of resistant bacteria.

Antibiotic residues in food, resulting from on-farm use and their implications for consumer health, are monitored by the veterinary residues committee and the FSA. The residue levels currently reported do not raise any concerns about risks to consumer health.

Cancer

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether he intends to make estimates of the number of people expected to be diagnosed with cancer over the medium-to long-term to inform the NHS Cancer Plan, as recommended in paragraph 2.10, page 22 of the National Audit Office Report, The NHS Cancer Plan: A Progress Report; [222819]

(2) what steps he is taking to define the roles and responsibilities of the constituent organisations of cancer networks; [222822]

(3) what steps he is taking to ensure that cancer networks *(a)* are fully staffed and *(b)* have adequate representation from NHS trusts and primary care trusts. [222823]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department welcomes the National Audit Office report, "The NHS Cancer Plan: A Progress Report", and will take account of the issues raised and the recommendations made as we further develop and improve cancer services. The report will be discussed in detail at a Committee of Public Accounts hearing scheduled for 23 March 2005. Sir Nigel Crisp, chief executive of the national health service and Professor Mike Richards, national cancer director, will give evidence at the hearing. The Government will respond to the Committee's subsequent report in the form of a Treasury Minute.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to establish a pilot programme for raising public awareness of the symptoms of cancer. [222820]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A pilot programme of raising public awareness of the symptoms of cancer will be set up this year.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to complete the investment tracking exercise on funding for cancer services, as described in paragraph 1.10, page 10, of the National Audit Office Report, The NHS Cancer Plan: A Progress Report. [222821]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As stated in the National Audit Office Report, preliminary results from the second investment tracking exercise show that the £570 million target should be met. Final validation of the data received is currently being undertaken, and it is expected that the results of the exercise will be available in spring 2005.

Cardiac Arrhythmia

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS trusts are equipped to use electro physiological interventions in the treatment of cardiac arrhythmia. [223215]

Miss Melanie Johnson: All of the 29 tertiary cardiac centres in England are equipped for and capable of administering electrophysiological interventions in the treatment of cardiac arrhythmia. They are located within the following national health service trusts.

Papworth Hospital NHS Trust
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust
St. Mary's NHS Trust
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust
Barts and the London NHS Trust
Guy's and St. Thomas' Hospital NHS Trust
King's College Hospital NHS Trust
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust
Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust
Cardiothoracic Centre Liverpool NHS Trust
The Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust
University Hospital of Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Cardiac Health

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action the Government are taking to reduce cardiac health risks among young people. [222175]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I published the "Choosing Health" delivery plan together with "Choosing a Better Diet"—a food and health action plan and "Choosing

Activity"—a physical activity action plan, on 9 March, which set out how the Government will deliver on a range of public health interventions to reduce the risks to the whole population and to key sectors, including young people. These plans set out in detail specific measures to reduce tobacco consumption, increase healthy diets and physical activity all of which are key behaviours for reducing the incidence of cardiovascular disease.

Care Homes/Social Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* independent and *(b)* local authority care (i) homes and (ii) places there were in each local authority area in England providing (A) nursing care and (B) residential care in the most recent period for which figures are available. [219390]

Dr. Ladyman: The following information has been placed in the Library.

The number of residential care homes in England by Council with Social Service Responsibilities (CSSR) and nursing homes by health authority (HA) for people aged 18 and over as at 31 March 2001.

The number of residential home places in England by CSSR and nursing home places by HA for people aged 18 and over as at 31 March 2001.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 135–36W, on care homes, how many *(a)* privately-owned and *(b)* local authority owned care homes there are in the Vale of York according to regionalised data provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection. [221441]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection that information on the number of registered care homes by sector and local authority area is not yet available.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the orders to increase the regulatory fees in 2005–06 for care homes and social care providers are expected to be laid before Parliament; and if he will make a statement. [223249]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The Commission for Social Care Inspection (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 were laid before Parliament on 10 March 2005 and come into force on 1 April 2005. I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I made on 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 77WS.

Carers

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Parliamentary Under-Secretary will reply to the letter of 7 February from the right hon. Member for South West Surrey on action for carers. [222495]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has no record of having received a letter dated 7 February from the right hon. Member for South West Surrey on action for carers. A letter on this subject, dated 9 March, was received by the Department on 15 March and a response will be provided before the easter recess.

Chorley South Ribble Primary Care Trust

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the process is for appointing a new chair for the Chorley South Ribble Primary Care Trust; and what the time scale is for the appointment. [222283]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Secretary of State has delegated his functions relating to the appointments to primary care trusts to the National Health Service Appointments Commission. I have asked the chair, Sir William Wells, to write directly to my hon. Friend with the information he has requested.

Contaminated Blood Products

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons financial support is not provided to women widowed through the infection of their husbands with hepatitis C from contaminated blood products prescribed for them by the NHS. [223180]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Unlike the Macfarlane and Eileen Trusts, which administer schemes for those infected with HIV, the ex gratia payment scheme for those infected with hepatitis C as a result of national health service treatment with blood or blood products, known as the Skipton Fund, is not a charitable trust.

The Skipton Fund has been designed to make lump sum, ex gratia payments to those living with the hepatitis C virus and has not been designed to compensate for bereavement. For these reasons it is distinct from the HIV payment schemes.

Deep Vein Thrombosis

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the level of deaths from deep vein thrombosis among NHS patients. [222205]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Virtually all deaths from deep vein thrombosis occur as a result of a pulmonary embolism and most pulmonary embolisms arise from deep vein thrombosis in the leg. However, the precise description of this sequence of events leading to death, as provided on the death certificate, affects whether the death is coded as pulmonary embolism or thrombosis. Therefore, a figure combining the two causes is shown in the table.

Number of deaths from pulmonary embolism and deep vein thrombosis[1], persons, England and Wales, 1998–2003[2]

Calendar year	*Number of deaths*
1998	6,992
1999	6,877
2000	7,233
2001	7,207
2002	7,099
2003	7,361

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes 415.1, 451.1, 451.2, 451.9 and 453.9 for the years 1998 to 2000 and, for the years 2001 to 2003, the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes I26, I80.1, I80.2, I80.3, I80.9 and I82.9.
[2] Figures are for deaths occurring in each calendar year.

The Government have noted the recent report published by the Health Committee into the prevention of venous thromboembolism in hospitalised patients and will provide a full response in due course.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in the reduction of waiting times for digital hearing aids. [223354]

Dr. Ladyman: The figures on waiting times for digital hearing aids are not collected centrally. It is for primary care trusts to ensure their local population benefits from modernised hearing aid services.

Disability Equipment

Mr. Osten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with internet providers on rules governing the re-sale of disability equipment. [222961]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* We have not had any discussions with internet providers on rules governing the re-sale of disability equipment.

We would expect anyone who is re-selling disability equipment whether on the internet or not, to take their liabilities into account and their duty to the public to ensure that the re-sold equipment is fit for purpose, decontaminated and ideally has a full service history.

Drug Addicts

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered drug addicts per head of population there are in *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Bristol, *(c)* Leeds, *(d)* Liverpool, *(e)* Manchester, *(f)* Newcastle, *(g)* Nottingham and *(h)* Sheffield. [214038]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no requirement on drug misusers to register their addiction. The number per thousand population in contact with structured treatment during 2003–04, the most recent year for which figures are available, was:

	Number
Birmingham	4.2
Bristol	7.6
Leeds	3.4
Liverpool	6.4
Manchester	6.9
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	3.1
Nottingham	5.7
Sheffield	3.5

Drug Rehabilitation

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 4 March, *Official Report*, column 1467W, on drug rehabilitation, what measures he is taking to encourage community drug services' treatment protocols to reflect the advice on alternatives to methadone substitution therapy. [222519]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* A range of guidance has been produced by the Department and the National Treatment Agency (NTA) including:

Department of Health Clinical Guidelines (1999);

Models of Care for the Treatment of Drug Misusers (December 2002), and

NTA guidance on components of prescribing services (2003)—Research into practice briefing 2.

These all promote a range of appropriate treatment options including alternatives to methadone substitution therapy.

These documents promote the use of medication in the context of a package of care and advise on detoxification and availability of a range of psychological interventions and pathways to rehabilitation and recovery.

The Department continues to fund the Royal College of General Practitioners, which provides training to doctors, nurses and pharmacists on the range of drug treatment options including substitution medication and psychological interventions.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the 2004–05 budget is for drug rehabilitation; what the budgets are for each year until 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [222672]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The pooled drug treatment budget for 2004–05, and the allocated funding up until 2007–08 is shown in the table.

	£ million
2004–05	253.4
2005–06	299.4
2006–07	423.8
2007–08	478.4

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on provision of drug treatment in Lancashire. [213906]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Within the Lancashire Drug Action Team (DAT) area, there are a number of substance misuse services providing treatment in line with National Treatment Agency models of care and the drug interventions programme, the levels of intervention continue to evolve to meet the needs of the individual.

The Lancashire DAT plans to provide treatment for 4,113 problem drug users in the area in the current financial year, rising to 5,307 in 2007–08.

Average national waiting times for drug treatment in England have fallen, from an average of 9.1 weeks in December 2001, to 2.5 weeks in June 2004. Lancashire DAT reported an average waiting time of 3.75 weeks in December 2004.

Lancashire's allocation from the pooled drug treatment budget in 2004–05 is £4.3 million in the current year. This will increase by 21.2 per cent. in 2005–06 to £5.2 million.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding was made available for drug action and rehabilitation teams in each year since 2001. [221165]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department and the Home Office have combined the funding provided for drug treatment. Known as the 'pooled treatment budget', this money is allocated to the 149 drug action teams across the country. This budget will increase from £142 million in 2001–02 to £478 million in 2007–08.

The pooled treatment budget allocation since 2001 is shown in the table.

	Amount (£ million)
2001–02	142
2002–03	191
2003–04	236
2004–05	253

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding was provided for each drug action and rehabilitation team in the latest year for which funding is available *(a)* per team member and *(b)* per user. [221166]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department and the Home Office have combined the funding provided for drug treatment. Known as the 'pooled treatment budget' this money is allocated to the 149 drug action teams (DATs) across the country. This budget is increasing from £142 million in 2001–02, to £478 million in 2007–08. The pooled treatment budget allocation for 2004–05 is £253 million.

DATs make their own decisions on staffing and commissioning of services. We do not hold information centrally on these costs.

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received *(a)* treatment and *(b)* assistance from West Leeds community drug service since it was set up; and if he will estimate how many lives the service has saved. [222245]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

The number of people seen by the West Leeds community drug services from April 2004 to December 2004 was 410. There are no figures for 2003–04.

Treatment data from national drug treatment monitoring system are presented for each drug action team (DAT) area. The total number of individuals in contact with structured drug treatment services in the whole Leeds DAT partnership area for 2003–04 was 24,530.

Food Hygiene Regulations

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representation he has received on his proposals for a remedial action notice within new food hygiene regulations; in what circumstances he would expect it to be used instead of the Emergency Prohibition Notice; and if he will make a statement. [221873]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am advised by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that concerns have been raised, largely by some meat industry stakeholders, about the use of the Remedial Action Notice in response to the FSA's consultation on new food hygiene legislation.

The proposed Remedial Action Notice would directly replace the existing Regulation 10 notice in current meat hygiene legislation. These notices are expected to be served in situations where requests for corrective measures to reduce the risk of contamination and consequent risk to public health have been ignored by the operator. Examples of where they might be used in slaughterhouses are:

> to promptly and effectively prohibit the use of a piece of equipment; impose conditions on, or the carrying out of a process; require the rate of production to be reduced or even stopped; or require the detention of any animal or food of animal origin for the purposes of examination.

Emergency Prohibition Notices and Orders are currently issued under the Food Safety Act 1990, and provision for Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices and Orders has been made in the draft Food Hygiene (England) Regulations. The current notices and orders are used where there is a real and imminent risk to health and the new provisions will replicate that requirement.

The FSA is considering the issues raised in the consultation to determine if the proposed legislation needs to be revised.

Food Poisoning

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were diagnosed as suffering from food poisoning in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [221685]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The number of notified cases of food poisoning in England and Wales reported to the Health Protection Agency (HPA) each year since 2001 is shown in the table. These numbers have shown a decrease each year since 2001.

	Notified cases of food poisoning in England and Wales
2001	85,468
2002	72,649
2003	70,895

Notified cases of food poisoning are not considered to be a reliable indicator of food-borne disease due to considerable under-reporting of all notifiable diseases. Very few notified cases will be based on evidence supporting the suspected association with food.

Based on laboratory reports and multiplication factors derived from a large study of infectious intestinal disease[1], the HPA estimated that, in 2000, there may have been as many as 1.3 million cases of food-borne illness acquired in England and Wales, of which around 370,000 consulted a doctor[2]. In that year, only 86,528 cases of food poisoning were notified. The HPA has not carried out a similar estimate for subsequent years.

[1] A Report on the Study of Infectious Intestinal Disease in England, 2000, The Stationery Office, ISBN 0-11-322308-0.
[2] Adak G K, Long S M, O'Brien S J. Gut 2002; 51:832–841.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the principal cause of food poisoning in England was in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [221686]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Notified cases of food poisoning are based on clinical diagnoses; therefore, it is not always possible to confirm the cause of the illness. However, estimates made by the Health Protection Agency (HPA)[1] have indicated that the main microbiological cause of food poisoning is "Campylobacter".

Data for 2001–03 on the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of illness in England and Wales caused by the five major food-borne bacteria also indicate that "Campylobacter" caused the greatest number of cases in each year.

Final figures for 2003 provided by the HPA are shown in the following table and suggest that the number of laboratory-confirmed cases of "Campylobacter" in England and Wales in 2003 decreased by 22 per cent. compared with the figures for 2001. Reliable data for 2004 are not yet available.

[1] G K Adak, S M Long, S J O'Brien—Trends in indigenous food-borne disease and deaths in England and Wales 1992–2000. Gut 2002, 51:832–841.

Laboratory-confirmed cases of Campylobacter in England and Wales

	Number
2001	44,368
2002	37,316
2003	34,593

Foreign Patients

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much has been charged by the NHS in each of the last five years to non-UK and non-EU *(a)* nationals and *(b)* embassies; [223454]

(2) what percentage of NHS patients treated in the last year for which figures are available were *(a)* UK nationals, *(b)* EU nationals and *(c)* non-EU nationals. [223455]

Mr. Hutton: Successive Governments have not required the national health service to provide statistics on the number or nationality of overseas visitors treated under the provisions of the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, as amended, or on the costs of treatment. It is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what deficit is projected for the Great Ormond Street hospital in the 2004–05 financial year. [222011]

Dr. Ladyman: The North Central London strategic health authority reports that the Great Ormond Street Hospital National Health Service Trust is forecasting they will achieve financial balance for the current financial year.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of MRSA infection have been recorded at the Great Ormond Street hospital in each of the last 10 years. [222013]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) bloodstream infections are only available by national health service trust since April 2001.

The table shows the published data for the last three and half years for Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust.

	Number of MRSA bloodstream infection reports
April 2001 to March 2002	7
April 2002 to March 2003	13
April 2003 to March 2004	4
April 2004 to Sept 2004	1

Health Funding (Leeds)

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of funding per head of population in each primary care trust in Leeds was in the last year for which figures are available; and what assessment his Department has made of inequality of healthcare provision in the city. [222879]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the allocations per weighted head of population in each primary care trust (PCT) in Leeds for 2004–05.

£

PCT	*2004–05 allocation per weighted head of population*
East Leeds	1,077.31
Leeds, North East	1,044.27
Leeds, North West	1,001.55
Leeds, West	1,052.69
South Leeds	1,010.21

Source:
Department of Health.

Service planning to address inequalities in service provision is agreed between PCTs and their strategic health authorities and not with the Department.

Health Services (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* day patient beds there were in York in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2004–05. [222231]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

	Organisation	*In-patient beds*	*Day patient beds*
1996–97	York health services national health service trust	1,171	32
2003–04[1]	York hospitals NHS trust[2]	778	43
2003–04	Selby and York PCT[2]	375	0

[1] The latest data available are 2003–04

[2] Following the transfer of community and mental health services to Selby and York PCT in 2001, the York health services NHS trust renamed itself York hospitals NHS trust.

Source:
Department of Health.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients had been waiting 13-weeks or longer for outpatient treatment at York health services NHS Trust at *(a)* April 1997 and *(b)* the latest date for which figures are available. [222232]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the number of patients not yet seen at the end of the quarter who have experienced a wait of over 13-weeks for a first outpatient appointment at York health services national health service trust in March 1997 and from 2002, at York hospitals NHS trust.

		Number
March 1997[1]	York health services NHS trust	2,058
December 2004	York hospitals NHS trust[2]	645

[1] The information given is for March 1997, as the data are collected quarterly.

[2] Following the transfer of community and mental health services to the Selby and York primary care trust, the trust was renamed York hospitals NHS trust.

Source:
QM08 quarterly return.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many finished consultant episodes there were in *(a)* total and *(b)* each speciality at York hospitals NHS trust in each year since 1996–97; and how many (i) hip replacements and (ii) cataract operations were carried out in that NHS trust in each year. [222269]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Table 1: Count of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) York hospitals national health service trust, 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Total FCEs
1996–97	60,956
1997–98	61,177
1998–99	65,143
1999–2000	62,296
2000–01	62,631
2001–02	63,523
2002–03	64,015
2003–04	69,699

Notes:
Finished consultant episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
Grossing
Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2002–03 and 2003–04, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Table 2: Count of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) by main speciality York hospitals NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2003–04

Main speciality		*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
100	General surgery	7,290	6,929	7,618	7,620	7,493	7,440	8,034	8,727
101	Urology	4,390	4,319	4,441	4,432	4,860	4,719	4,817	5,345
110	Trauma and Orthopaedics	4,375	4,274	4,560	4,468	4,660	4,649	5,158	5,566
120	Ear Nose & Throat (ENT)	2,211	1,833	2,134	2,166	2,193	2,301	2,050	2,041
130	Ophthalmology	1,923	1,885	2,175	2,288	2,253	2,272	2,290	2,534
140	Oral surgery	1,215	1,268	1,351	1,368	1,244	1,223	1,354	1,409
141	Restorative Dentistry	422	397	364	333	336	339	0	0
160	Plastic surgery	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	—
170	Cardiothoracic Surgery	0	0	*	0	0	0	0	0
180	Accident and Emergency (A&E)	1,361	731	460	134	—	*	29	7
190	Anaesthetics	1,174	2,345	2,469	2,292	1,906	1,918	1,882	1,879
300	General Medicine	10,604	10,961	11,591	12,002	12,888	14,076	15,561	16,536
303	Haematology (clinical)	814	1,043	1,310	1,391	938	824	667	684
330	Dermatology	132	113	170	148	127	103	75	62
360	Genito-urinary Medicine	0	*	0	0	0	0	0	*
370	Medical oncology	0	*	*	126	348	269	190	165
400	Neurology	441	409	404	397	429	510	520	670
410	Rheumatology	290	351	318	265	190	184	172	256
420	Paediatrics	3,290	3,321	3,741	4,168	3,908	4,158	4,124	4,651
430	Geriatric medicine	4,311	4,561	5,254	5,021	5,216	5,448	6,160	7,756
502	Gynaecology	13,553	13,471	13,524	9,622	9,726	9,748	9,310	9,738
610	General practice with maternity function	200	125	516	1,829	1,772	1,418	1,581	1,631
620	General Practice other than Maternity	519	522	480	437	411	370	0	0
700	Mental Handicap	174	53	60	34	31	38	0	0
710	Mental Illness	1,288	1,223	1,166	771	821	687	0	0
711	Child and Adolescent Psychiatry	72	64	54	47	57	51	0	0
715	Old Age Psychiatry	838	904	854	745	744	696	0	—
800	Radiotherapy	*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
810	Radiology	0	0	*	*	0	0	*	*
822	Chemical Pathology	67	72	121	190	80	80	38	40
824	Histopathology	0	0	0	*	0	0	0	0
Total		60,956	61,177	65,143	62,296	62,631	63,523	64,015	69,699

Notes:
Finished consultant episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
Speciality
Care is needed when analysing HES data by speciality, or by groups of specialities (such as Acute). Trusts have different ways of managing specialities and attributing codes so it is better to analyse by specific diagnoses, operations or other recorded information.
Grossing:
Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2002–03 and 2003–04, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Table 3: Count of finished consultant episodes with a hip replacement (OPCS4 codes W37-W39 and W46-W48) or cataract operation (OPCS4 codes C71-C72 and C74-C75) as a main or secondary operation
York hospitals NHS trust, 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Hip replacements	*Cataract operations*
1996–97	424	1,010
1997–98	366	1,035
1998–99	435	1,337
1999–2000	426	1,448
2000–01	459	1,392
2001–02	468	1,361
2002–03	506	1,220
2003–04	542	1,529

Notes:
Finished consultant episode (FCE)
An FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year.
All operations count of episodes
These figures represent a count of all FCEs where the procedure was mentioned in any of the 12 (four prior to 2002–03) operation fields in a HES record. A record is only included once in each count, even if an operation is mentioned in more than one operation field of the record.
Grossing
Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2002–03 and 2003–04, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were treated at York NHS walk-in centre in 2004. [222270]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2004, York national health service walk-in centre treated 37,566 patients.

Healthcare-acquired Infections

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* guidance and *(b)* circulars were issued (i) between 1987 and 1997 and (ii) 1997 and 2005 on the control of healthcare-acquired infections; and what (A) ministerial statements and (B) press notices on the subject were issued between 1997 and 2005. [220087]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The table shows the guidance and circulars relating to healthcare associated infection and the linked topic of cleanliness issued between 1987 and 2005. The second table shows press releases on the same subject issued between 1997 and 2005. There were no ministerial statements to the House on these subjects during the time period stated.

Circulars and guidance

Date	*Subject*
February 2005	Suggested framework for annual reports of Directors of infection prevention and control published on Department's website.
7 December 2004	"Revised Guidance on Contracting for Cleaning (including National specifications for cleanliness) (previously National Standards of Cleanliness)".
19 October 2004	"Matron's Charter; An Action plan for Cleaner Hospitals"
8 October 2004	Audit Tools for Monitoring Infection Control Standards 2004: a publication produced by ICNA working in partnership with DH
22 July 2004	Letter from NHS Chief Executive stressing the importance of infection control.
12 July 2004	"Towards Cleaner Hospitals and Lower rates of infection"
24 May 2004	Letter giving suggested competencies for Directors of Infection Prevention and Control.
5 December 2003	"Winning Ways: reducing healthcare associated infection in England"
June 2003	"Infection control: Prevention of healthcare-associated infection in primary and community care".
9 June 2003	Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) letter-PL CMO (2003) 4 Surveillance of healthcare associated infections.
9 June 2003	CMO letter—PL CMO (2003) 4 Hospital Pharmacy initiative for promoting prudent use of antibiotics in hospitals.
10 January 2002	"Getting Ahead of The Curve: a strategy for combating infectious diseases (including other aspects of health promotion)"
2001	"National Standards of Cleanliness (Revised 2003) (Revised and renamed 2004)"
2001	"Infection Control in the Built Environment (revised 2002)"
18 January 2001	"The National Evidence-based Guidelines for Preventing Healthcare Associated Infections" (also known as the 'epic' guidelines).
2000	"Standards for Environmental Cleanliness in Hospitals"—Guidance developed by ADM and ICNA and published in conjunction with NHS Estates.
11 February 2000	Health Service Circular—HSC (2000) 02 The management and control of hospital infection: action for the NHS for the management and control of infection in hospitals in England.
13 August 1999	Health Service Circular—HSC (1999) 179 Controls assurance in infection control: decontamination of medical devices.
5 March 1999	Health Service Circular—HSC 1999/049 Resistance to antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents action for the NHS following the Government's response to the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee report "Resistance to antibiotics and other antimicrobial agents"
1998	Hospital acquired infection: Information for chief executives, why you need to be interested.
March 1996	Guidelines on the control of infection in residential and nursing homes.
March 1996	"MRSA what nursing and residential homes need to know Department's leaflet"
21 April 1995	Health Service Guidance—HSG (1995) 18.

Hospital laundry arrangements for used and infected linen

7 March 1995	Health Service Guidance—HSG (1995) 10 "Hospital Infection Control-Guidance on the control of infection in hospitals, prepared by the Hospital Infection Working Group of the Department of Health and PHLS (also known as the 'Cooke report')"
1993	CDO letter PL CDO (1993) 3 Cross Infection Control
1991	CMO letter PL CMO (1991) 18 Detection of Hospital Infection
1988	Health Circular HC (1988) 33 Health services management: hospital infection control
1988	DHSS: Health Service Catering Manual : Hygiene (1988) 3rd edition giving guidance to assist health authorities achieve and maintain safe standards of practice, including cleaning and maintenance, of services and service areas and equipment and food handling

Press releases

Date	*Subject*
7 March 2005	MRSA cases lowest ever recorded as NHS actions begin to take effect
7 March 2005	Reid considering legislation on health hygiene in hospitals, nursing homes and care homes
28 February 2005	Cleaners, Nurses and Doctors make improvements on Think Clean Day
4 February 2005	Review panel makes progress on helping the NHS to fight MRSA
20 January 2005	Chief Nursing Officer says hospitals must spread best practice on reducing MRSA
21 December 2004	Government hits target of housekeepers half of all NHS hospitals
15 December 2004	Top international scientists join health secretary in fighting infection : John Reid challenges scientists translate research into practical measures against MRSA
7 December 2004	New model cleaning contract will help improve standards
1 December 2004	First results from rapid review panel in battle on MRSA
5 November 2004	Blood borne MRSA infection rates to be halved by 2008
4 November 2004	Infection control training for over one million NHS staff: new Chief Nurse says all staff must play their part in fight against MRSA
15 October 2004	NHS steps up the fight against hospital infections
19 October 2004	Hospital cleanliness a top priority for new top nurse
September 2004	Chief Nursing Officer's (CNO) Bulletin: Matrons make their mark, Clean hands equal clean wards, Hygiene checklist for nurses
14 July 2004	New MRSA figures published
12 July 2004	New action for cleaner, safer hospitals: Reid sets out plans to boost cleanliness and reduce infection rates
July/August 2004	CNO Bulletin: Keeping hospitals clean and safe
9 February 2004	Health Minister urges Accident and Emergency (Accident and Emergency) matrons to claim tiheir £10,000
5 December 2003	Drive to tackle hospital infections
13 August 2003	Latest results for hospital food and cleanliness: no red hospitals found
7 April 2003	Modern Matrons get £2 million fund to improve Accident and Emergency
9 June 2003	CMO to step up fight against hospital infections: £12 million for hospital pharmacists and central monitoring
19 March 2002	Cash bonuses for porters, cleaners and caretakers if they meet targets at work
8 February 2002	Lord Hunt welcomes report into rates of MRSA hospital infection by NHS trust
31 October 2001	Hospitals shine in latest cleanliness checks: WIRVS invited on board to keep standards high
10 October 2001	Maternity units receive £100 million to modernise and improve facilities
31 July 2001	Empowering nurses and slashing red tape means better care and cleaner wards for patients
23 July 2001	Health Minster Lord Philip Hunt announces new advisory committee on antibiotic resistance

Press releases

Date	*Subject*
10 April 2001	Cleanliness standards in hospital are rising: cleaner hospitals programme a "clear success"
4 April 2001	Heath Secretary brings back Matron to the Health Service
17 January 2001	Ward sister have greater control over cleaning standards: extra £30 million to drive up standards as part of biggest ever clean-up campaign
16 October 2000	All hospitals to monitor hospital acquired infection
26 September 2000	Improving the ward environment for patients: cleanest hospitals to act as models for others
31 July 2000	New NHS "Hospital clean-up" to improve patients' experience: extra £31 million investment for improving hospital cleanliness
12 June 2000	Next steps in tackling hospital infections announced: Denham to publish Government's Antimicrobial Strategy and set out plans for NHS to publish infection data
12 May 2000	Raising standards in NHS Wards
22 November 1999	New framework for managing hospital acquired infection: infection control part of a new range of standards for the NHS (Controls Assurance)
17 December 1998	Government Publishes Response To House Of Lords Report On Resistance To Antibiotics And Other Microbial Agents
3 September 1998	Report On Impact Of Clinical Prescribing On Antimicrobial Resistance Published
23 April 1998	Frank Dobson Welcomes Lords Report On Resistance To Antimicrobial Agents
1997	Tessa Jowell responds to PHLS study into hospital acquired infection
1991	Stephen Dorrell stresses government's commitment to a Cleaner, Greener NHS
1990	NHS hospital receives national clean kitchen award: The Victoria Hospital in Blackpool won the major award

Between 1987 and 1997, cleanliness conditions in individual hospitals were the responsibility of the national health service trust to which the hospital belonged, and needed to comply with the Patient's Charter.

Healthy Eating

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* the Food Standards Agency have had with the food and drinks industry in response to the recommendations in the Health Select Committee report on obesity. [220800]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The commitments in the Choosing Health White Paper include many of the Health Select Committee's recommendations and positive discussions have taken place between the Department, the Food Standards Agency and the food and drinks industry on these, including approaches to reducing salt, fat and sugar in the diet.

Hepatitis B Vaccine

Derek Conway: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* conducted and *(b)* evaluated concerning a possible link between hepatitis B vaccine and the development of autoimmune rheumatoid diseases; and if he will make a statement. [221609]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The safety of all medicines and vaccines, including hepatitis B vaccine, is continuously monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), with expert advice from the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). The MHRA uses a variety of data sources for this purpose

including reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) which are reported through the yellow card scheme, clinical trials, published literature, epidemiological studies and periodic safety update reports from marketing authorisation holders.

The known side effects of medicines and vaccines are described in their product information. Arthralgia and arthritis (joint pain and inflammation) have been reported very rarely in relation to hepatitis B vaccines and these possible side effects are included in product information. There have been reports of suspected adverse drug reactions suggesting an association between hepatitis B vaccine with rheumatoid arthritis.

In light of concerns raised by reports of suspected ADRs, in 2003, the MHRA and the vaccine working group of the CSM reviewed all the available evidence relating to the possible links between hepatitis B vaccine and rheumatoid arthritis. This review examined published literature and studies and reports of suspected adverse drug reactions. The working group advised that there is no confirmed scientific evidence linking the vaccine with an increased risk of rheumatoid arthritis. The MHRA will continue to monitor the safety of hepatitis B vaccine.

Herbal Medicinal Products

Mr. Tredinnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of differences in the *(a)* regulation and *(b)* supply of herbal products in each EU member state; and what steps he intends to take through the Herbal Medicinal Products Working Group to ensure that the requirements in respect of (i) quality standards and (ii) other matters for the registration of dossiers under the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive are set at a level appropriate to traditional herbal medicinal products; [222528]

(2) whether he intends to make it his policy in implementing the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive fully to use all the options afforded for national flexibility; and what account he will take of the potential regulatory burden on small and medium sized enterprises; [222529]

(3) when the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency expects to issue a comprehensive assessment of the costs of implementation of the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive; [222530]

(4) when he expects the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to consult on the fees for processing registrations under the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive; whether that consultation will assess the impact of the proposed fee levels upon small and medium sized enterprises; and whether in setting the date for that consultation he expects the Agency to take account of the need of such enterprises to assess the impact of those costs before deciding whether to submit registrations under the provisions of the legislation prior to the deadline of October. [222531]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Before the European Commission brought forward proposals for the Directive on Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products (Directive 2004/24/EC) a study was carried out for the Commission on the then arrangements for regulation of herbal medicines across the European Union (EU). This demonstrated that there were significant differences between member states. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) understands from discussion with industry and regulatory authorities in other EU member states that this assessment has been widely supported, and we do not see any need to replicate the work.

There are many thousands of herbal products on the market of one or more EU member state and variously falling within different categories, such as medicines, foods, food supplements, cosmetics or general consumer products. We do not see a case for commissioning a comparative assessment of the position in each member state and doubt its practicality.

The main requirements on quality and on the information and data to be included in dossiers flow directly from the terms of the Directive. There are existing European guidelines on the quality and manufacturing standards for medicines, including herbal medicines. We understand that the Herbal Medicinal Products Committee, based at the European Medicines Agency, may review whether any additions or modifications to existing guidelines are desirable or whether further guidelines are required on other issues relating to the Directive. However, there is no fundamental reason why quality standards, for example as to the identity and quality of ingredients, freedom from unacceptable levels of contamination, and the claimed shelf life of the product, should be lowered for traditional herbal medicines as compared with the requirements for other medicines with a marketing authorisation. The absence of such standards in the existing United Kingdom regime for unlicensed herbal medicines has been associated with evidence of risk to public health from low quality products. The UK appointed member of the Committee has extensive scientific and practical regulatory knowledge of herbal medicines and has regular discussions with industry and other interested parties. There is a range of opportunities for industry to make its views known to the Committee and the MHRA has encouraged the UK industry to contribute actively in this area.

Subject to the outcome of a further consultation on legislation to transpose the Directive into UK legislation, we intend to take advantage of the flexibility under the Directive to permit a transitional period to run until 2011 before products legally on the UK market at April 2004 are required to comply with the Directive. We also intend to permit product information to state the nature of the herbal tradition, which we believe will be helpful to consumers and to industry.

The MHRA has an extensive programme of work in hand to help industry, and in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, prepare for the Directive. Measures have included: a programme of workshops for industry; around 30 meetings with individual companies to advise them on the possibility of registering their products under the Directive; extensive website guidance on the Directive; and regular discussions with the industry's Herbal Forum to identify and respond to issues of concern. The Agency has received considerable positive feedback on the help provided to industry.

The MHRA gave indicative information on fee levels in the partial regulatory impact assessment published in 2003. In the light of detailed work that has taken place in the interim, updated specific proposals will be published for consultation by the early summer of 2005 along with an updated regulatory impact assessment. October 2005 is the date by which a registration scheme under the Directive must be introduced. It does not represent a deadline by which companies must apply to register products.

Home Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received publicly funded home care in each year since 1991; and how many hours of publicly funded home care have been provided in each year since 1991. [219389]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of clients and households receiving publicly funded home care and the number of contact hours provided during a sample week in September for the years 1992 to 2003 is shown in the table. Data prior to 1992 are not available centrally. Double counting refers to where a household receives home care from both the council and the independent sector and is counted as two households. Additional information removing double counting has been collected since 2000. The figures for 1992, when the data collection was introduced, are less precise than figures for subsequent years.

In order to help older people stay at home, there has been a rise in more intensive home care packages. This has resulted in more contact hours being provided to slightly fewer households.

Number of clients and households receiving publicly funded home care and contact hours in England, 1992 to 2003—survey week in September

Rounded numbers

		Households		
	Clients	*Excluding double counting*	*Including double counting*	*Contact hours*
1992	n/a	n/a	528,500	1,687,000
1993	n/a	n/a	514,600	1,780,800
1994	n/a	n/a	538,900	2,215,100
1995	n/a	n/a	513,600	2,395,700
1996	n/a	n/a	491,100	2,486,700
1997	n/a	n/a	479,100	2,607,500
1998	n/a	n/a	447,200	2,607,400
1999	n/a	n/a	421,000	2,678,200
2000	414,700	398,100	415,800	2,791,300
2001	395,500	381,700	399,900	2,881,600
2002	382,000	366,500	383,100	2,983,200
2003	373,500	362,800	376,000	3,113,000

Note:
n/a—Data not available.
Source:
HH1

Hospital Parking Charges

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will abolish parking charges for hospital visitors; [222776]

(2) what the car parking charge is *(a)* per day, *(b)* per week, *(c)* per month and *(d)* for a short-term stay at each hospital in England. [222780]

Mr. Hutton: It is a matter for individual national health service hospitals to decide whether or not to charge for car parking and the level of charges in the light of local circumstances. Information on this activity is therefore not routinely collected centrally.

Many car parking charges are set to cover the cost of maintenance and security of the car park such as adequate lighting, car park attendants and security officers. If charges were not made to offset these costs the money would have to be found at the risk of cutting patient services elsewhere. There are therefore no plans to instruct hospitals to abolish car parking charges for visitors.

Hospital Readmissions

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rates of readmission to hospitals have been in *(a)* England and *(b)* Lancashire in each year since 1997. [222098]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Information on emergency readmissions for all ages, within 28 days of discharge, has been collected since 2002–03. Prior to that date, the quarterly information related to the over 75 age group only.

Table 1 shows the all ages emergency readmission rates for England for each quarter since quarter one (April to June) 2002.

Financial year	*Quarter*	*Rate of 28 day emergency admission for people of all ages (percentage)*
2004–05	3	5.9
2004–05	2	5.9
2004–05	1	5.9
2003–04	4	5.7
2003–04	3	5.7
2003–04	2	5.5
2003–04	1	5.6
2002–03	4	5.5
2002–03	3	5.5
2002–03	2	5.3
2002–03	1	5.4

Table 2 shows the information for the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA).

Financial year	*Quarter*	*Number of people of all ages discharged from hospital*	*Number of people of all ages readmitted as an emergency within 28 days of discharge*
2004–05	3	121,921	6,651
2004–05	2	—	—
2004–05	1	—	—
2003–04	4	—	—
2003–04	3	—	—
2003–04	2	—	—
2003–04	1	—	—
2002–03	4	—	—
2002–03	3	—	—
2002–03	2	—	—
2002–03	1	—	—

Notes (Table 2):
Data for quarter 2 2002–03 are not available as not all organisations in the strategic health authority submitted a return. Traditionally, no estimates are made for in such instances. However, an overall England figure is estimated in such instances, as the margin of error is smaller.

Influenza Pandemic Plan

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to publicise the steps that the public should take to minimise the risk of transmission and infection in the event of an outbreak of an influenza pandemic. [220979]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information is already available in the UK Pandemic Influenza Contingency Plan, and is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to hasten the development of a vaccine in the event of an outbreak of an influenza pandemic. [220980]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The United Kingdom, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and international colleagues, is supporting research, developing seedstock for pandemic strains and continuing discussions with manufacturers about the development of a vaccine in the event of an influenza pandemic.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the phases in the UK Influenza Pandemic Plan published in March 1997 became inconsistent with the phases which trigger public health action as defined by the World Health Organisation; and when he expects the next change in these phases by the World Health Organisation. [220981]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The phases used in the 1997 UK Influenza Pandemic plan are geared to United Kingdom action.

The World Health Organization is currently considering modifications to the phases used to the international spread of an influenza pandemic. We understand these are to be published shortly. Any necessary amendments will be made to the UK plan.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on what basis an incubation period of one to three days, as described on page 25 of the UK Influenza Pandemic Plan, was assumed for planning purposes in the event of an outbreak of an influenza pandemic; and whether he plans to model the outbreak of an influenza pandemic with an incubation period of different length. [220982]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The incubation period of influenza ranges from one to seven days, but is commonly two to three days and this range was therefore used for planning purposes. There are no plans to extend this aspect of modelling.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to develop a strategy for the optimal use of antivirals in tackling an influenza pandemic; if he will publish this strategy; and what part the National Institute for Clinical Excellence will play in developing it. [220986]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We will consult the National Institute for Clinical Excellence for its views on the use of antivirals when developing the strategy, which will take into account comments received on the plan and be published in due course.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish guidance for NHS organisations for use alongside the UK Influenza Pandemic Plan, as mentioned on page 7 of the plan; and for which organisations he expects to produce a checklist to follow, as mentioned on page 7 of the plan. [220990]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The guidance will be published shortly.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the draft clinical treatment protocols described on page 46 of the UK Influenza Pandemic Plan to be published. [220991]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Draft treatment protocols will be published on the Health Protection Agency's website when they are agreed.

Isotretinoin

Mr. Bruce George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to monitor prescribing of isotretinoin to women of child bearing age with particular reference to EU regulations on pregnancy prevention. [220529]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Isotretinoin (Roaccutane) is a prescription-only medicine indicated for the treatment of severe acne, such as nodular or conglobate acne or acne at risk of permanent scarring. Its use is limited to specialists in dermatology with expertise in the use of systematic retinoids for the treatment of severe acne and a full understanding of the risks of isotretinoin therapy and monitoring requirements.

The safety of isotretinoin has been closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), with expert advice from the Committee on Safety of Medicines, since it was approved in 1983.

Isotretinoin is known to harm the foetus if used during pregnancy and the product information has always carried stringent warnings to guard against its use during pregnancy. The product information for isotretinoin products was recently reviewed at a European level by the Committee for Human Medicinal Products. This has resulted in consistent updated advice to prescribers and patients throughout Europe, including the introduction of a pregnancy prevention programme. The pregnancy prevention programme consists of three parts; an education programme, therapy managements and distribution controls, which work together to raise awareness of the serious consequences for pregnancies exposed to isotretinoin.

All female patients will receive information about isotretinoin, the risks associated with exposure during pregnancy as well as information on contraception. If clinical judgment is that a woman is not at risk of becoming pregnant she may not need to be subject to all of the requirements of the scheme in order to receive treatment with isotretinoin.

The effectiveness of the pregnancy prevention programme is being closely monitored by the MHRA and other European member states. The marketing authorisation holders are required to submit regular reports six monthly for the first two years and annually thereafter on the effectiveness and implementation of

the scheme across Europe. The pregnancy prevention programme has not yet been launched in all member states, but, in the first six months of launch in the first five member states, there were no new cases of pregnancy exposed to isotretinoin in those countries.

Long-term Care

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care in each year from 2005–06 to 2010–11; and if he will make a statement. [223059]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* In England, the Government has accepted each of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Long Term Care except the recommendation to provide free personal care in all settings. Making personal care free for everyone carries a very substantial cost but would not raise the standard or range of services available; the estimated cost for 2003–04 is £1.5 billion.

Free personal care would not help the poorest in society, who receive means tested support nor would it help the sickest, whose bills are paid by national health service continuing care arrangements. Free personal care does not cover all residential care costs and people in residential care would still be expected to contribute to board and lodging costs if personal care was made free.

The estimated costs for future years are shown in the table. They take account of demographic change, in terms of numbers of older people by age, gender, household type and housing tenure. They assume that cost of care will rise by 2 per cent. per year in real terms, in line with average earnings. As with any projections, the figures should only be taken as broad estimates of the cost because of the uncertainty of projecting over such a long time scale.

	£ billion
2005–06	1.75
2006–07	1.9
2007–08	2.05
2008–09	2.25
2009–10	2.45
2010–11	2.65

Mental Health Care

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the funding per capita for mental health services in Leeds, North-West for *(a)* over-65s and *(b)* under 65s is for 2004–05. [223217]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets his Department has for expanding the availability of cognitive behavioural therapies for patients with mental illness. [222040]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no specific targets for cognitive behaviour therapies. However, the national service framework (NSF) for mental health, published in 1999, sets out the national standards for mental health; what they aim to achieve, how they should be developed and delivered and how to measure performance in every part of the country. Following this, the NHS Plan, published in 2000, set plans and targets for investment and reforms in the National Health Service in England. In addition, the Department's guidance, published in July 2004, entitled "Organising and Delivering psychological therapies", addresses issues for local services wanting to deliver a better quality or more readily accessible effective psychological therapies including cognitive behaviour therapies.

Copies of these publications are available from the Library or from the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/fs/en

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many trained medical doctors have been employed in mental health facilities in Lancashire in each year since 1997. [222084]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

Midwifery

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with *(a)* NHS organisations and *(b)* other interested bodies on adopting the Independent Midwives' Association's Community Midwifery Model; if he will adopt the Model across the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [222643]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* I met the Independent Midwives' Association (IMA) last year. Following that meeting, officials have been working with the IMA to investigate the feasibility of using the model in the national health service. That process is continuing.

MRSA

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons his Department decided that data collected for MRSA rates under the mandatory surveillance system should be published every six months; on what date this decision was made; what representations he received from *(a)* NHS organisations and *(b)* other interested bodies in support of publishing data under the mandatory surveillance system at six monthly intervals; if he will publish all data collected under the mandatory surveillance system since April 2001 for intervals of six months; and what plans he has to publish data under the mandatory surveillance system at intervals of three months. [221348]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Department decided to publish data from the mandatory methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) surveillance system on a six-monthly basis so that the public could be informed more

frequently about the record of their local national health service trusts. The decision was taken in February this year, after consulting the Health Protection Agency, to ensure this would not over-burden specialist NHS resources and that data published at this frequency would be meaningful

The tables published on 7 March 2005 include all the data collected through the mandatory MRSA bloodstream infection surveillance system since 2001, set out in six-monthly intervals. The Department has received no other representations on this issue and there are no current plans to publish this data on a quarterly basis.

The tables are available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/10/55/18/04105518.pdf and have been placed in the Library.

Nevirapine

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 693W, on nevirapine, when he expects the British HIV Association will issue new guidance on the use of nevirapine to prevent mother-to-baby transmission of HIV/AIDS. [222588]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We understand that the British HIV Association will publish new guidelines on the management of HIV infection in pregnant women and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission in July 2005.

NHS Estates

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to restructure NHS estates. [222958]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The decision to abolish NHS Estates was announced in a Press Release issued by the Department on 22 July 2004. The final closure date will be 30 September 2005.

A number of the agency's policy functions will be transferred to the Department, including NHS ProCure 21 and decontamination. Responsibility for national health service advisory services will transfer to strategic health authorities. The National Patient Safety Agency will take on the implementation of programmes concerning food and cleaning, and certain design related projects.

Inventures trading services are likely to be disposed of through a managed closure.

NHS Expenditure

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what he estimates the NHS expenditure per weighted head of population will be in north and east Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire strategic health authority in 2004–05. [222271]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not yet available. Data for 2004–05 will be available in the autumn.

NHS Research

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role the University of Warwick has played in determining the formula for calculating future receipts of the Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Hospital Trust. [223092]

Mr. Hutton: The University of Warwick was commissioned to advise on the geographic variation in staff costs. This work has contributed to the new system of financial flows, called Payment by Results, national health service trusts are paid according to a national tariff.

Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he has taken to prevent the development of a two tier employment situation in the areas of cleaning, catering and associated services at the Norfolk and Norwich university hospital. [217716]

Mr. Hutton: The Government has announced a major extension of the Local Government Two Tier Code on Workforce matters to the wider public sector, including the national health service. With some limited exemptions, the Code will apply to all new and re-tendered service contracts which involve transferred staff, and aims to ensure that employees are treated fairly, regardless of whether they are employed directly by the NHS or a service provider.

Nurses' Uniforms

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 175W, on nurses uniforms, (1) on what research his Department bases the assertion that dilution in domestic washing machines will effectively disinfect nurses uniforms; [220200]

(2) when Health Service Guidance 95 (18) was last updated; [220201]

(3) what research has been carried out since 1997 to establish *(a)* mechanical efficiency and *(b)* hygienic effectiveness of the washing of nurses uniforms at home; and if he will make a statement. [220202]

Mr. Hutton: Health Service Guidance 95 (18), published in 1995, has not been revised as it still adequately covers the issue of temperature and disinfection.

The Department is not aware of any research concerning the washing of nurses' uniforms at home. Expert opinion is that a combination of heat, detergent and water will remove soil and reduce the bioburden sufficiently.

Single use aprons and other equipment should be used if contamination is likely.

Opticians

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole-time equivalent *(a)* optometrists, *(b)* dispensing opticians and *(c)* ophthalmic opticians there have been in England in each year since 1997.[221809]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the estimated number of whole-time equivalent optometrists since 1997. Information is not available for numbers of whole- time equivalents (WTEs) for dispensing opticians and ophthalmic medical practitioners.

	Estimated number of practising optometrists (WTE) in England
1997–98	4,700
1998–99	4,700
1999–2000	5,000
2000–01	5,300
2001–02	5,600
2002–03	5,800
2003–04	6,100

Paluvizumab

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what instructions he has issued to primary care trusts and hospital trusts to ensure that they comply with the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations on the use of paluvizumab to immunise premature babies against respiratory syncytial virus. [221962]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The recommendations from Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations are published on the Department's website at: www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk/jcvi/mins 01nov02.htm

It is a matter for clinical governance on how these recommendations are implemented.

Personal Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will revise his estimate of the cost of providing free personal care to take account of *(a)* the current review of eligibility for NHS continuing care and *(b)* changes to the amount of funding for free nursing care since January 2004. [222374]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave on 11 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 137W.

Radiologists

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he will take to increase the number of specialists in interventional radiology. [223216]

Mr. Hutton: A range of initiatives are in place to help expand the national health service work force, including the number of clinical radiologists who undertake interventional radiological procedures. These initiatives include improving pay and conditions, encouraging the NHS to become a better, more flexible and diverse employer, help with accessing child care, increasing training, attracting back returners and running national and international recruitment campaigns. In addition, we are aiming to further boost consultant numbers by centrally funding up to 226 additional specialist registrar places in clinical radiology between 2002–03 and 2005–06. Up to 60 of these additional posts are for the new clinical radiology academies set to modernise training in clinical radiology in 2005–06.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many primary care trusts and hospital trusts have put in place a respiratory syncytial virus preventive treatment programme in compliance with the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisations. [222149]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We do not routinely collect this information.

Sexual Health Services

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what use Kingston hospital trust in Surrey has made of the access money provided for sexual health services; [221438]

(2) what plans he has for increased provision of sexual health services. [221822]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has invested £26 million since 2002–03 to pump-prime improvements to sexual health services. It is for the national health service locally to decide how this money can best be spent in order to meet local needs, and no information is held centrally on how the allocations are used by individual trusts.

A further £15 million capital funding was also made available in 2004–05 to improve genito-urinary medicine (GUM) premises and the Department invited bids for this funding. The Wolverton Centre at Kingston hospital trust was allocated £800,000 of this money.

The Government have announced investment of £300 million over the next three years through the Public Health White Paper to improve sexual health. This includes £130 million to modernise services, £80 million to accelerate the roll-out of the national chlamydia screening programme by March 2007; £40 million to improve the provision of contraception services and; £50 million to undertake a national media campaign. A new goal of 48-hour maximum waiting times for GUM appointments by 2008 has also been introduced and a national review of GUM services and national audit of contraception services is taking place to disseminate best practice and inform future investment. Sexual health, for the first time, features in the local delivery plans of primary care trusts to strengthen the delivery of service improvements at local level.

Social Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people in England who have social care needs but do not receive social care. [222609]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* This information is not held centrally.

Springfield Mental Hospital

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients subject to sectioning at Springfield mental hospital, Tooting have committed acts of violence outside the hospital in each of the last 10 years while subject to those sections. [222002]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the participation of problem drug users in drug treatment programmes by 100 per cent. by 2008 will be met. [219240]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures published on 30 September 2004 by the National Treatment Agency (NTA) for substance misuse show that 54 per cent. more drug users were in contact with drug treatment services in 2003–04 by comparison to the 1998–99 baseline. We are on track to achieve the drug treatment target of doubling the number of drug users in contact with treatment by 2008.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce the inequality in mortality rates from cancer between the fifth of areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators and the population as a whole by at least 6 per cent. by 2010 will be met. [219246]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Early indications from monitoring of the gap between the fifth of areas with the worst health and deprivation indicators and the population as a whole has suggested that we are on course to deliver a reduction of 6 per cent. by 2010.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research he has examined concerning the effect of 3G phone masts on people's health. [222704]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The National Radiological Protection Board provides statutory advice on risks from exposure to radiation and electromagnetic fields. Their recent publication "Mobile Phones and Health 2004" (Documents of the NRPB, Vol 15, No 5, 2004) reviewed the possible health implications of mobile phones and base stations including the newer technologies such as third generation (3G). The NRPB reiterated the Stewart Report (2000) concludes that:

> "the balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near to base stations on the basis that exposures are expected to be small fractions of guidelines".

Measurements around 3G base stations undertaken by both NRPB (www.nrpb.org) and by Ofcom (www.ofcom.org.uk) have consistently shown that exposures to the radio signals from base stations are lower than the guidelines published by the International Commission on Non-ionising Radiation Protection.

Following an unexplained result on 3G base station exposures, undertaken in the Netherlands in 2003, the Mobile Telecommunications and Health Research Programme in this country is now supporting a research study at the University of Essex into the symptoms experienced by 3G signals on volunteers.

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has received reports concerning the health effects of mobile phone masts which he has not made public. [222705]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Reports received by the Department on health effects associated with mobile phone technology have usually appeared in scientific journals or on the internet. The Department sometimes receives unpublished accounts, reports or letters, which it passes on to the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) for a considered view. The NRPB, or its independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation (AGNIR), have published reviews of the scientific knowledge based on the totality of work to date.

AGNIR provided a comprehensive review of the science "Health Effects from Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields", (Documents of the NRPB, Vol 14, No2, 2003). More recently, the NRPB reviewed the progress on implementing the recommendations in the 2000 Stewart Report in "Mobile Phones and Health 2004" (Documents of the NRPB, Vol 15, No 5, 2004). These reports are available on the NRPB website (www.nrpb.org)

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects on people with heart problems of the radiation emitted from mobile phone masts, with particular reference to those with pacemakers. [222706]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and its predecessor the Medical Devices Agency (MDA) has monitored research activities undertaken by pacemaker manufacturers to assess potential pacemaker interference from mobile phones, by participating in European and International pacemaker safety standards committees.

For implanted pacemakers the power level and severity of interference signals from phone masts is much less than for mobile phones in proximity to the patients. MHRA issued guidance to clinicians about possible interference effects to pacemakers from mobile telephones in February 1996, via Pacemaker Technical Note PTN 61, which advised a minimum phone to pacemaker separation distance of 15 centimetres.

Toxic Waste

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the potential health effects on infant children exposed to toxic waste from former steelworks; and if he will make a statement. [221877]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not undertaken any such assessment.

Visual Impairment

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the proportion of the population which is visually impaired in *(a)* one eye and *(b)* both eyes; and what assessment he has made of likely future changes in these proportions. [221810]

Dr. Ladyman: At March 2003, 157,000 people were on the register of blind people in England and 155,000 people were on the register of partially sighted people.

Registration of blindness is voluntary so the register does not necessarily include all people who are blind.

No further information is held by the Department.

West Suffolk Hospital

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the staff complement at the West Suffolk hospital was in each of the last nine years; and what percentage of that total was made up of *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* ancillary staff and *(d)* administrative, managerial and clerical staff in each year. [222864]

Dr. Ladyman: The staff complement at the West Suffolk hospital national health service trust for each year for the last nine years, and the percentage of the total as made up of doctors, nurses, ancillary staff and administrative, managerial and clerical staff for each year is shown in the following table.

NHS staff in the West Suffolk hospital NHS trust by main staff group and percentage total of each, as at 30 September each specified year

headcount and percentage headcount

	1995	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
All staff	2,029	2,215	2,084	1,996	2,237
Professionally qualified clinical staff—total	947	1,209	1,079	1,029	1,140
Professionally qualified clinical staff—total percentage	46.7	54.6	51.8	51.6	51.0
Medical and dental staff	155	173	173	183	177
Medical and dental staff—percentage	7.6	7.8	5.3	9.2	7.9
Qualified nurses	609	819	688	612	719
Qualified nurses—percentage	30.0	37.0	33.0	30.7	32.1
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical (ST and T)	183	217	218	234	244
Qualified ST and T—percentage	9.0	9.8	10.5	11.7	10.9
Support to clinical staff—total	570	702	685	666	790
Support to clinical staff—total percentage	28.1	31.7	32.9	33.4	35.3
Support to doctors and nurses	481	637	630	612	735
Support to doctors and nurses—percentage	23.7	28.8	30.2	30.7	32.9
Support to ST and T	89	65	55	54	55
Support to ST and T—percentage	4.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.5
NHS infrastructure support—total	311	296	320	300	307
NHS infrastructure support—total percentage	15.3	13.4	15.4	15.0	13.7
Central functions	110	77	78	87	95
Central functions—percentage	5.4	3.5	3.7	4.4	4.2
Hotel property and estate staff	184	180	196	177	178
Hotel property and estate staff—percentage	9.1	8.1	9.4	8.9	8.0
Managers and senior managers	17	39	46	36	34
Managers and senior managers—percentage	0.5	1.8	2.2	1.8	7.5
Other and unknown—total	201	8	0	1	0
Other and unknown—total percentage	9.9	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.0

headcount and percentage headcount

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All staff	2,310	2,479	2,596	3,073
Professionally qualified clinical staff—total	1,199	1,311	1,390	1,583
Professionally qualified clinical staff—total percentage	51.9	52.9	53.5	51.5
Medical and dental staff	206	208	215	240
Medical and dental staff—percentage	8.9	5.4	5.3	7.5
Qualified nurses	728	832	860	1,001
Qualified nurses—percentage	31.5	33.6	33.7	32.6
Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical (ST and T)	265	271	315	342
Qualified ST and T—percentage	11.5	10.9	72.7	77.7
Support to clinical staff—total	765	802	834	965
Support to clinical staff—total percentage	33.1	32.4	32.7	37.4
Support to doctors and nurses	714	737	770	888
Support to doctors and nurses—percentage	30.9	29.7	29.7	25. 9
Support to ST and T	51	65	64	77
Support to ST and T—percentage	2.2	2.6	2.5	2.5
NHS infrastructure support—total	346	366	372	525
NHS infrastructure support—total percentage	15.0	74.5	74.3	77.7
Central functions	99	114	112	112
Central functions—percentage	4.3	4.6	4.3	3.6
Hotel property and estate staff	213	217	220	368
Hotel property and estate staff—percentage	9.2	5.5	5.5	12.0

headcount and percentage headcount

	2000	2001	2002	2003
Managers and senior managers	34	35	40	43
Managers and senior managers—percentage	7.5	1.4	7.5	7.5
Other and unknown—total	0	0	0	0
Other and unknown—total percentage	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source:
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* acute and *(b)* non-acute beds there were in West Suffolk Hospital in each of the last nine years. [222865]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of acute and non-acute beds at West Suffolk Hospital in each of the last nine years are shown in the table.

Average daily number of available beds in West Suffolk Hospital (RGR)

	Name	All beds (A)	Acute beds (B)	Non-acute beds (A minus B)
2003–04	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	676	432	244
2002–03	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	638	422	216
2001–02	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	679	441	238
2000–01	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	687	445	242
1999–2000	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	664	423	241
1998–99	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	673	398	275
1997–98	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	713	381	332
1996–97	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	685	367	318
1995–96	West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a

Note:
n/a—not available.
Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the outturn against planned expenditure of the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust was in each of the last nine years. [222866]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has taken outturn against planned expenditure to mean the retained surplus/(deficit) position for the financial year, as reported in the final accounts of national health service trusts.

The table shows the retained surplus/(deficit) figures reported by the West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust from 1996–97 to 2003–04, which is the latest year for which figures are available. Data relating to the accounts of individual NHS bodies are not held prior to 1996–97.

	Retained surplus/(deficit) (£000)
1996–97	432
1997–98	(32)
1998–99	28
1999–2000	(286)
2000–01	290
2001–02	(936)
2002–03	947
2003–04	(2,501)

Wirral, South

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what per capita spending on health was in Wirral, South in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* the last year for which figures are available. [222681]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Expenditure based on individual constituencies is not available. The expenditure per capita on health in Wirral Health Authority area and Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority area is shown in the table.

£ per head

	Wirral Health Authority area	Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority area
1997–98	557.21	n/a
2001–02	872.21	n/a
2003–04	n/a	1,063.39

Notes:
1. Expenditure is taken from audited health authority summarisation forms and primary care trust summarisation schedules which are prepared on a resource basis and therefore differ from cash allocations in the year. Figures are given in cash terms.
2. Allocations per weighted head of population provide a much more reliable measure to identify differences between funding of health authorities and primary care trusts.
3. Figures for 1997–98 and 2001–02 have been prepared using gross expenditure figures. Figures for 2003–04 have been adjusted to eliminate expenditure which would be double counted where an authority acts as a lead in commissioning healthcare or other services.

Sources:
1. Wirral Health Authority audited accounts 1997–98.
2. Wirral Health Authority audited summarisation forms 2001–02.
3. Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority audited summarisation forms 2003–04.
4. Primary care trust audited summarisation schedules 2001–02 and 2003–04 for bodies within the above health authority areas.
5. Weighted population figures.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average wait for operations on the NHS in Wirral, South was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* the last year for which figures are available. [222682]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. However, information relating to the Wirral Hospitals National Health Service Trust is shown in the table.

Method of admission: elective (waiting list and booked cases). Mean and median time waited (days) for all operations. Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust 1997–98, 2001–02, 2003–04

	Average waiting time	*Days Median waiting time*
1997–98	69	41
2001–02	81	45
2003–04	90	48

Notes:
1. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details eg time waited but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.
2. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
3. Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides count and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also HES, calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).

Source:
HES, Department of Health.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has *(a)* recruited workers previously employed in the poppy industry and *(b)* used funds to purchase poppy crops in Afghanistan since 1997. [222542]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Ministry of Defence employs a number of Afghan civilians. While we do not retain records on these individuals' involvement, if any, in poppy cultivation, their employment is a positive contribution to the legitimate labour market in Afghanistan.

United Kingdom Armed Forces have not used funds to purchase poppy crops, including in the period since 1997.

Armed Forces Discipline

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many armed forces personnel have spent time in military prison since 1997 on charges of *(a)* assault, *(b)* sexual offences and *(c)* absence without leave. [222900]

Mr. Caplin: The number of armed forces personnel who have served a period of detention since April 1997 to date at the Military Corrective Training Centre, following a conviction for assault, sexual offences or absence without leave (AWOL) is as follows:

	Number
Assault	1,573
Sexual Offences	167
AWOL	5,636

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the performance against target in the most recent period for which figures are available was for the issuing of each medal issued by the Army Medal Office; and what his most recent assessment of the total number of applications for each medal awaiting processing is. [221284]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The Army Medal Office started recording medal statistics on a weekly basis beginning week-ending 23 April 2004, and the records from this date to the week ending 25 February 2005 are as follows:

	Cases outstanding	
Medal group	*23 April 2004*	*28 February 2005*
GSM Canal Zone	22,450	13,496
Historic	3,672	5,726
Conduct	568	660
Reserve and Cadets	595	480
Current	1,573	1,050
Replacements and Next of Kin	1,343	1,937
Iraq	Not Applicable	18,543
Total Outstanding	30,201	41,892

Since April 2004, an average of 1,518 applications were cleared each week against a target of 1,500.

During this period 73,788 new applications have been received, and of these 48,898 were for the Iraq medal and 9,077 for the Canal Zone.

Army Recruitment

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 732W, on army recruitment, whether the future establishment for *(a)* signals, *(b)* intelligence, *(c)* logistics and *(d)* engineers has been finalised. [221487]

Mr. Ingram: The adjustments to the size and shape of the Army envisaged as part of the process of moving to the Future Army Structure will take some years to implement. When they are complete, we anticipate that the revised establishments of the Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, Royal Logistics Corps and Intelligence Corps will be as shown in the following table. It should be noted that these figures will be subject to further refinement as the Army continues to work through the changes associated with the Future Army Structure programme.

Arm/Service	*Future establishment*
Royal Engineers	10,020
Royal Signals	8,550
Royal Logistic Corps	16,390
Intelligence Corps	1,840

Note:
All figures are as at 1 January 2005 and are rounded to the nearest 5.

Chinook Crash

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1141W, on Chinook Crash, how many days passed between the day on which Flight Lieutenant Jonathan Tapper had a change made to his self-authorisation status to fly Chinook helicopters and *(a)* the day on which he requested that he be allowed to retain an HC1 Chinook helicopter at Aldergrove and *(b)* the crash of the HC2 Chinook he captained. [222591]

Mr. Ingram: A Sub RAF Form 1575 approving self-authorisation was signed on 23 May 1994. Flight Lieutenant Tapper requested the retention of a Chinook HC1 on 27 May 1994 and Chinook ZD576 crashed on 2 June 1994.

Approval for self-authorisation is reviewed whenever a pilot transfers from one Station or Squadron to another and/or when the Station or Squadron Commander changes. Additionally, Station and Squadron Commanders may review self-authorisation status as the need arises.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1141W, on Chinook Crash, whether members of the Chinook squadron other than Flight Lieutenants Jonathan Tapper and Rick Cook, based at RAF Odiham or RAF Aldergrove had their status altered between 23 May and 2 June 1994 to allow them to self-authorise on VIP flights. [222592]

Mr. Ingram: We are unable to ascertain from extant documentation whether or not any other members of the Chinook Squadrons had their self-authorising status changed in respect of VIP flights between the dates in question.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1141W, on Chinook Crash, who authorised the change in self-authorisation status made on 23 May 1994 to Flight Lieutenants Jonathan Tapper and Rick Cook; and what types of flights they were authorised to fly prior to 23 May 1994. [222593]

Mr. Ingram: Self-authorisation status was approved on 23 May 1994 by the Station Commander, RAF Aldergrove. On 5 April 1994, in an approval signed by the Station Commander, RAF Odiham, both Flight Lieutenants (Flt Lts) Tapper and Cook are shown as able to authorise Squadron routine training and standard operating check flights, Squadron task flying, low flying, qualified helicopter instructional flying, fighter affiliation and associated specialist training on Chinook. Additionally, Flt Lt Cook could authorise Squadron routine training and standard operating check flights, Squadron task flying, low flying, air test, qualified helicopter instructional flying and associated specialist training on Gazelle helicopters.

Christmas Cards

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many official Christmas cards were sent out by his Department in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; [205131]

(2) what the cost was of purchasing official departmental Christmas cards in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; [205130]

(3) what the cost of postage was for official departmental Christmas cards in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; [205129]

(4) what percentage of official departmental Christmas cards included a contribution to charity in their cost; and which charities benefited from such a contribution; [205128]

(5) how many departmental staff have responsibility for preparing Christmas cards; [205127]

(6) how many hours of staff time were taken up in preparation of Christmas cards in 2004. [205126]

Mr. Caplin: Expenditure on the purchase and postage of official Christmas cards is governed by departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government Accounting. This allows for Ministers, members of the Defence Council, Head of Defence Export Services and the Director General of Media and Communications to send Christmas cards at public expense. Additionally, resulting from representational responsibilities at management levels below the Defence Council, individual Top Level Budget Holders may personally send a modest amount of Christmas cards at public expense. The regulations also allow for some TLB business areas to send official Christmas cards (on an exceptional basis) where this would facilitate the achievement of specific business objectives.

The information we have for 2003 and 2004 is as follows:

	2003	*2004*
Number of cards[1]	1,972	2,183
Cost (£)	1,743	1,664
Charity (percentage)	n/k	[2]9
Postage	[3]—	[3]—
Staff	[4]—	[4]—
Staff time	[4]—	[4]—

[1] Purchased with public funds.
[2] Nine per cent. were notified as bought from charitable organisations. The charities benefiting from this were the Army Benevolent Fund and the RAF Benevolent Fund.
[3] Accurate information on the cost of postage of official department Christmas cards is not held centrally.
[4] Information on the number of staff involved in the preparation of Christmas cards and the staff time taken is not held centrally.

Civilian/Service Jobs (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of his Department's *(a)* civilian and *(b)* service jobs there were at each (i) Royal Navy, (ii) Army, (iii) Royal Air Force and (iv) Reserves defence installation in Scotland for the year ended (A) 1 April 2004, (B) 1 April 2001 and (C) 1 April 1997; what the most recent available figures are; and if he will make a statement. [222869]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* Figures for the number of civilian jobs by defence installation are not held centrally. Defence Analytical Services Agency does however publish figures for the number of

personnel employed in Scotland. These can be found in the annual UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is placed in the Library of the House and can also be accessed via the DASA website: www.dasa.mod.uk.

Figures for the number of Service jobs by defence installation are not held centrally. Tri Service Publication (TSP) 10, shows the distribution of UK Regular forces across UK by Government Office Region and local authority. Copies of TSP 10 can be found in the Library of the House.

Defence Information Infrastructure

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the financing for the Defence Information Infrastructure will divert funds from other military programmes. [214806]

Mr. Caplin: There are no plans to divert additional funds to finance the Defence Information Infrastructure. Funding for Defence Information Infrastructure is provided as part of the current Defence-wide programme which seeks to ensure the optimum balance of capabilities to deliver Government objectives within available resources.

Departmental Efficiency Programme

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the planned headcount changes attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Pay and Personnel Agency, *(b)* Queen Victoria School, *(c)* RAF Training Group Defence Agency, *(d)* Service Children's Education, *(e)* Veterans Agency and *(f)* Warship Support Agency for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209333]

(2) what the planned headcount changes attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Commander-in-Chief Fleet, *(b)* General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland), *(c)* Commander-in-Chief Land Command, *(d)* Commander-in-Chief Strike Command, *(e)* Chief of Joint Operations and *(f)* Chief of Defence Logistics for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209334]

(3) what the planned headcount changes attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Second Sea Lord/Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command, *(b)* Adjutant General, *(c)* Commander-in-Chief Personnel and Training Command, *(d)* Central, *(e)* Defence Procurement Agency and *(f)* Corporate Science and Technology for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209335]

(4) what the planned headcount changes, attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency, *(b)* Army Training and Recruiting Agency, *(c)* British Forces Post Office, *(d)* Defence Analytical Services Agency and *(e)* Defence Bills Agency for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209382]

(5) what the planned headcount changes, attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Defence Communication Services Agency, *(b)* Defence Dental Agency, *(c)* Defence Estates, *(d)* Defence Geographic and Imagery Intelligence Agency and *(e)* Defence Intelligence and Security Centre for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209383]

(6) what the planned headcount changes, attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Defence Medical Training Agency, *(b)* Defence Procurement Agency, *(c)* Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, *(d)* Defence Transport and Movements Agency and *(e)* Defence Vetting Agency for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08; [209384]

(7) what the planned headcount changes, attributable to his Department's efficiency programme are for the *(a)* Disposal Services Agency, *(b)* Duke of York's Royal Military School, *(c)* Medical Supply Agency, *(d)* Ministry of Defence and Guarding Agency and *(e)* Naval Recruiting and Training Agency for financial years (i) 2005–06, (ii) 2006–07 and (iii) 2007–08. [209385]

Mr. Caplin: The Spending Review announcement in July 2004 committed the MOD to reductions of some 10,000 UK-based civilian posts plus 1,000 locally engaged civilian posts overseas by April 2008.

Agreements have been reached between Top Level Budget Holders (TLBs) and the Defence Resource and Planning Division (Def RP) on the number of civilian posts to be reduced during the next three financial years (i.e. in the period to 31 March 2008). A table showing a breakdown by TLB follows. This table represents our current assessment of how the reductions will be achieved (in some cases final decisions have yet to be taken) and it is not yet clear how the reductions will affect individual establishments.

Civilian headcount reductions by TLB

	Financial year		
	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
DLO			
Reductions programmed in STP	-690	-1,340	-1,780
DCP headcount reduction	-1,850	-2,050	-3,790
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	-10	-30
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	-160
Force structure reductions	0	0	0
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	-1,850	-2,060	-3,980
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-2,540	-3,400	-5,760
DPA			
Reductions programmed in STP	+10	-30	-260
DCP headcount reduction	0	-60	-100
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	0
Force structure reductions	0	-40	-90
Other headcount reductions (image IPT)	-10	+10	0
Total	-10	-90	-190
Total plus STP programmed reductions	0	-120	-450
2SL/FLEET			
Reductions programmed in STP	-10	-30	-40
DCP headcount reduction	-20	-40	-40
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	-80	-180
Force structure reductions	0	-30	-60
Total	-20	-150	-280
Total plus STP programmed reductions[1]	-30	-180	-320
RFA manning uplift (STPO5)	+80	+160	+140
Total	+50	-20	-180

Civilian headcount reductions by TLB

	Financial year 2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
LAND			
Reductions programmed in STP	-200	-150	-150
DCP headcount reduction	0	-70	-240
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	-180	-350
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	-30	-100	-370
Force structure reductions	0	0	-20
Other headcount reductions (Allenby Connaught)	-280	-280	-280
Total	-310	-630	-1,260
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-510	-780	-1,410
AG			
Reductions programmed in STP	+10	+10	0
DCP headcount reduction	0	-40	-190
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	-80
Force structure reductions	0	0	-60
Other headcount reductions	0	0	0
Total	0	-40	-330
Total plus STP programmed reductions	+10	-30	-330
GOCNI			
Reductions programmed in STP	-10	-10	-10
DCP headcount reduction	0	-30	-100
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	0
Force structure reductions	0	-30	-50
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	0	-60	-150
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-10	-70	-160
STC			
Reductions programmed in STP	+30	+10	-120
DCP headcount reduction	-20	-110	-110
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	-90
Force structure reductions	0	-270	-530
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	-20	-380	-730
Total plus STP programmed reductions	+10	-370	-850
PTC			
Reductions programmed in STP	-10	-50	-120
DCP headcount reduction	-10	-70	-10
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	-190
Force structure reductions	0	-110	-220
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	-10	-180	-420
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-40	-200	-330
CJO			
Reductions programmed in STP	-170	-380	-450
DCP headcount reduction	0	0	0
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	-70	-130
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	0
Force structure reductions	0	0	0
Other headcount reductions	+130	+250	+250
Total	+130	+180	+120
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-40	-200	-330

Civilian headcount reductions by TLB

	Financial year 2005–06	2006–07	2007–08
CTLB			
Reductions programmed in STP	+20	-80	-170
DCP headcount reduction	+40	+20	+60
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	-20	-50
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	-200	-400
Force structure reductions	0	-20	-40
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	+40	-220	-430
Total plus STP programmed reductions	+60	-300	-600
DEF Estates			
Reductions programmed in STP	-230	-620	-710
DCP headcount reduction	0	0	0
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	0
Force structure reductions	0	0	0
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	0	0	0
Total plus STP programmed reductions	-230	-620	-710
SC			
Reductions programmed in STP	0	0	0
DCP headcount reduction	0	0	0
LEC measure headcount reduction	0	0	0
Other rationalisation and efficiencies	0	0	0
Force structure reductions	0	0	0
Other headcount reductions	—	—	—
Total	0	0	0
Total plus STP programmed reductions	0	0	0

[1] Excludes Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) personnel but includes HR and Finance Function Reductions.

Notes:

1. Totals shown are cumulative. Numbers are set out to the nearest 10, and represent our current assessment of how these reductions will be achieved (in some cases final decisions have yet to be taken). Numbers are based on full-time equivalent mid-year averages and include locally employed civilians (LEC). These figures do not include civilians employed in trading funds.

2. "Reductions Programmed in STP"—These are posts which have been assumed will not continue from previous years' planning rounds. These posts fall mainly within the DLO, although some smaller reductions also fall within other TLBs and are due mainly to reorganisation measures which were ongoing prior to the efficiency programme.

3. "DCP Headcount Reduction"—These are posts which are being reduced as a result of the Department's major change initiative—the defence change programme (DCP).

4. "LEC Measure Headcount Reduction"—In addition to the reduction in numbers of UK-based civil servant, the number of locally employed civilians (LECs) employed supporting permanently based forces is planned to reduce by up to 1,000 in the same time frame. Numbers of LECs employed in operational theatres have not been included in the planning.

5. "Other Rationalisation and Efficiencies"—These are posts which are being reduced as a result of non-defence change programme efficiency initiatives. The majority of these posts will come from reduced requirements for staff in, for example, the Head Office in Whitehall and in other Headquarters.

6. "Force Structure Reductions"—Posts which will be reduced as a result of changes to the force structure.

7. "Other Headcount Reductions"—Posts which are being reduced for reasons not included in the categories above.

Departmental Records Office (Hayes)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 7 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1542W, on Departmental Records Office (Hayes), what action he plans to take in response to agency staff employed by TNT being found in possession of drugs. [222426]

Mr. Caplin: TNT have a strict policy of zero tolerance of drug and alcohol abuse. The same policy applies at all TNT sites, and will continue in force at the Hayes site until its eventual closure. In accordance with this policy, the agency staff at Hayes found to be in possession of drugs have been dismissed. No further action is required.

Depleted Uranium

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the effect of depleted uranium shells on *(a)* current and *(b)* former (i) personnel of his Department and (ii) soldiers; and if he will make a statement. [222022]

Mr. Caplin: The Depleted Uranium Oversight Board (DUOB), an independent committee established by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) is measuring uranium in the urine of personnel who served in the first Gulf Conflict 1990–91 and in the Balkans Operations. This work includes personnel who have been discharged from service as well as those who are still serving. Similarly, under MOD's biological monitoring policy, the Defence Radiological Protection Service (DRPS) is assessing uranium in urine of both military personnel and MOD civilians on operations—including Operation Telic in Iraq—where there is potential for exposure. Depleted Uranium in urine is also being measured in a sample of personnel from across the battlefield as part of a wider study into the physical and psychological health of Operation Telic participants by King's College, London.

Edinburgh Military Tattoo

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has held with Edinburgh Military Tattoo Ltd. on the impact of the planned restructuring of the Scottish regiments on the Edinburgh Military Tattoo. [221826]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The planned restructuring of the Scottish regiments will not have any impact on the Edinburgh Military Tattoo and there have been no discussions on this subject between the Ministry of Defence and Edinburgh Military Tattoo Ltd.

EU Intelligence Sharing and Co-ordination Service

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 13W, on EU Intelligence Sharing and Co-ordination Service, if he will list those documents, with security grading and caveat, that have been supplied to the EU Intelligence Sharing and Co-ordination Service by his Department; and if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on the nature of departmental material that may be supplied. [216509]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 355W, by my hon. Friend the Minister for Europe.

Flight Plans

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in what circumstances ranks higher than Flight Lieutenant in the RAF would have been required to approve flight plans prior to June 1994. [222599]

Mr. Ingram: Navigation, training or transit sorties (including low level) have not, in the last 30 years, required specific approval by an officer above Flight Lieutenant rank. However, plans for sorties involving multi-aircraft formations conducting air combat manoeuvring or low level evasion training typically require authorisation by an officer of Squadron Leader rank or higher; this requirement has been in place for many years and remains unchanged to date.

Historical Records

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what discussions he has had with *(a)* the national record office at Kew and *(b)* Army archives about the First World War records at Hayes; [222708]

(2) what steps he is taking to preserve the First World War records at Hayes. [222707]

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to preserve the medal index cards from the First World War for posterity. [222699]

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will take steps to safeguard the card records of medals issued to First World War personnel pending discussions with the Imperial War Museum, the Veterans' Association and others on a possible future home for their storage; and if he will make a statement. [223245]

Mr. Caplin: The only collection of records relating solely to the First World War still held by the Ministry of Defence is the Army medal cards. More than 80 years after the end of the conflict, there is no administrative reason for the Ministry of Defence to hold the cards.

The National Archives has microfilmed the front of these cards, which in most cases contains all the information they hold, and they are now available to researchers (in Class WO 372) in microfilmed format at Kew and through the National Archives website online.

Ministry of Defence staff routinely discuss questions relating to records which may be worthy of permanent preservation with the National Archives staff, and both recognise the historical interest in the medal cards. With the agreement of the National Archives, the Ministry of Defence has been approaching institutions in the hope of finding one to which the cards could be presented. So far this exercise has been without success, but discussions continue.

Infantry Future Army Structure

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 50W, on Infantry Future Army Structure, whether recruitment will operate at *(a)* regimental and *(b)* battalion level for the (i) Mercian Regiment, (ii) Yorkshire Regiment and (iii) Royal Regiment of Scotland. [211795]

Mr. Caplin: Under the Infantry Future Army Structure arrangements, it is intended that recruitment to the Mercian Regiment, Yorkshire Regiment and the Royal Regiment of Scotland will be by Regiment, rather than individual battalion.

Low-flying Training

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in which areas of the UK military low-flying training is carried out. [222613]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The whole of the United Kingdom, in principle, is open to low-flying training by military aircraft, although there are areas that are specifically excluded. These include the restricted airspace around civil aerodromes, glider sites, certain industrial sites, the major conurbations and other large centres of population (those towns with over 10,000 inhabitants). Coventry falls within the avoidance area afforded to the West Midlands Conurbation, which also includes Birmingham International Airport. For further details my hon. Friend may wish to consult the report "The Pattern of Military Low Flying across the United Kingdom" which is placed in the Library of the House on an annual basis.

Medium Sector

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which battalions in each division will be earmarked to the medium sector in the Future Infantry Structure; and when he expects them to commence progress towards the medium sector. [221489]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Infantry Structure was announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 16 December 2004. Work is continuing to define the roles and locations of individual battalions.

The Future Army Structure highlighted the requirement for a Medium Weight Capability. Achievement of this capability is being scoped and will identify the force elements that will deliver it, both in the interim and in the long term. Until this work is complete the identity of the battalions to whom this role will be assigned will not be confirmed.

Military Aircraft Crashes

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 804W, on military aircraft crashes, how many of the military accidents listed involved fatalities in each year. [222594]

Mr. Ingram: The following table repeats the information given in my answer of 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 804W, with an additional column showing the number of those accidents that resulted in fatalities.

	Number of air accidents	*Number of air accidents involving fatalities*
1993	12	5
1994	10	5
1995	10	5
1996	12	3
1997	9	2
1998	7	4
1999	12	5
2000	8	0
2001	9	3
2002	8	2
2003	2	4
2004	6	3
Total	105	41

Military Bodies (Funding)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the grant-in-aid for the *(a)* Commonwealth War Graves Commission, *(b)* Ghurkha Welfare Scheme, *(c)* Welfare Council, *(d)* Victoria/George Cross, *(e)* Royal British Legion—Polish Ex-Servicemen and *(f)* Royal British Legion—War Graves was for financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04. [221976]

Mr. Caplin: The Grant-in-Aid payments for financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04 were:

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Commonwealth War Graves Commission[1]	22,271	21,990	23,038	23,503	23,498	26,251	28,942
Gurkha Welfare Scheme[2]	300	400	380	460	560	710	800
Welfare Council	67	66	79	43	56	78	58
Victoria and George Cross Association[3]	0	30	0	22	0	21	0
Royal British Legion—Polish Ex-Servicemen [4]	192	259	185	266	181	205	205
Royal British Legion—War Graves[5]	147	147	125	100	127	127	127

[1] The United Kingdom Government provides the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) with a grant-in-aid for the maintenance of World War graves. Payment is made by each Commonwealth country in proportion to the number of war graves. The UK's share is 78.431 per cent.

[2] The Gurkha Welfare Scheme is the field operating arm of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

[3] The Victoria Cross (VC) and George Cross (GC) Association receives a biennial grant-in-aid to assist recipients (plus two accompanying relatives) to travel to their biennial reunion in London.

[4,5] The Polish Ex-Service Personnel Welfare Fund provides a regular allowance to members of the Polish forces who served under British command during the Second World War and subsequently settled in the UK. The War Widow/ers Pilgrimage Scheme enables widows and widowers who lost their husband or wife overseas between 1914 and 1967 to make one visit to their grave. Both schemes are administered on behalf of the Ministry of Defence by the Royal British Legion.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the grant-in-aid for the *(a)* Scott Polar Research Institute, *(b)* Air Training Corps, *(c)* Atlantic Council, *(d)* Skill Force and *(e)* Millennium String-Pearls was for financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04. [221977]

Mr. Caplin: The grants-in-aid were as follows:

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Scott Polar Research Institute	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Air Training Corps	125	121	19	19	39	27	14
Atlantic Council	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Skill Force	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Millennium String-Pearls	0	0	30	10	0	0	0

Military Deployment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many troops are serving in *(a)* Sierra Leone, *(b)* Afghanistan, *(c)* East Timor and *(d)* the Falkland Islands, broken down by (i) rank and (ii) regiment. [221641]

Mr. Ingram: The information requested is set out in the following table:

Theatre	Officers	Senior NCOs	Other Ranks
Sierra Leone 9 March 2005	58	41	5
Afghanistan 6 March 2005	161	158	590
East Timor 11 March 2005	0	0	0
Falkland Islands 31 January 2005	165	305	991

The Afghan Roulemont Infantry Battalion (ARIB) is currently 1st Battalion the Worcestershire and Sherwood Forester Regiment and in the Falkland Islands, the Resident Infantry Coy (RIC) is provided from the Queens Lancashire Regiment. Troops serving in the other theatres are not from formed units.

Ministerial Travel

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Ministers who have served in the current Government since 1997 have used aircraft in the Queen's Flight for visits which have been wholly or partially of a personal nature; on what dates such visits took place; and which Ministers have made payments to the taxpayer to cover the cost of that usage. [208261]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence is not routinely made aware whether ministerial usage of No.32 (The Royal) Squadron is wholly or partially of a personal nature.

"Travel by Ministers" makes clear that special flights may be authorised when a scheduled service is not available, or when it is essential to travel by air, but the requirements of official or parliamentary business or security considerations or urgency preclude the journey being made by a scheduled service. In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list published in 1999 covers the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 1999. Where RAF/Private Charter aircraft are used this is shown in the list. Where there is an element of personal business, this is also shown. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of these are available in the Library of the House. Information for 2004–05 will be published in due course.

All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will answer the question from the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South, ref 199990. [216499]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to the hon. Member on 28 February 2005.

Project Allenby/Connaught

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to sign a contract with the Aspire consortium in connection with Project Allenby/Connaught; and if he will make a statement. [221025]

Mr. Caplin: Subject to the successful outcome of ongoing commercial negotiations it is hoped to sign the contract in the summer of 2005.

RAF Recruitment

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on recruitment to the RAF. [221587]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1827–28W to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Regiments

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence who will decide on regimental *(a)* accoutrements and *(b)* dress for the proposed King's Lancashire and Border Regiment; and when he expects decisions to be made. [219066]

Mr. Ingram: A committee of representatives from the King's Own Royal Border Regiment, the King's Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment will be formed to consider how each of the antecedent

regiments will be represented in the regimental dress and accoutrements of the proposed King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment.

It is anticipated that the committee's decisions will be taken during the second half of 2005. Executive approval from the Army Dress Committee will be required before any announcement is finalised.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* Executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219888]

Mr. Caplin: The only non-departmental public body within the Ministry of Defence's remit that follows the regional structure of the Government offices for the regions is the advisory body comprising the War Pensions Committees. The War Pensions Committees were set up in 1921 and reconstituted on a regional basis on 1 January 2001.

The Ministry of Defence has no Executive agencies based on the regional structure of the Government offices for the regions.

Scottish Regiments

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 21 February, *Official Report*, columns 254–55W, on Scottish regiments, who is likely to carry out the study on the future of the Scottish Regimental museums; and when he expects the studies to be completed. [218594]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 28 February 2005]:* A study into the future of the Army's Corps and Regimental Headquarters, which might also cover issues such as the locations of the Regimental Headquarters in the light of the restructuring of the Army and the Infantry, is under consideration but no decision has yet been taken.

It will ultimately fall to the MoD and the trustees of the museums to consider their future. The Scottish Division is also looking at a range of regimental issues arising from the formation of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, including the implications for museums.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221668]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence and armed forces are committed to promoting equality and diversity and recognise and respect different religious beliefs. Sikh personnel in the armed forces and MOD Civil Service are therefore allowed to wear the Kirpan.

Trident

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 189W, on Trident, if he will estimate the number of potential casualties which would arise from a malfunction of a Trident nuclear warhead at the base on the Clyde. [223301]

Mr. Hoon: It is highly unlikely that a malfunction of a nuclear warhead resulting in a nuclear explosion would occur at the Naval Base on the Clyde. There are no plans to make assessments of potential casualties.

Uniforms

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any samples for the battledress being produced for the Cut and Sew contract which have been tested have been manufactured in Belgium. [222280]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 599W. The fabric samples tested for the combat clothing being produced under the Cut and Sew contract were manufactured in China.

Wind Turbines

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the objections of Defence Estates to the proposal to erect two 100 metre high wind turbines at Uglow Farm, Edgworth; and what the evidential basis is for the claim that these turbines may affect the efficiency of BAE Systems radars at Warton Aerodrome. [222420]

Mr. Caplin: An initial assessment of the proposed development at Uglow Farm, Edgworth was carried out last year at the pre-planning stage. This was unfortunately based on a misinterpretation of incomplete co-ordinates provided to the Department. Now that this error has been recognised, the developer has been informed and technical advisers are carrying out an urgent review of the proposal using the correct data. The true location of the proposed wind farm is some distance from that originally assumed, but it would be premature to say whether the radar at Warton will be affected.

I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as the results of the review are known, and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Working Time Regulations

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many officials working in ministerial private offices in the Department have worked more than a 48 hour week at any time in the last 12 months for which figures are available; how many of those had signed a waiver under working time regulations; and what percentage these figures represented of the total in each case. [204146]

Mr. Caplin: All officials working in the Ministry of Defence ministerial private offices have worked more than one 48 hour week in the last 12 months. Of the individuals involved, just over 10 per cent. had signed a waiver.

The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the protection of a limit of an average of 48 hours a week working time. This is not an absolute cap of 48 hours in any one week. This average is normally calculated over a 17-week reference period, although this can be longer in certain situations (26 weeks) and can be extended by agreement (up to 52 weeks). Workers may choose to work more than 48 hours per week over the reference period by signing an opt-out agreement, but employers cannot force a worker to sign an opt-out, and workers cannot be subject to detriment for refusing to sign an opt-out.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Consultants

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs with which external consultancy companies contracts are held by his Department. [222944]

Mr. Lammy: My Department collects information on the use of external consultancies on an annual basis at the end of the financial year.

Information relating to current consultancy contracts is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The companies that provided us with consultancy services during 2003–04 are listed as follows:

Companies used by DCA/Court Service for provision of consultancy 2003–04

Alex Cameron Ltd.
AMTEC
Anagram
Andrew Gibson Consulting
Ark Consulting
Ashton Penney
Atkins Asset Management
BMI Health Services
Butcher Doulton Communications
Cap Gemini
CGMS Consulting
CMAS
Deloitte
Deloitte & Touche
Enodian Consultancy
Fresh Minds
Frontline Consultancy
Gartner UK Ltd.
Global Solutions
GVA Grimley
Hedra
HM Associates
Norwood Safety Ltd.
Human Assets
Insight Consulting
Integral
Inventures
Issan Ghazi Partnership
Janet Rubin Human Resources
JMU Access Partnership
KMC International
Lan2Lan
Liberate
Logica CMG UK Ltd.
Logsys
Luther Pendragon
MORI
Moulton Hall
Near Glow
ORC
PA Consulting
Pavillion Publishing
Penna Change Consultancy
PKF
PricewaterhouseCoopers
The Henley Centre
Public Partners
Retail Maxim Ltd.
Sapphire International
Sector UK
SERCO
SGS UK Ltd.
STC Energy Management
Sue Steel Associates
Towers Perrin
TSO Consulting
VP Treen & Associates
White Young & Green
WS Atkins
Xansa
Yale Consulting

Immigration and Asylum

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the cost of providing legal aid for immigration and asylum cases was in 2004 in Coventry. [222945]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission contracts with suppliers in Coventry and elsewhere to provide a range of services throughout England and Wales. It is therefore not possible to identify precisely the amount paid for services provided exclusively in Coventry. However, the Legal Services Commission estimates £1.6 million was spent on immigration and asylum cases to suppliers in the Coventry area during 2003–04.

Ineffective Trials

Mrs. Humble: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the rate of ineffective trials for *(a)* Crown and *(b)* magistrates courts was in each local Criminal Justice Board area in (i) 2001 and (ii) 2005. [222903]

Mr. Leslie: We are unable to provide the information for individual magistrates courts without incurring disproportionate cost, but we are able to provide on an LCJB area basis for the Crown and magistrates and on an individual court basis for the Crown.

LCJB area data collection began in rolling quarter ending June 2001 for the Crown and June 2002 for the magistrates.

Table A shows Crown and magistrates court LCJB area ineffective trial rates for the earliest point available and for the most recent rolling quarter (ending January 2005).

Table B shows Crown court ineffective trial rates for rolling quarter ending June 2001 and the most recent rolling quarter, January 2005.

Table A: Crown and magistrates LCJB area ineffective trial rates

Percentage

	Crown *Ineffective trial rate quarter ending*		*Magistrates* *Ineffective trial rate quarter ending*	
	June 2001	*January 2005*	*June 2002*	*January 2005*
England and Wales	24.2	15.1	30.8	23.7
Avon and Somerset	25.5	17.4	24.4	13.4
Bedfordshire	24.1	11.4	26.5	33.2
Cambridgeshire	33.3	14.7	23.0	19.2
Cheshire	20.0	11.9	27.5	17.6
Cleveland	25.7	19.1	33.3	20.7
Cumbria	26.5	11.3	20.3	16.5
Derbyshire	20.1	21.8	30.4	26.2
Devon and Cornwall	15.7	12.9	19.4	18.7
Dorset	12.7	6.9	30.2	16.0
Durham	26.4	7.8	24.4	32.0
Dyfed Powys	13.6	9.6	27.2	16.2
Essex	21.6	21.6	30.5	22.8
Gloucestershire	35.6	11.6	23.3	26.4
Greater London	25.7	15.7	39.8	28.7
Greater Manchester	26.7	15.6	27.7	20.1
Gwent	13.4	12.9	35.3	20.7
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	21.3	15.3	33.4	23.7
Hertfordshire	26.9	17.7	32.3	23.3
Humberside	21.6	11.2	38.8	19.1
Kent	24.9	18.3	25.1	22.7
Lancashire	28.2	16.2	27.0	22.8
Leicestershire	33.5	13.7	28.7	24.5
Lincolnshire	14.9	12.3	22.2	21.4
Merseyside	21.8	14.9	37.3	25.9
Norfolk	21.8	10.6	21.1	19.2
North Wales	14.1	19.3	23.6	15.5
North Yorkshire	17.4	23.2	18.9	19.7
Northamptonshire	22.9	6.1	28.7	18.3
Northumbria	22.5	17.8	32.8	25.8
Nottinghamshire	30.3	12.1	36.9	25.0
South Wales	13.5	9.3	27.9	18.5
South Yorkshire	26.3	14.1	24.0	25.5
Staffordshire	16.3	8.6	23.2	20.8
Suffolk	10.7	6.0	21.1	14.2
Surrey	28.4	10.1	23.5	23.2
Sussex	25.3	15.1	39.6	22.7
Thames Valley	20.8	8.6	30.6	20.9
Warwickshire	12.5	15.4	14.4	8.6
West Mercia	26.8	16.1	33.0	26.2
West Midlands	27.9	16.7	26.9	23.8
West Yorkshire	19.7	15.2	27.6	24.9
Wiltshire	16.2	8.7	33.8	20.0

Table B: LCJB Crown court ineffective trial rates

Percentage

	Ineffective trial rate quarter ending	
	January 2001	*January 2005*
England and Wales	24.2	15.1
Aylesbury Crown	14.6	15.1
Barnstaple Crown	0.0	0.0
Barrow-in-Furness Crown	33.3	50.0
Basildon Crown	20.3	23.1
Birmingham Crown	27.7	19.0
Blackfriars Crown	27.3	18.2
Bolton Crown	28.1	18.0
Bournemouth Crown	12.7	9.1
Bradford Crown	17.4	17.0
Bristol Crown	24.1	19.1
Burnley Crown	32.3	15.2
Caernarfon Crown	6.7	6.7

Table B: LCJB Crown court ineffective trial rates

Percentage

	Ineffective trial rate quarter ending	
	January 2001	*January 2005*
Cambridge Crown	31.0	6.9
Canterbury Crown	22.3	20.7
Cardiff Crown	13.0	14.5
Carlisle Crown	27.4	9.9
Carmarthen Crown	0.0	14.3
Central Criminal Court	10.6	2.2
Chelmsford Crown	22.7	19.7
Chester Crown	16.7	12.5
Chichester Crown	21.2	9.1
Coventry Crown	20.0	16.1
Croydon Crown	21.9	11.2
Derby Crown	20.5	21.6
Doncaster Crown	32.6	21.8
Durham Crown	38.3	9.2

Table B: LCJB Crown court ineffective trial rates

Percentage

	Ineffective trial rate quarter ending	
	January 2001	*January 2005*
Exeter Crown	9.3	2.6
Gloucester Crown	35.7	9.1
Grimsby Crown	32.6	8.2
Guildford Crown	28.0	10.1
Harrow Crown	28.0	15.8
Haverfordwest Crown	0.0	0.0
Hereford Crown	0.0	13.0
Hull Crown	13.3	11.7
I.L.S.H. Crown	33.3	18.4
Ipswich Crown	10.9	6.0
Isleworth Crown	25.6	15.5
Kingston upon Thames Crown	30.8	17.8
Knutsford Crown	20.8	23.5
Lancaster Crown	34.1	10.0
Leeds Crown	26.3	13.1
Leicester Crown	33.5	13.7
Lewes Crown	27.7	17.1
Lincoln Crown	16.0	12.3
Liverpool Crown	21.9	14.8
Luton Crown	25.8	12.8
Maidstone Crown	28.3	16.9
Merthyr Tydfil Crown	8.5	6.0
Mold Crown	21.3	29.7
Newcastle Crown	19.7	17.9
Newport (IOW) Crown	29.6	16.7
Newport Crown	15.9	9.1
Northampton Crown	22.2	6.0
Norwich Crown	20.0	10.1
Nottingham Crown	30.0	13.3
Oxford Crown	17.2	3.2
Peterborough Crown	37.1	19.0
Plymouth Crown	20.6	23.1
Portsmouth Crown	13.2	13.3
Preston Crown	25.3	17.4
Reading Crown	24.8	8.8
Salisbury Crown	0.0	12.5
Sheffield Crown	23.9	11.6
Shrewsbury Crown	32.1	22.2
Snaresbrook Crown	29.0	20.5
Southampton Crown	23.1	16.1
Southwark Crown	24.0	14.5
Stafford Crown	20.1	6.9
Swansea Crown	14.8	7.4
Swindon Crown	24.0	9.1
Taunton Crown	20.9	6.7
Teesside Crown	22.7	19.3
Truro Crown	26.7	6.5
Warrington Crown	21.7	7.7
Warwick Crown	16.7	13.0
Weymouth Crown	6.7	0.0
Winchester Crown	30.0	16.5
Wolverhampton Crown	32.0	13.2
Wood Green Crown	20.0	10.9
Woolwich Crown	24.6	12.6
Worcester Crown	23.3	11.3
York Crown	17.8	22.1
Manchester (Minshull Street) Crown	26.6	16.2
Middlesex Guildhall Crown	25.3	10.9
St. Albans Crown	26.7	18.0
Stoke on Trent Crown	17.6	12.9
Manchester (Crown Square) Crown	25.5	12.5

Planning

Andy Burnham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many cases legal aid has been awarded to challenge a planning decision made by a Secretary of State in each year since 2000. [223416]

Mr. Lammy: Challenges against planning decisions made by a Secretary of State are made in the High Court. Civil legal aid is available in such cases subject to the statutory tests of the applicant's means and the merits of the case. The only figures that the Legal Services Commission (LSC) can identify are for appeals against a decision of the Secretary of State under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and/or the Planning Compensation Act 1991. The number of funded cases are as follows:

	Number
2000–01	0
2001–02	2
2002–03	1
2003–04	2
2004–05	1

The figures given do not cover any challenges of planning decisions made by a Secretary of State by way of Judicial Review. The LSC does not record figures for Judicial Review by way of type of application.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve the delivery of justice in all criminal justice system areas, with a greater increase in the worst performing areas; [219139]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to increase the level of confidence in the criminal justice system within ethnic communities; [219142]

(3) what recent progress has been made towards the Public Service Agreement target to increase the satisfaction of victims and witnesses with the criminal justice system. [219143]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety on 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 336W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to improve the level of public confidence in the criminal justice system. [219141]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister for the Home Office on 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1621w.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Virgin Islands

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what mechanisms are in place to ensure that Ministers and officials from the British Virgin Islands are advised of legislative

initiatives from the European Commission or Parliament which may impact on the British Virgin Islands. [223346]

Mr. MacShane: When legislative initiatives that might impact on the British Virgin Islands and other Overseas Territories come to the attention of UK officials, information on them is fed to the Overseas Territories Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This information is then passed on to the territories.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on progress his Department has made on the negotiated compensation package between the UK Government and the British Virgin Islands Government. [223347]

Mr. MacShane: The compensation package agreed with the British Virgin Islands (BVI) Government as part of the discussions on the implementation of the EU Savings Directive is reviewed regularly between Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials and representatives of the BVI Government. Progress has been made on most of the agreed measures with conclusions already reached on some of them.

EU Regulations

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many EU regulations, directives and decisions have been enacted in each year since UK accession; and how many have been *(a)* deleted and *(b)* are no longer in force. [221232]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold this information. The House of Commons Library estimates that around 9 per cent. of UK legislation emanates from the EU. The details in the tables are taken from the annual Commission "Report on the activities of the EU", which has in turn been collated by the House of Commons. The figures for EU regulations, directives and decisions enacted are only available for the years 1980–2003 inclusive. The figures for legislation repealed or expired are only available for the years 1997–2003 inclusive.

EU regulations, directives and decision enacted between 1980–2003

	Commission	Council	Total
1980	5,901 instruments[1]	51 directives	—
		312 regulations	—
		136 decisions	—
1981	6,044 instruments	45 directives	—
		414 regulations	—
		150 decisions	—
1982	5,321 instruments	42 directives	—
		393 regulations	—
		128 decisions	—
1983	14,123 instruments	41 directives	—
		395 regulations	—
		108 decisions	—
1984	5,190 instruments	53 directives	—
		351 regulations	—
		99 decisions	—
1985	7,442 instruments	59 directives	—
		447 regulations	—
		109 decisions	—
1986	12,081 instruments	74 directives	—
		473 regulations	—
		184 decisions	—
1987	8,212 instruments	40 directives	—
		458 regulations	—
		125 decisions	—
1988	6,799 instruments	63 directives	—
		434 regulations	—
		131 decisions	—
1989	5,737 instruments	79 directives	—
		394 regulations	—
		161 decisions	—
1990	6,298 instruments	65 directives	—
		380 regulations	—
		169 decisions	—
1991	6,130 instruments	72 directives	—
		335 regulations	—
		174 decisions	—
1992	34 directives	95 directives	129
	1,137 regulations	381 regulations	1,518
	385 decisions	134 decisions	519
Total			2,166
1993	52 directives	65 directives	117
	1,160 regulations	325 regulations	1,485
	520 decisions	135 decisions	655
Total			2,257
1994	24 directives	17 directives	41
	1,579 regulations	180 regulations	1,759
	445 decisions	72 decisions	517
Total			2,317
1995	35 directives	39 directives	74
	2,801 regulations	242 regulations	3,043
	3,025 decisions	175 decisions	3,200
Total			6,317
1996	39 directives	58 directives	97
	2,341 regulations	247 regulations	2,588
	2,806 decisions	170 decisions	2,985
Total			5,670
1997	35 directives	34 directives (20 with EP)	69
	760 regulations	209 regulations (1 with EP)	969
	635 decisions	164 decisions (7 with EP)	799
Total			1,837
1998	44 directives	53 directives (26 with EP)	97
	733 regulations	202 regulations	975
	537 decisions	196 decisions (7 with EP)	733
Total			1,805
1999	55 directives	44 directives (14 with EP)	99
	842 regulations	144 regulations (11 with EP)	986
	516 decisions	139 decisions (18 with EP)	655
Total			1,740
2000	38 directives	43 directives (18 with EP)	81
	606 regulations	182 regulations (34 with EP)	788
	557 decisions	24 decisions (4 with EP)	581
Total			1,450
2001	18 directives	45 directives (23 with EP)	63
	600 regulations	152 regulations (15 with EP)	752
	651 decisions	30 decisions (3 with EP)	681
Total			1,496
2002	44 directives	149 directives (36 with EP)	193
	602 regulations	164 regulations (24 with EP)	766

EU regulations, directives and decision enacted between 1980–2003

	Commission	Council	Total
	610 decisions	57 decisions (6 with EP)	667
Total			1,626
2003	61 directives	19 directives (41 with EP)	
	648 regulations	154 regulations (35 with EP)	
	560 decisions	30 decisions (9 with EP)	
Total			1,557

[1] These figures includes regulations, decisions, directives, recommendations and opinions (i.e. legislative and non-legislative instruments), as Commission sources prior to 1992 do not give a breakdown for Commission instruments.

EU legislation repealed or expired, 1997–2003

	Commission	Council	Total
1997	27 directives	39 directives (1 with EP)	66
	503 regulations	271 regulations	774
	199 decisions	83 decisions (1 with EP)	282
Total			1,122
1998	13 directives	46 directives (2 with EP)	59
	551 regulations	146 regulations	697
	260 decisions	192 decisions (5 with EP)	452
Total			1,408
1999	17 directives	57 directives	74
	612 regulations	193 regulations	805
	381 decisions	141 decisions (14 with EP)	522
Total			1,401
2000	21 directives	43 directives	64
	602 regulations	201 regulations (1 with EP)	803
	131 decisions	29 decisions	160
Total			1,027
2001	10 directives	49 directives (1 with EP)	59
	555 regulations	147 regulations (3 with EP)	702
	143 decisions	11 decisions	154
Total			285
2002	32 directives	51 directives (3 with EP)	83
	398 regulations	149 regulations (5 with EP)	547
	178 decisions	21 decisions (4 with EP)	203
Total			833
2003	33 directives	38 directives (8 with EP)	—
	328 regulations	69 regulations (1 with EP)	—
	122 decisions	25 decisions (5 with EP)	—
Total			629

EU-ASEAN Meetings

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether the Government will be represented at the EU-ASEAN meetings during Burma's chairing of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in 2006–07; [222874]

(2) what his policy is on the use of the conditions agreed at Tullamore in April 2004 by the EU as the criteria for whether the EU should attend EU-ASEAN meetings chaired by Burma in 2006; [222875]

(3) what position the Government will take within the EU on the issue of Burma's military rulers chairing EU-ASEAN meetings in 2006–07. [222876]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* We are concerned about Burma's forthcoming chairmanship of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2006. We know too that some other ASEAN members are concerned.

The UK attends EU-ASEAN meetings as a member of the EU. Decisions on attendance are taken by consensus with the EU. It is too early for the EU to take a decision on the approach it will take in July 2006. This will depend on developments in Burma before then. We have made clear that we wish to see real progress towards genuine democratisation in Burma including the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners.

We are also using our regular bilateral and multilateral contacts with all ASEAN members, who are key to progress on this issue, to encourage them to press the military regime in Burma to enter into a meaningful dialogue with the democratic opposition and ethnic groups as soon as possible. There is a clear understanding that the prospect of Burmese chairmanship of ASEAN makes the need for change all the more pressing.

European Constitution

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on consistency in the wording of the question in each country's referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe. [222991]

Mr. MacShane: None.

Interpretation/Translation Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many companies have been invited to tender for *(a)* interpretation and translation services and *(b)* interpretation equipment provision for EU presidency meetings hosted by the UK; and what the value of each tender is. [223063]

Mr. MacShane; I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given to him by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 31 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 716W. Since then, we have issued no further invitations to tender for interpretation services, translation services or equipment provision for FCO-run UK EU presidency events. Other Government Departments are responsible for arranging these services for their own presidency events.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the UK lawyer based in the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq first became aware of allegations of abuse at Abu Ghraib and other US detention facilities. [212312]

Mr. MacShane: The UK lawyers based in the Coalition Provisional Authority building in Baghdad first became aware of allegations of mistreatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib and other US detention facilities in February 2004, by which time the US authorities had already begun detailed investigations.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost of his Department's operations in Iraq have been since September 2002. [221424]

Mr. MacShane: The direct local resource cost of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) operations in Iraq for financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04 was £0.349 million and £5.465 million respectively. Direct local resource costs for financial year 2004–05 are estimated to be around £13 million.

Estimated FCO capital investment expenditure in financial year 04–05, relating to setting up posts in Baghdad, Basra and Kirkuk, is some £10 million.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he included the text of the full advice from the Attorney-General on the war in Iraq with the correspondence he sent to his ministerial colleagues in advance of the debate on 18 March 2003. [221821]

Mr. MacShane: No. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary wrote to ministerial colleagues and Members of Parliament on 17 March 2003 enclosing, among other things, a copy of his letter to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the same date setting out the legal basis for the use of force. This included the Attorney General's Parliamentary Answer and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office paper entitled "Iraq: Legal Basis for the Use of Force."

Lebanon

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to encourage democracy in Lebanon. [221802]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The international community has been united in calling for Syria to withdraw its troops and intelligence personnel from Lebanon in compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. My noble Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, visited Lebanon on 24–25 February. In her discussions with Lebanese Foreign Minister Hammoud, she made it clear that we expect Syrian withdrawal to be complete and rapid, so that Lebanon can hold free and fair elections to its National Assembly without foreign influence or interference. My noble Friend also emphasised the importance of a full and transparent investigation into Mr. Rafic Hariri's assassination in Beirut on 14 February. The UK stands ready to assist the Lebanese Government in preparing for fully democratic elections.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment his Department has made of the security situation in Lebanon since the start of the withdrawal of Syrian military forces. [222889]

Mr. MacShane: The withdrawal of Syrian troops to the Beka'a Valley in Lebanon and back to Syria is a first step in the implementation on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. Since the start of the withdrawal, the security situation has remained calm, as can be seen by the large-scale peaceful rallies that have been taking place in Beirut. So far, the Lebanese security forces have shown themselves to be capable of filling the security role left by the departing Syrian troops.

Palestinian Authority

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of progress made by the Palestinian Authority in reform of its security apparatus. [222883]

Mr. MacShane: We have worked closely with the Palestinian Authority (PA) on reform of their security apparatus. The London Meeting on 1 March 2005 was aimed at supporting the PA in its plans to build the institutions needed to underpin a future viable Palestinian state. At the meeting, PA President Abu Mazen promised "100 per cent. effort" on security, and set out detailed plans in this area, along with plans for governance reform and economic development. On security specifically, the early signs have been good and on 16 March 2005 Israel handed Jericho over to PA security control. It is imperative that the PA's efforts continue. We will continue to work with the parties and the international community to support the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will encourage the Palestinian Authority to take steps to ensure that Christian Arabs are not driven out of the territories by the activities of extremists. [222971]

Mr. MacShane: We are not aware of Christian Arabs being driven out of the territories by the activities of Palestinian extremists. However, we do call upon the Palestinian Authority to continue with reforms, especially security reform, so that it can ensure Palestinian law and order and take effective action against rejectionist and extremist violence.

Rwanda

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish the instructions he gave to the UK ambassador to the UN in relation to UK policy on Rwanda in the months prior to the beginning of the Rwandan genocide. [222989]

Mr. Mullin: It is an established convention that Ministers of one administration cannot see the documents of a previous administration. I am therefore unable to provide the information requested.

Sikh Employees

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the kirpan by Sikh employees. [221672]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) commitment not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of religion or belief is set out clearly in our equal opportunities policy. This states:

> "All FCO staff are entitled to be treated with respect. No staff should be exposed to unfair discrimination, including harassment, bullying or victimisation on any grounds, particularly gender, family status, race, disability, religion, faith or sexual orientation."

The FCO does not have a specific policy on the wearing of clothing or items associated with particular religions. This includes the kirpan. However, in line with our equal opportunities policy, all employees are free to practice their religion.

The FCO has taken a number of steps to address discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. These include: diversity training for all staff, diversity objectives for all staff, provision of prayer rooms, and flexible working which enables staff to pray during religious festivals.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Sudan concerning its use of arrest of civilians in Darfur on the basis that they are helping the Sudan Liberation Army. [222392]

Mr. MacShane: We make frequent representations to the Government of Sudan on the need for it to abide by international humanitarian and human rights law. We have stressed the need to stop arbitrary arrests as part of this commitment.

We continue to make clear to the Government of Sudan and the rebel factions that they must respect the ceasefire in Darfur, and fulfil their commitments under the Abuja Humanitarian and Security Protocols. They must take all steps to prevent attacks, threats, intimidation and any other form of violence, including arbitrary arrests, against civilians by any party or group.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan on the use of torture. [222393]

Mr. MacShane: We have frequent discussions, both bilaterally and as part of the EU-Sudan dialogue, with the Government of Sudan on the need for it to abide by international humanitarian and human rights law, including by ratifying and implementing the UN Convention Against Torture. Most recently, we raised our concerns about human rights violations in Sudan, including torture, as part of the EU-Sudan human rights dialogue on 24 February and during the EU-Sudan political dialogue on 3 March.

We are providing £180,000 over three years to support the work of the Sudanese Organisation Against Torture which works to support victims of torture, challenge legal impunity and raise human rights awareness.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the UN's recent estimate of the number of deaths in Darfur; and how many of those he estimates were killed by *(a)* ethnic violence, *(b)* malnutrition and *(c)* disease. [222996]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Co-ordinator, Jan Egeland, has said that he estimates that 180,000 people have died in Darfur from disease and malnutrition over the last 18 months. We share his grave concerns about the situation in Darfur and elsewhere in Sudan. Insecurity prevents regular access to the worst affected areas, inhibiting accurate assessment, and there are, therefore, no reliable mortality figures at this time.

We recognise the need for more accurate data so the UK is funding a second survey by the World Health Organisation in conjunction with the Sudanese Ministry of Health. This will commence at the end of April.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of whether the situation in Darfur constitutes genocide. [222997]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The UK pressed for the establishment of an expert International Commission of Inquiry (ICI) by the UN to investigate the atrocities in Darfur, and determine whether genocide had been committed. The ICI's report, issued to the UN Security Council on 31 January, concluded that, while the Government of Sudan had not pursued a policy of genocide in Darfur, a competent court would need to decide whether certain individuals had done so, and that the Government of Sudan, the Arab militias and the rebels are all guilty of serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law, which may amount to crimes against humanity and/or war crimes.

We have consistently made clear that the perpetrators of these terrible crimes must be brought to justice. The UN Security Council is united in its determination that there can be no impunity for these crimes. We continue to discuss the way forward with our partners in the Security Council.

Sustainable Development

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the *(a)* G8 and *(b)* EU are taking to promote sustainable development, with particular reference to (i) climate change and (ii) Africa. [222969]

Mr. MacShane: 2005 is an important year for the global community to take action on climate change and on Africa in the context of sustainable development. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister is committed to using the opportunity offered by our twin presidencies of the EU and G8 to make real progress.

The review of the EU's sustainable development strategy provides the EU with the opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to promoting sustainable development and tackling climate change in the context of the re-launched Lisbon strategy. But this is just one element of the EU's climate change strategy: implementation of the EU emissions trading scheme is helping the EU to meet its Kyoto targets; on future action, the EU will be seeking to reinvigorate international dialogue under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Engaging countries beyond the EU will be a vital part of this. The G8 too is firmly focused on climate change. The UK presidency of the G8 aims to build on past G8 initiatives, including on technology development, by promoting a broader understanding of the challenges of addressing climate change.

On Africa, the EU is the world's largest provider of aid to the region and an important trade partner. It is working to provide a sustainable response to the recommendations of the Commission for Africa, and to ensure that the millennium development summit gives new impetus to action on sustainable development and climate change in order to tackle global poverty and achieve the millennium development goals. The G8 is working to agree a comprehensive plan of specific actions to address the complex and inter-linked problems of Africa. This plan will build on the work of the Kananaskis G8 Africa Action Plan, the Commission for Africa, the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Uganda

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many treason suspects are on remand in Uganda; what the nature is of the charges; whether the suspects are linked to political parties; and if he will make a statement. [222500]

Mr. Mullin: We have asked the Uganda Human Rights Commission for an estimate of numbers, grounds and political affiliation of those being detained on treason charges. I will write to my hon. Friend as soon as we get this information.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the strength of the *(a)* Uganda People's Defence Forces and *(b)* Ugandan Presidential Protection Brigade; how many different security organisations are operating in Uganda; what technical assistance the UK gives to each organisation; and if he will make a statement. [222501]

Mr. MacShane: All military organisations, including the Uganda Army, Air Force, National Police Air Wing, and Marines, are considered as part of the Uganda Peoples' Defence Force (UPDF). The UPDF assessed strength is around 50,000.

There are four main security organisations; the Internal Security Organisation, External Security Organisation, the Chieftaincy of Military Intelligence and Special Branch. We have urged the Ugandan Government to put these organisations onto a firm statutory basis so as to allow proper public and Parliamentary scrutiny of their activities. We are providing no technical assistance to any of them.

The Department for International Development has provided approximately £0.2 million to support the Uganda Defence Review process and approximately £2.5 million in non-military assistance for conflict resolution efforts in northern and eastern Uganda.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 16 March 2005 *Official Report*, column 346W.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his estimate is of the proportion of Uganda's national budget that is spent on *(a)* health, *(b)* education, *(c)* agriculture and *(d)* defence; and if he will make a statement. [222502]

Mr. MacShane: Figures from the 2003–04 approved budget (including donor funded projects) are:

Health—12.3%

Education—18.8%

Agriculture—3.2%

Security (defence)—10.6%.

Uganda has a well-developed and consultative budgetary process. Donors are involved throughout, and have an opportunity to endorse the budget at the annual Public Expenditure Review. This level of consultation allows partners, including the UK, to ensure government meets its commitment to prioritise poverty reduction. Budget execution is generally good and closely monitored by government and donors, including the International Financial Institutions. Our Poverty Reduction Budget Support, and that of other partners such as the World Bank, is conditional on our endorsement of the budget and its subsequent execution.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 23 March 2005

NORTHERN IRELAND

Paramilitary Activity

8. **Mr. Gregory Campbell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent assessment he has made of the level of crimes being carried out by each of the main paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland. [222764]

Mr. Pearson: All of the main paramilitary groups in Northern Ireland are engaged in organised criminality to varying degrees. Of the top 25 organised criminal gangs who operate in Northern Ireland, two thirds have links to paramilitary gangs with both loyalist and republican gangs engaging in a range of illicit activity including drugs, smuggling, extortion, armed robbery and intellectual property crime.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on terrorist group related crime in Northern Ireland. [222759]

Mr. Pearson: Both loyalist and republican paramilitary groups are heavily involved in organised crime in Northern Ireland. The Organised Crime Task Force Threat Assessment published in May 2004 clearly indicated paramilitary involvement in organised crime. The Independent Monitoring Commission's report of 4 November also provided a clear assessment of the criminal activities of paramilitary groups.

Single-sex Schools

9. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of secondary school children in Northern Ireland are in single sex schools; and what the percentage was *(a)* five and *(b)* 10 years ago. [222765]

Mr. Gardiner: 31 per cent. of post-primary pupils in Northern Ireland currently attend single sex schools. This compares to 34 per cent. five years ago and 37 per cent. 10 years ago.

Unemployment

10. **Mr. Joyce:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of the working age population of Northern Ireland is unemployed. [222766]

Mr. Gardiner: Seasonally adjusted figures from the Labour Force Survey for the period November 2004-January 2005 estimate that 3.4 per cent. of the working age population in Northern Ireland are unemployed.

Peace Process

11. **Dr. Palmer:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the peace process. [222767]

13. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the peace process. [222769]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer my hon. Friend and the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland to the answer I gave earlier today to the hon. Members for Basingstoke (Mr. Hunter) and Tewkesbury (Mr. Robertson), *Official Report*, column 868.

Assets Recovery Agency

12. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the work of the Assets Recovery Agency in Northern Ireland. [222768]

Mr. Pearson: The Assets Recovery Agency has set an objective that 80 per cent. of the cases pursued in Northern Ireland will focus on property obtained by, or in the hands of, paramilitaries and organised criminals. The agency met its operational targets in Northern Ireland last year and is set to meet or exceed its targets for this year.

To date the agency has received 73 referrals. Action has been completed in six cases at a value of £1,720,000 and action is under way in 12 cases, with a value of £4,176,507. A further 13 cases are under investigation and 23 are under assessment. The remaining 19 have been returned to law enforcement agencies.

Value System Education

14. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he plans to take to broaden the religious and other value system education in schools in Northern Ireland. [222770]

Mr. Gardiner: The Religious Education Core Syllabus is intended to comprise about half of the teaching time for RE, allowing schools scope to include other religions and value systems if they wish. The revised core syllabus that has been drawn up by the four main churches in Northern Ireland addresses the study of other world religions. In addition, Citizenship education, which will cover issues such as religious diversity, is currently being rolled out to all post-primary schools and will become compulsory from September 2006.

Belfast Agreement

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) when the Code of Practice on access to information held by implementation bodies set up under the Belfast Agreement was *(a)* agreed and *(b)* published; [223145]

(2) how many of the implementation bodies set up under the Belfast Agreement have a Code of Practice on access to information held by them. [223146]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The North South Implementation Bodies Agreement 1999 provides that a code of practice on access to information will be drawn up by the Irish and Northern Ireland Ministers with responsibility for

freedom of information for approval by the North/South Ministerial Council. That code is at an advanced stage of preparation and will be published for public consultation shortly.

Farming

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his estimate of the profitability of the *(a)* dairy, *(b)* beef, *(c)* pig and *(d)* poultry sectors of farming in the Province was in the last year for which figures are available. [223164]

Mr. Pearson: The level of profitability of the main agricultural sectors is not calculated by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). However, annual estimates are available of the contribution made by each sector towards the overheads and profitability of the agricultural industry, as measured by their aggregate sector gross margins.

The 2004 provisional sector gross margins are:

(a) £281 million for dairy cows and followers;

(b) £244 million for beef cattle, rearing and fattening;

(c) £23 million for pigs; and

(d) £23 million for poultry.

Detailed information on the value of outputs and costs included in the determination of the sector gross margins is given in the Statistical Review of Northern Ireland Agriculture 2004, which is available on the DARD website at www.dardni.gov.uk

Fishing Vessels

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what sources of assistance are available to the owners of fishing vessels under 10 metres in length; and what plans he has to extend this assistance to vessels under 10 metres. [223370]

Mr. Pearson: The under 10 metre fleet are mostly small scale in shore vessels using static gear and not directly affected by the cod closure, therefore, there are no plans to extend assistance. Currently, grant aid is available to this sector under the Building Sustainable Prosperity, Small Scale and Coastal sub-measure which provides assistance for co-ordination, distribution and marketing.

Illegal Immigrants

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will use the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference to discuss with the Republic of Ireland the extent to which illegal immigrants are using the Republic of Ireland as a point of entry into the United Kingdom. [221338]

Mr. Browne: I have been asked to reply.

The British Government have no plans to raise this matter at a future meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference. We discuss this issue with Ireland in other bilateral forums.

National Sports Foundation

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relation to the extension to Northern Ireland of the new National Sports Foundation. [223269]

Angela Smith: I have had no discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in relation to the extension to Northern Ireland of the new National Sports Foundation as detailed arrangements are still to be decided by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. I will, however, be consulting with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on the matter in due course.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220958]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The value of sales of surplus assets from my Department (including its agencies but excluding NDPBs) is as follows:

	£
2000–01	248,000
2001–02	0
2002–03	648,000
2003–04	207,000

This information is included in the departmental resource accounts, copies of which are available in the Library.

Traffic Congestion

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to improve traffic congestion at Sandyknowes roundabout on the M2 motorway in Northern Ireland. [223168]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. David Burnside, dated 22 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what plans he has to improve traffic congestion at Sandyknowes roundabout on the M2 motorway in Northern Ireland. I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The recently published Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) proposes modifications to the Sandyknowes roundabout incorporating full signalisation coupled with layout improvements to minimise conflicts between different traffic movements and afford greater priority to the strategic M2 and A8 movements. Roads Service is currently investigating various options to implement these proposals.

The M2 southbound from Sandyknowes junction through the Greencastle interchange to join the M5 is due to be widened to three lanes as part of Package 1 of Roads Service's DBFO Programme.

In addition, the Transport Assessment associated with a planning application for the Global Point Development at Ballyhenry, has identified a traffic impact on the Sandyknowes

junction. Roads Service is working closely with the developer to reach agreement on the nature and extent of any mitigating measures required for the development.

I hope this information is helpful.

Transport Links

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his plans are for improving road and rail links between the airport at Aldergrove and Belfast, with particular reference to the Dunsilly roundabout M2 link through Antrim town to the airport. [223171]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Burnside, dated 22 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question, about what his plans are for improving road and rail links between the airport at Aldergrove and Belfast, with particular reference to the Dunsilly roundabout M2 link through Antrim town to the airport. (223171). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

You may recall that John Spellar, MP, in his letter dated 22 October 2004, assured you that the importance of Belfast International Airport as a transport hub was recognised by the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy. During preparation of the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTN TP), the transport links to Belfast International Airport were examined. However, it was considered that the three roads radiating out from the Killead roundabout provided good links to the strategic road network, servicing the Province and beyond. No additional road infrastructure was considered necessary during the life of the Plan.

The Antrim Road/Dublin Road between Belfast International Airport and Antrim does not offer a direct link to the Key Strategic Road Network and is not therefore, considered to be either a Key Strategic Corridor or Link Corridor, as defined in the Regional Development Strategy. However, the RSTN TP appraisal process included the examination of a new link road connecting the M2 Motorway/Rathmore roundabout to Belfast International Airport, and it is hoped that this proposal will be included, not only in Roads Service's Long Term Forward Planning Schedule, but also as a potential Transport Scheme in the forthcoming Antrim/Ballymena/Larne Development Plan, currently being prepared by the Department of the Environment's Planning Service. The inclusion of this scheme would afford protection of the route from any development that would be likely to prejudice future implementation of a scheme.

With regard to the Antrim Road/Dublin Road, which forms part of the route from the Dunsilly Roundabout to the airport, I can advise that Roads Service has identified a number of possible road improvements. The first of these, involving the realignment and widening of approximately 500m of carriageway, together with a right turn lane and improved visibility splays at the Dungonnell Road junction to Crumlin, is scheduled to start during the 2005/06 financial year.

The proposed improvements to the M2 motorway, which will be undertaken as part of Package 1 of Roads Service's DBFO Programme, will widen the existing carriageway to provide three lanes in the Belfast bound direction from Sandyknowes junction through the Greencastle interchange to join the M5. An additional lane will also be provided to carry 3 lanes through the Greencastle interchange in the northbound direction. The works will include the replacement of three of the bridges over the M2 motorway on this section of the route, i.e. Hightown Bridge, Collin Bridge, and Longlands Bridge.

With regard to improving rail links to the airport, I understand in the context of a new park and ride site near Templepatrick, that Translink would consider diverting the current bus service between Aldergrove and the Europa Bus Centre to enable a rail connection to be made there.

I hope this information is helpful.

TRANSPORT

Aircraft Pollution

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to reduce the contribution that aircraft make to greenhouse gas emissions; and if he will make a statement. [221749]

Charlotte Atkins: The Government's proposals to tackle the climate change impacts of aviation are set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper (paragraphs 3.35–3.43).

Buses

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the A65 quality bus scheme submitted by Leeds city council and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive; and when he expects to make a decision on funding for the scheme. [223526]

Charlotte Atkins: Ministers decided to ask regional bodies for a view on its priority. It is now for Leeds city council to determine which of the schemes they would want considered, and the justification for that decision.

Full consideration of regional views is currently expected to commence in time for the 2006 settlement. Local authorities would need to provide a strong case for the Department to reconsider schemes remitted to the region before those arrangements are in place.

Carriage of Dangerous Goods

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* his Department and *(b)* other Government Departments have responsibility within Wales for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004 (S.I., 2004, No.568). [223103]

Mr. Jamieson: The Carriage of Dangerous Goods and Use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004 apply to the whole of Great Britain.

These regulations are the policy responsibility of the Department for Transport. Competent authority functions are primarily shared between DfT and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The lead agency for enforcement of the regulations in Wales is the HSE. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and the Welsh police forces also have enforcement responsibilities under the terms of a Memorandum of Understanding with the HSE.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the drafting process that was followed for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and use of Transportable Pressure Equipment

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Regulations 2004 (S.I., 2004, No.568); and whether individuals from outside his Department were involved in the drafting. [223132]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 21 March 2005]*: Transport Ministers and the Chair of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) exchanged correspondence in 2000 and the HSC were invited to prepare the draft regulations. HSC instructed the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to undertake that task. HSE's policy and legal advisors prepared the regulations (including a regulatory impact assessment and full consultation exercise) and these were submitted to the DfT who agreed and made them on 1 April 2004.

Concessionary Travel Schemes

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what change in the local Government Finance Settlement would be necessary to reimburse local government in full for the costs of replacing the national minimum standards for concessionary travel schemes for people over the age of 60 with a 100 per cent. discount on bus fares; [223247]

(2) how much additional government expenditure would be required to introduce concessionary travel schemes for people over the age of 60 with a 100 per cent. discount on bus fares. [223248]

Charlotte Atkins: From April 2006, the Government are extending the existing statutory minimum requirement so that older and disabled people in England will be guaranteed free off-peak travel on their local bus services, with no charge for the pass. The Government will be providing an extra £350 million in 2006–07 for the local Government Finance Settlement for local authorities in England, to implement this measure. Total additional government expenditure will be £420 million, also including consequential payments to Wales and Scotland under the Barnett formula.

Cycling

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the average distance cycled per person in each year since 1980. [223591]

Mr. Darling: The National Travel Survey (NTS) shows the data requested in the following table.

Average distance cycled per person per year: 1985–86 to 2002–03

	Miles
1985–86	44
1989–91	41
1990–92	41
1991–93	39
1992–94	38
1993–95	37
1994–96	38
1995–97	39
1996–98	38
1997–99	40
1998–2000	39
1999–2001	39
2002–03	34

Source:
National Travel Survey, DfT.

Averages are taken over all the population living in households, not just cyclists. Equivalent information is not available for 1980–84 and 1987–88. Data are shown for three-year aggregates between 1999 and 2001 because of the smaller sample sizes during that period.

The NTS only collects data on travel by bicycle on the public highway and paved pathways with unrestricted access, and travel by bicycle off these routes will not be recorded. Trips by children's bicycles/tricycles intended as toys are not included.

Departmental Property (Trespass)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents of trespassing on his Department's property have been reported in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England since 1997. [222890]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department for Transport was formed in May 2002 and as a result the information provided only relates to the years 2002–03 onwards.

Comprehensive records on trespass are not kept by the Department and its six agencies. Where records are kept and are accessible without disproportionate cost the information shows that since 1 April 2002 there were 33 incidents of trespass in England but none in Leicester.

De-trunking Programme

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on *(a)* his de-trunking programme and *(b)* the level of resources transferred from his Department to local highway authorities for this purpose. [222482]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The policy of transferring non-core trunk roads (de-trunking) to local highway authorities was first set out in the White Paper A New Deal for Transport published in July 1998. De-trunking allows the Highways Agency to concentrate on the operation of the strategic (core) trunk road network, whilst enabling local authorities to consider their own priorities for the improvement of non-core routes. The aim has been to transfer some 3,200 kms (30 per cent.) of the trunk road network (as it was in April 1999) to local authorities in a phased programme. To date more than three-quarters (around 2,500 kms) of the programme has been completed since April 2001.

(b) Prior to the de-trunking of a road, the Highways Agency and local authority agree an appropriate level of funding for annual routine maintenance and in some cases' outstanding capital maintenance projects. The methodology for calculating the funding has been approved by the Local Government Association to ensure a fair transfer of resources. In the years following de-trunking, the authority can also make supplementary bids for additional funds for capital maintenance projects (bridge replacement, resurfacing etc.) on de-trunked roads as part of the LTP process. In 2004–05 around £33.1 million of routine maintenance funds, and £31.6 million of capital maintenance funds were transferred from the Highways Agency to local authorities for all de-trunked roads.

Driving Licences

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many fraudulent applications for driving licences there have been in each year since 1997. [223191]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has been refining enforcement processes in this area over the last few years and reliable figures are only available from 2003. Over this period, DVLA referred on average about 40 suspected fraudulent driving licence applications every week to the prosecution authorities.

General Lighthouse Fund

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was contributed by the General Lighthouse Fund to navigational aids in the territorial waters of the Republic of Ireland in each of the last 10 years; and what his estimate is of contributions over the next three years. [222411]

Mr. Jamieson: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 311W. The figures for the 2004–05 financial year are not yet available.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how much was contributed by the central fund to the Northern Lighthouse Board in each of the last 10 years; [222412]

(2) what the annual budget of *(a)* the Trinity House Lighthouse Authority, *(b)* the Commissioners of the Irish Lights and *(c)* the Northern Lighthouse Board was in each of the last 10 years. [222415]

Mr. Jamieson: The expenditure requirements of the three General Lighthouse Authorities are met from the General Lighthouse Fund. The annual expenditure figures available are set out in the following table. Expenditure figures for Trinity House Lighthouse Service prior to 1998 can be supplied only at disproportionate cost.

£000

	Trinity House Lighthouse	*Northern Lighthouse Board*	*Commissioners of Irish Lights*
1996–97	—	21,772	16,195
1997–98	—	23,329	15,217
1998–99	29,362	22,057	13,401
1999–2000	28,587	28,185	13,701
2000–01	30,364	22,930	15,077
2001–02	30,203	24,210	16,168
2002–03	31,998	22,385	16,034
2003–04	31,747	22,797	18,864
2004–05[1]	45,558	23,164	20,194
2005–06[1]	38,712	22,941	20,663

[1] Approved budget

Sanctioned expenditure for Trinity House post 2004 includes the forecast cost of the redevelopment of Harwich buoy yard and offices and redundancy costs.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with negotiations with the Irish Government on the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [222413]

Mr. Jamieson: The Irish Government's Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources have now stated that they have no objection in principle to participating in a review of the 1985 agreement. We are now developing proposals for their consideration as a matter of priority.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much revenue from light dues has been collected from ships calling at ports in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* the Isle of Man, *(c)* England and Wales, *(d)* Northern Ireland and *(e)* the Republic of Ireland in each of the last 10 financial years. [222414]

Mr. Jamieson: The information requested is set out as follows for the years 1997 to 2004. We do not have the data broken down in this way prior to 1997.

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Scotland	6,628,362	8,034,125	8,929,664	9,110,458	8,536,211	7,270,784	6,495,877
Isle of Man	37,730	44,425	20,636	19,013	19,401	26,075	24,261
England and Wales	51,540,876	54,942,312	55,756,006	57,923,612	62,489,783	60,343,914	63,510,099
Northern Ireland	706,508	617,012	662,504	599,415	662,196	637,722	600,136
Republic of Ireland (ROI)	2,816,420	3,131,481	3,464,780	3,416,675	3,077,674	3,363,730	3,482,544
Total	61,729,896	66,769,355	68,833,590	71,069,173	74,785,265	71,642,225	74,112,917

The figures are for general light dues and does not include income from UK fishing vessels and tugs.

The figures do not include any light dues refunds that were made.

The figures for ROI are shown in sterling after conversion from punts. Pre conversion figures shown as follows.

Republic of Ireland

	Euros
1997–98	3,154,666
1998–99	3,597,475
1999–2000	4,246,164
2000–01	4,396,336
2001–02	4,144,998
2002–03	5,268,091
2003–04	5,008,651

Heathrow Airport

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many transit and transfer passengers have used Heathrow airport in each of the last five years. [223041]

Charlotte Atkins: The following table shows the number of transit and transfer passengers who used Heathrow airport in each of the last five years.

	Transit (thousand)	*Transfers (interliners) (million)*
2000	341	19.0
2001	311	18.6
2002	327	22.3
2003	287	22.9
2004 (provisional)	234	22.7

Correspondence

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will reply to the letters of 24 February and 14 March from the hon. Member for Maidstone and the Weald regarding a meeting to discuss the Strategic Rail Authority's proposals for the Integrated Kent Franchise. [223734]

Mr. McNulty: I replied to the right hon. Member's letters on 22 March.

Kerrier Home Zone Project

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the North Kerrier Home Zone project to be completed. [222657]

Charlotte Atkins: The council expects phase 1 of the works to be substantially complete by the end of April 2005. Further phases of the project are planned as funds become available. Cornwall county council is responsible for the development and implementation of the North Close Home Zone scheme and has received a grant of £460,000 from the Challenge fund.

In submitting their bid for the scheme, Cornwall county council underestimated the scale of the project. It has therefore only been possible to implement the first phase of the project from the grant funding available. The county council are planning to implement further phases from other funding streams in future years.

Unadopted Roads

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what recent representations he has received about unadopted roads on new estates. [222716]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department has received a small number of representations from people living on unadopted roads on new housing estates. In addition, I met with my hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr. Jones) last December to discuss unadopted roads in other areas.

Nottingham East Midlands Airport

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has received from Nottingham East Midlands Airport concerning its proposals for implementing noise controls. [222891]

Charlotte Atkins: Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA) has indicated that it will address possible enhancements to its existing environmental mitigation measures in preparing its master plan. I understand that NEMA will go out to consultation on its draft master plan in the summer, with a view to publishing the final document around the end of the year.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's plans are for *(a)* expansion and *(b)* night flight capacity at Nottingham East Midlands Airport. [222893]

Charlotte Atkins: This is a matter for the airport operator. We expect the airport operator to outline its proposals in its draft master plan, which is expected to be published for consultation in the summer.

Parking Enforcement

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the effects of decriminalised parking enforcement on the numbers of *(a)* traffic wardens and *(b)* parking enforcement officers in England. [223373]

Charlotte Atkins: The Government have encouraged local authorities to take over responsibility for parking enforcement from the police and police traffic wardens. This allows authorities to provide more effective enforcement and to match that enforcement to their local transport objectives. Over 150 local authorities are now responsible for decriminalised parking enforcement, with parking attendants carrying out the enforcement on the street. This policy of transferring responsibility to local authorities is reflected in Home Office figures for the number of traffic wardens in England and Wales for the years 1999–2000 to 2003–04 (the most recent year for which figures are available), which are as follows:

	Number
1999–2000	2,801
2000–01	2,538
2001–02	2,280
2002–03	2,108
2003–04	1,688

Comparable figures for parking attendants employed by local authorities are not collected centrally.

Regional Funding Allocations

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the proposed introduction of regional transport funding allocations; how many miles of *(a)* motorway and *(b)* trunk roads will be reduced from national to regional importance; what representations he has received on this proposal; and what discussions he has had with the (i) Chancellor of the Exchequer, (ii) Deputy Prime Minister and (iii) Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on these proposals. [222483]

Charlotte Atkins: In December 2004, the Government launched a consultation on proposals to establish regional funding allocations for transport, housing and economic development. As part of that consultation a number of routes have been classified as being of regional rather than of major national and international importance. This amounts to 520 miles of motorway

and 2,185 miles of all-purpose trunk roads. The categorisation is being used to assist the identification of regional priorities for transport investment and does not represent a reduction in the status of these routes. Representations about the classification of routes have been received so far from some local authorities as well as the RAC Foundation, the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association.

The deadline for responses to the consultation was 10 March 2005. The Government are currently considering the responses received and will set out how it intends to proceed in due course. HM Treasury, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Transport have been working closely together at both ministerial and official level on the development of these proposals.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220938]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department has not used eBay to dispose of any surplus stock.

Train Services (Disruption)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action he is taking to prevent disruption to train services by adverse weather. [221721]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 15 March 2005]*: Network Rail advise that all its regions have plans and preparations in place for adverse weather and ensures that best practice is shared.

Network Rail is taking a range of actions to prevent disruption to train services in cold weather. Network Rail holds a winter preparation conference every summer to review performance during the previous winter and to start planning for the winter ahead.

Through these and other efforts, Network Rail has reduced the delays it causes to the network by 16 per cent. over the year ending 31 December 2004, compared to the preceding year. Delays in the autumn period (the 10 weeks from beginning of October to early December 2004) were reduced by 42 per cent. compared to the same period in 2003.

Working Time Regulations

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on guidance given to companies on the application of working time regulations to the transport sector. [223456]

Mr. Jamieson: We have produced detailed guidance on the working time arrangements provided for in the Road Transport (Working Time) Regulations 2005 (which implement EU Directive 2002/15/EC). We consulted on a draft version of the guidance last October and the finalised version is now posted on our website at www.dft.gov.uk/freight/rtd.

PRIME MINISTER

GP Service

Brian Cotter: To ask the Prime Minister what steps the Government is taking to ensure the effective operation of the new out-of-hours GP service. [223399]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I have been asked to reply.

In January this year, the Government's national quality requirements came into force, ensuring that all patients have fast and convenient access to care, delivered by the most appropriate professional in the most appropriate place. This is supported by funding of £316 million, in this financial year, towards out-of-hours services. All patients can now access out-of-hours services with a single call to NHS Direct. Patients are guaranteed a home visit from a GP, if that is what they need.

Dartmoor

Mr. Steen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make an official visit to Dartmoor. [223401]

The Deputy Prime Minister: I have been asked to reply.

My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has no current plans to do so.

Northern Ireland

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Prime Minister on how many occasions since 20 December 2004 *(a)* officials and *(b)* special advisers in his office have met representatives of (i) Provisional Sinn Fein and (ii) the Provisional IRA; and if he will make a statement. [223534]

The Prime Minister: My officials and I have had frequent meetings with political parties in Northern Ireland.

Terrorism

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with *(a)* Sir Ian Blair and *(b)* the UK security services regarding Sir Ian Blair's comments that terrorists may use the UK election day as a target date to attack the UK; and if he will make a statement. [223069]

The Prime Minister: It has been the practice of successive governments not to comment on specific security matters. Terrorist threats are kept under constant review and advice would be issued immediately if members of the public needed to take specific action.

UK Waters (Security)

David Davis: To ask the Prime Minister which Government Department is responsible for patrolling UK waters for the detection of *(a)* narcotics, *(b)* illegal immigrants and *(c)* illegal importation of weapons. [223587]

The Prime Minister: The Government are committed to tackling drug trafficking, illegal immigration and illegal imports of weaponry. HM Customs and Excise are responsible for patrolling UK waters for the detection of narcotics and other assigned matters,

including the illegal importation of weapons. They also assist the Immigration Service by patrolling against illegal immigration, assisted by the police, Royal Navy and HM Coastguard.

The Serious Organised Crime and Police Bill provides for the creation of a new Serious Organised Crime Agency which will lead the national fight against drug trafficking, people smuggling and the importation of illegal firearms.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Data Protection

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of the operations of companies charging for services to assist compliance with data protection legislation. [220079]

Mr. Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

My Department does not have a statutory duty to provide protection to consumers who purchase services directed at helping them to comply with data protection legislation, and so no such assessment has been made. However, the Information Commissioner promotes the following of good practice by data controllers. For example, advice is offered as to what is necessary in order to notify with the Commissioner correctly, which can include taking professional advice. Information has been published on the activities of bogus notification agencies. More generally, the Information Commissioner also supports standards and guidance offered to the data protection user community, for example, by the British Computer Society, The National Computing Centre and the British Standards Institution.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Coventry, South constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to her Department's policy since 1997. [219535]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 7 March 2004]:* This information would only be available at disproportionate cost; therefore, I am unable to provide an answer to my hon. Friend's question: however, I can offer the following information about the Department's activities in Coventry and Warwickshire.

Coventry has benefited from capital investment in its industry from the Selective Finance for Industry in England (SFIE) programme (formerly Regional Selective Assistance—RSA). In the last five years, 22 companies have received a total of £12.4 million in SFIE offers which will enable these companies to make capital investments totalling £119.6 million. This investment will allow these companies to create 2,407 new jobs and safeguard a further 832 existing jobs.

Since January 2003 the Small Business Service in the West Midlands made 17 offers of grant to SME's in Coventry. The total value of the grants offered was £945,051 to support Grant for Research and Development (GRD) its predecessor SMART and for Enterprise Grant projects. In the last year, the Small Business Service has assisted a total of 1,695 companies and potential start-ups in the Coventry, South constituency.

122 companies in Coventry have benefited so far from the subsidised advice available from the West Midlands Manufacturing Advisory Service. Companies also benefit from investment by Advantage West Midlands (AWM) through the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Triangle High Technology Corridor; AWM's Cluster programme and funding through the Coventry and Nuneaton Regeneration Zone. This year alone, AWM has spent £34 million on projects across Coventry and Warwickshire which has achieved the following:

Coventry and Warwickshire

Projects	
Jobs created or safeguarded (Number)	2,652
New Businesses Created (Number)	89
Businesses Assisted (Number)	2,347
Learning Opportunities Created (Number)	3,889
Brownfield Land Reclaimed (hectares)	11
Private Sector Leverage (£ million)	16
Community Enterprise Initiatives (Number)	382

Tribunal Cases

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many tribunal cases have been brought under the *(a)* Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and *(b)* the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 since they came into force. [213524]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 4 February 2005]:* The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 came into force on 1 and 2 December 2003 respectively.

In the period December 2003 to 31 March 2004 in total 61 Employment Tribunal claims were registered by the Employment Tribunals Service relating to sexual orientation and 70 claims relating to religion or belief.

For the period 1 April 2004 to 28 February 2005 according to the data held in the Employment Tribunals Service's statistical database, 315 claims have been registered relating to sexual orientation and 265 claims relating to religion or belief. These figures will be included with others in the Employment Tribunals Service's Annual Report, which is due to be published and laid before the House in mid-July 2005.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Consumer Committee met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [214298]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The EU Consumer Committee was in 2003 renamed the European Consumer Consultative Group (ECCG). Its meetings are attended by non-governmental consumer organisations. The UK is currently represented by Nick Stace of Which, and Susan Knox of Food Aware is the alternate member.

Details of ECCG meetings held during the Italian, Irish and Dutch presidency of the EU and who represented the UK are given as follows.

Presidency	*Date*	*ECCG Meeting*	*UK Representative*	*Location*
Italian	July to December 2003	9 July 2003	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels
	July to December 2003	2 October 2003	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels
	July to December 2003	10 December 2003	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels
Irish	January to June 2004	18 March 2004	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels
	January to June 2004	15 June 2004	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels
Dutch	July to December 2004	22 September 2004	Nick Stace (Consumer Association)	Brussels
	July to December 2004	10 December 2004	Susan Knox (Food Aware)	Brussels

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee of experts on the transit of electricity through grids met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [215902]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: No such meetings took place. The relevant Directive—90/547/EEC—was repealed with effect from 1 July 2004.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Contact Committee European Economic Interest Grouping met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217893]

Jacqui Smith: There were no such meetings.

Kidney Disease

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding the Medical Research Council has made available for research into kidney disease in each year since 1997. [222829]

Ms Hewitt: The figures for MRC expenditure on research into kidney disease for the financial years requested are as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	2.1
1998–99	1.8
1999–2000	2.1
2000–01	2.5
2001–02	2.7
2002–03	3.3

The figures for the first three financial years are estimates, while those for the latter three financial years are actual expenditure.

Maternity Pay

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the statistics relating to maternity pay, which, since 1997 *(a)* are no longer collected by her Department and *(b)* have had the way in which the figures are compiled changed. [221798]

Ms Hewitt: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given on 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 423W by the Under-Secretary of State with responsibility for disabled people, my hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool, Garston (Maria Eagle).

Music Industry

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department takes to support the UK music industry; and what action her Department takes to protect the intellectual property rights in the industry. [222472]

Ms Hewitt: In addition to a range of business support solutions that apply to business generally, my Department has recently announced £0.5 million to promote the music industry in key markets like the US and China and, in response to advice from the music industry, UK Trade and Investment will be refocusing its resources and developing new strategies to help UK artists and companies enter the US market which is an export priority for the industry.

We have delivered legislative changes to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights, including enhanced protection in the information society by UK implementation of the EC Copyright Directive (2001/29/EC). My noble Friend the Minister for Science and Innovation with responsibility for intellectual property, and my right hon. Friend the Minister with responsibility for sponsorship of the music industry in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, jointly chair the Creative Industries Forum on Intellectual Property, which includes representatives of the music industry and which is exploring new opportunities for exploiting IP in the digital environment as well as concerns about protection for rights threatened by IP crime and online infringement. This builds on the IP Crime Strategy which was launched by my Department in August last year and our work to raise awareness about IP.

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Newcastle-under-Lyme she estimates have benefited from the minimum wage. [223262]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Newcastle-under-Lyme due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 80,000 people in the North East have benefited from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. It is estimated that the October 2005 uprating will provide a guaranteed pay rise for around 80,000 workers in the North East. The DTI has based these estimates on the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings April 2004.

Phoenix Companies

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures are in place to protect consumers from phoenix companies. [216868]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is as follows:

Measures in place to protect consumers:

Disqualification:

Courts can disqualify directors from between two to 15 years if they are unfit. "Phoenix" companies are particularly targeted and the courts take such cases very seriously. But hard evidence is needed in all cases.

Over 1,000 directors were disqualified in the period April 2004 to February 2005. Over 850 of these disqualifications involved directors offering an undertaking not to act as a director under the recently introduced (2001) new fast track process. It avoids the need for a court hearing where the director consents to a period of disqualification.

The Enforcement "Hotline" was established in January 1998 to enable the public to report possible criminal activities by those who manage companies while disqualified. In the period April 2004 to February 2005, 152 calls were received by the Hotline, 82 of which were referred for investigation.

Prosecution:

Directors can be and are prosecuted for offences relating to "phoenix" operations and on conviction they can, additionally, be disqualified from being directors.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* Executive agencies within the remit of her Department have regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219874]

Jacqui Smith: The Department is lead sponsor for the eight Regional development agencies, the boundaries of which reflect the Government offices for regions' regional structure. The regional development agencies were established under the Regional Development Agencies Act 1998. The London Development Agency is based in London and was established by the Greater London Act 1999. None of the Department's other agencies and NDPBs has regional offices based on the Government offices for the regions' regional structure.

Printer Cartridges

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether she plans to refer the pricing of printer cartridges to the Office of Fair Trading; and if she will make a statement. [215355]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) is the independent competition regulator. It is responsible for deciding what action to take to promote effective competition and address anti-competitive behaviour. Anyone with evidence of anti-competitive conduct should pass that information to the OFT.

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have benefited from child benefit in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the north-east and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [223377]

Dawn Primarolo: Details of *(a)*, *(b)*, *(c)* and *(d)* for November 2003 appear in "Child Benefit Statistics. Geographical Analyses. November 2003". The latest figures available for *(d)* also appear in "Child Benefit Quarterly Statistics. November 2004". These publications are available on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/child_benefit/menu.htm. Geographical analyses for 2004 are not yet available.

I understand from the Department of Work and Pensions that the numbers of families claiming child benefit between 1999 and 2002 (and the numbers of children in these families) were as follows:

	August			
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
(a) Jarrow parliamentary constituency				
Families	10,720	10,655	10,495	10,495
Children	18,460	18,290	17,895	17,760
(b) South Tyneside local authority				
Families	19,810	19,800	19,580	19,530
Children	34,455	34,345	33,685	33,380
(c) North-east Government office region				
Families	326,170	325,460	321,620	319,790
Children	570,975	568,160	559,230	553,845
Great Britain[1]				
Families	7,014,225	7,020,270	7,004,140	6,987,525
Children	12,745,925	12,728,005	12,657,620	12,582,040

[1] Figures for Northern Ireland are not available on exactly the same basis, and hence the UK figure is unavailable.

Notes:
1. Figures are taken from a 100 per cent. sample of the child benefit centre.
2. In order to maintain anonymity of claimants, all 100 per cent. figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
3. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
4. Produced by Information Directorate, DWP.

Figures for previous years are not available on the same basis.

Civil Service

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in which departments and agencies he expects to be able to make further reductions in civil service posts. [223772]

Mr. Boateng: The planned levels of reductions in total and in detail were set out in the Spending Review 2004 White Paper, and are summarised in Chapter 2, Table 2.2.

Inland Revenue

Mr. Gray: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1406W, on Inland Revenue, on what date Inland Revenue commenced a review of its existing informers, and its practices relating to them, to ensure that it would be compliant with the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [223192]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue responded to an approach by the Home Office in 1999 prior to the passage of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act, and informed them of the Department's continuing need to use information provider by informants and, in particular, that type of informant later classified as a Covert Human Intelligence Source by the Provisions of RIPA. The Inland Revenue asked staff in its Special Compliance Office to consider whether any of the informers then in use fell within the definition of a Covert Human Intelligence Source on 9 August 2001.

Tax Evasion

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what methods his Department uses to tackle tax evasion. [223071]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue employs a twin-track approach to ensuring tax compliance by helping taxpayers to meet their obligations and dealing effectively with deliberate non-compliance. Central to that approach, the Revenue has a continuous and sophisticated programme of risk assessment directed at tackling tax evasion.

New Homes (VAT)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to review the zero rate of VAT on new homes. [223355]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government keep all taxes under constant review.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent representations he has received from the European Commission regarding the zero rate of VAT on new homes in the United Kingdom. [223356]

Dawn Primarolo: I am not aware that any Treasury Minister has received any recent representations from the European Commission concerning the zero rate of VAT for new housing.

Office of Government Commerce

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many suppliers are included on the list of pre-qualified suppliers maintained by the Office of Government Commerce's buying solutions; and how many are located in Wales. [223333]

Mr. Boateng: OGC buying.solutions does not maintain a listing of 'pre-qualified suppliers.' Delivery of the products and services is via Framework Agreements and Managed Services contracts. The OGC buying.solutions supply base is 570, of which eight have registered offices in Wales.

In order to provide the appropriate service coverage to central Government and the wider public sector within Wales, the supply base may utilise regional offices or sub-contractors based within Wales. The Management Information submitted by each supplier does not include details of which office or sub-contractor is responsible for carrying out work in each region.

PFI Contracts

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value to date is of secondary market equity sales in private finance initiative contracts. [222886]

Mr. Boateng: The Government do not hold information on sales of equity stakes in PFI deals as these are transactions between two private sector entities. PFI contracts require that the identity of any new owner arising from such a transaction must be notified to the procuring authority of the PFI project. The Government undertake PFI for reasons of value for money, and the value of secondary private sector equity sales does not change the value for money case or the unitary charge paid for an individual project.

Socio-economic Classifications

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of each National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification was unmarried but lived with a partner in the last period for which figures are available; and what proportion of these couples had a child. [223122]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Andrew Tyrie, dated 23 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for the proportion of cohabiting couple families in each National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC), and the proportion of these families that had a child. I am replying in his absence. (223122)

The most recent estimates of the number of cohabiting couples indicated that there were 2 million cohabiting couples in England and Wales in 2003. The proportion of these couples who have children is not available. No estimates are made for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The NS-SEC of families is not routinely published, but the Labour Force Survey can be used to provide estimated proportions of family types by NS-SEC. A table based on data from the first quarter of 2004 for the United Kingdom is attached. This table also shows the proportion of cohabiting couples who have children living with them. The data should be interpreted with some caution as the results are not standardised for age. The number of children an NS SEC category of cohabitants have will, in part, be determined by the age distribution of cohabitants in that category.

Proportion of cohabiting couple families[1] in each NS-SEC[2] and the proportion of these couples that had a child[3], United Kingdom, spring 2004

Percentage

	Higher managerial and professional occupations	*Lower managerial and professional occupations*	*Intermediate occupations*	*Small employers and own account workers*	*Lower supervisory and technical occupations*
Cohabiting couples	13	21	5	12	14
Split of cohabiting couples by whether or not children are resident:					
with no children	71	67	66	52	50
with dependent children	27	30	31	43	46
with non-dependent children only	2	3	3	5	4
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Percentage

	Semi-routine occupations	*Routine occupations*	*Never worked, long term unemployed full-time students and not stated or classifiable*	*Total*
Cohabiting couples	10	13	12	100
Split of cohabiting couples by whether or not children are resident:				
with no children	48	44	64	58
with dependent children	49	52	32	38
with non-dependent children only	4	4	4	4
Total	100	100	100	100

[1] A cohabiting couple family is a cohabiting couple on their own, or with their never-married children who have no children of their own. A small number of those cohabiting will actually be legally married but separated from their marriage partner.
[2] NS-SEC is an occupationally based classification but has rules to provide coverage of the whole adult population. The family reference person has been used to assign the NS-SEC of the family. It does not follow that everyone in the family will be of the same NS-SEC as the family reference person.
[3] A family with children can contain dependent or non-dependent children. Dependent children are defined as children under 16 years of age, or those aged 16 to 18 who are never-married and in full-time education.
Note:
Due to rounding, percentages may not total to exactly 100.
Source:
Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics.

Tax Credits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 76W, on tax credits, how many complaints were received by the MP tax credits complaints team *(a)* by post and *(b)* by telephone in (i) January and (ii) February. [223595]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Total Managed Expenditure

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the projected total managed expenditure for *(a)* 2007–08 and *(b)* 2011–12 is; [223362]

(2) what the projected annually managed expenditure for *(a)* 2007–08 and *(b)* 2011–12 is; [223363]

(3) what the projected total departmental expenditure limits for *(a)* 2007–08 and *(b)* 2011–12 are. [223364]

Mr. Boateng: Plans for Total Managed Expenditure (TME), including Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME), up to 2007–08 are set out in Chapter C of Budget 2005.

Illustrative long-term fiscal projections for 2010–11 and beyond were set out in the 2004 "Long-term Public Finances Report" and were updated in Annex A of Budget 2005.

Tax Credits

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many people in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK received working families tax credit; [223658]

(2) how many people in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK have received child tax credit since its inception. [223660]

Dawn Primarolo: The numbers of families receiving working families tax credit in the areas requested appear in "Working Families' Tax Credit and Disabled Person's Tax Credit Statistics. Geographical analyses".

Estimates of the numbers of in-work families in these areas receiving child tax credit at various dates since July 2003 appear in "Child and Working Tax Credit

Statistics. Geographical analyses". However, these estimates are based on a sample of families and are subject to sampling uncertainty. These publications can be found on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm.

Unemployment

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of *(a)* unemployment and *(b)* long-term unemployment has been in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK in each year since 1997; [223048]

(2) what the level of youth unemployment in the North East was in each year since 1997. [223105]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 23 March 2005:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (223048, 223105)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. Tables 1 and 2 provide the available information. In table 2, long-term unemployment figures are available for the years 1999 to 2004 but not for earlier years.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). Table 3 gives the annual average numbers of young people aged 18 to 24 years old resident in the North East region claiming JSA. Table 4 shows the annual average numbers of all JSA claimants resident and those claiming for over 12 months in the Jarrow Parliamentary Constituency, South Tyneside Local Authority, the North East region and the United Kingdom. The figures for both tables 3 and 4 are for the years 1997 to 2004.

Table 1: Youth Unemployment[1] among residents of the North East Region

	Number
12 months ending February	
1997	33,000
1998	36,000
1999	27,000
2000	34,000
2001	34,000
2002	30,000
2003	28,000
2004	34,000

[1] Unemployed people aged 16 to 24.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 2: People resident in Jarrow parliamentary constituency, South Tyneside local authority and North East Region and the United Kingdom by duration of unemployment

12 months ending February	*Jarrow parliamentary constituency*[1]	*South Tyneside local authority*[1]	*North East region*	*United Kingdom*
1997				
All unemployed	5,000	9,000	118,000	2,207,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998				
All unemployed	5,000	8,000	106,000	1,911,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1999				
All unemployed	3,000	7,000	93,000	1,730,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	[3]	3,000	33,000	520,000
2000				
All unemployed	4,000	11,000	107,000	1,689,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	1,000	4,000	33,000	486,000
2001				
All unemployed	4,000	8,000	90,000	1,518,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	1,000	3,000	28,000	410,000
2002				
All unemployed	4,000	7,000	84,000	1,450,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	1,000	2,000	24,000	354,000
2003				
All unemployed	3,000	7,000	76,000	1,494,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	1,000	1,000	20,000	322,000
2004				
All unemployed	3,000	6,000	77,000	1,444,000
Long-term unemployed[2]	[3]	1,000	17,000	321,000

n/a = Data not available.
[1] Estimates for these areas are based on very small sample sizes and are subject to a very high degree of sampling variability. Changes from year to year, especially, should be treated with caution.
[2] Those unemployed for one year or more.
[3] Estimate not given in order to protect respondent confidentiality.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey

Table 3: JSA claimants resident in the North East region

Annual averages	*Youth claimants (aged 18–24)*
1997	25,670
1998	22,680
1999	20,505
2000	19,030
2001	17,580
2002	16,920
2003	16,365
2004	14,680

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

JSA claimants resident in the Jarrow parliamentary constituency, South Tyneside local authority, the North East Region and the United Kingdom

	Jarrow parliamentary constituency	*South Tyneside local authority*	*North East region*	*United Kingdom*
1997				
All claimants	3,119	7,004	94,459	1,602,442
All claiming for over 12 months	1,035	2,420	33,785	541 ,445
1998				
All claimants	2,766	6,283	84,399	1,362,340
All claiming for over 12 months	540	1,335	24,660	365,680
1999				
All claimants	2,820	6,477	81,042	1,263,001
All claiming for over 12 months	570	1,455	20,305	309,815
2000				
All claimants	2,625	6,058	73,363	1,102,257
All Claiming for over 12 months	560	1,435	16,680	243,385
2001				
All claimants	2,377	5,540	63,852	982,998
All claiming for over 12 months	510	1,295	13,365	191,335
2002				
All claimants	2,273	5,207	59,026	958,759
All Claiming for over 12 months	410	1,045	10,390	154,440
2003				
All claimants	1,986	4,588	53,808	945,894
All claiming for over 12 months	320	815	7,960	141,220
2004				
All claimants	1,742	4,078	47,093	866,144
All claiming for over 12 months	265	665	6,445	135,000

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many young unemployed people there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 2001; [223154]

(2) how many people were unemployed in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 2001; [223155]

(3) how many long-term unemployed people there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 2001. [223183]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Marsden, dated 23 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment in Shrewsbury and Atcham Parliamentary Constituency. (223183, 223154, 223155)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey following International Labour Organisation definitions. Table 1 provides the requested information for the twelve-month periods ending in February each year from 2001 to 2004.

These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. Table 2 gives the annual average number of JSA claimants, the total claiming for over 12 months and those aged 18 to 24 years claiming Jobseeker's Allowance benefits resident in the Shrewsbury and Atcham Parliamentary Constituency for each year since 2001.

Table 1: Unemployed people resident in Shrewsbury and Atcham parliamentary constituency

12 months ending February each year	*All unemployed1*	*Long-term2 unemployed*	*Youth3 unemployed*
2001	2000	[4]	[4]
2002	2000	[4]	1000
2003	1000	[4]	1000
2004	2000	[4]	1000

[1] Refers to all those aged 16 plus who are unemployed.

[2] Refers to those unemployed for more than 12 months.

[3] Refers to those aged 16–24 who are unemployed.

[4] Estimate not given to protect individuals' confidentiality.

Note:

These estimates are based on very small sample sizes and are subject to a very high degree of sampling variability. Changes from year to year, especially, should be treated with caution.

Source:
ONS—Labour Force Survey

Table 2: JSA claimants resident in the Shrewsbury and Atcham parliamentary constituency

Annual averages	*All claimants*	*All claiming for over 12 months*	*Youth claimants (aged 18–24)*
2001	970	150	220
2002	806	105	185
2003	818	75	200
2004	765	65	205

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

DEFENCE

Defence Service Agencies (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people work for the Defence Communications Services Agency; how many are employed in Scotland; what the personnel costs of the agency are; and what the figures were in 2003–04.[215431]

Mr. Ingram: The number of personnel in the Defence Communication Services Agency as of 3 February is 4,820, of whom 140 are based in Scotland. For 2003–04, the overall number of personnel was 4,680, of whom 120 personnel were based in Scotland. The total costs for personnel for 2003–04 was £161.520 million.

Both civilian and Service personnel data by Agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk

The number of Service personnel employed by Agency and location is not collated centrally. However, locally held records were available and have been included.

A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MOD Agency, for the Agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, has also been published on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House.

Personnel numbers are rounded to the nearest 10.

Departmental Finances

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of his Department's SR 2004 Departmental Submission.[217843]

Mr. Ingram: No, as to do so could harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Information relevant to the outcome of Spending Review negotiations can, however, be found in the Ministry of Defence's SR 2004 settlement as set out in Chapter 13 of the 2004 Spending Review document (Cm 6237), with further detail on forward defence plans in "Delivering Security in a Changing World—Future Capabilities" (Cm 6269).

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value was of receipts from asset sales that were *(a)* appropriated in aid of his Department and *(b)* surrendered to the Consolidated Fund in each financial year since 1997–98. [217990]

Mr. Ingram: The amounts included in Appropriations-in-Aid and those surrendered to the Consolidated Fund in respect of fixed asset disposals for the years commencing 1999–2000 are shown in the table. The figures are based on the published Resource Accounts of the Department, the first set of which was published for the year 1999–2000. Information in respect of years 1997–98 and 1998–99 is included in the Appropriation Accounts of the respective years; these are available in the Library of the House.

Disposal of fixed assets

£000

	Appropriations-in-Aid	*Surrendered to Consolidated Fund*
1999–2000	234,862	[1]—
2000–01	317,987	[1]—
2001–02	299,589	22,557
2002–03	360,555	44,300
2003–04	481,298	125,927

[1] This information was not recorded in the Resource Accounts for these years. Any amounts surrendered to the Consolidated Fund would have been included in the Appropriation Accounts, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House.

The amounts shown for Appropriations-in-Aid for the year 2003–04 represent receipts on sale of fixed assets; in prior years asset disposals were required to be stated in the Departmental Resource Accounts at their net book value in accordance with HM Treasury Resource Accounting Manual.

The above figures do not include the disposal in respect of sale of shares in QinetiQ, a public corporation. This resulted in a receipt of £39,427,000 which was surrendered to the Consolidated Fund.

Fighter Aircraft

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the next generation of the strategic fighter aircraft to be operational; and where it will be based. [222386]

Mr. Ingram: The Joint Combat Aircraft (JCA) is expected to enter service towards the middle of the next decade. As I announced on 10 March 2005, there are five RAF Stations currently being considered as its potential bases: RAF Cottesmore, RAF Marham, RAF Lossiemouth, RAF St. Mawgan and RAF Leeming.

IT Contracts

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the contracts awarded by his Department to *(a)* Computer Sciences Corporation and *(b)* EDS in each of the last seven years. [220258]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Mutual Defence Agreement

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the running costs of the Atomic Co-ordinating Offices in London and Washington established under the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement were in the last year for which figures are available; and how many staff are employed in the offices. [216673]

Mr. Ingram: The annual running costs of the Atomic Control Office, London and the Atomic Co-ordinating Office, Washington are some £72,000 and some £400,000 respectively. The numbers of staff employed in each office are three and five respectively.

Northern Ireland (Royal Navy)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* shore-based Royal Navy personnel are stationed in Northern Ireland and *(b)* ship-based personnel are assigned to duty in Northern Ireland, broken down by rank. [223293]

Mr. Ingram: The total strength of shore-based Royal Navy personnel stationed in Northern Ireland as at 21 March 2005 is 31 (5 Officers, 26 Ratings), 10 of whom are full-time RN staff administering HMS Caroline, a Royal Naval Reserve Establishment.

The total number of ship-based Royal Navy personnel currently assigned to duty in Northern Ireland is 107 (19 Officers, 88 Ratings).

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. McFall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the question tabled by the right hon. Member for Dumbarton on 10 December 2004, reference 204981, on cash machines. [211369]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 26 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 332W.

Regiments

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on progress the future *(a)* Mercia, *(b)* Yorkshire, *(c)* Scottish and *(d)* Welsh regiments are making on decisions on (i) cap badges, (ii) rank slides, (iii) belt buckles and (iv) mess dress. [221488]

Mr. Ingram: A joint formation committee will be set up for each of the new regiments being created under the future infantry structure. Each committee will be made up of representatives from the respective antecedent regiments. They will consider regimental dress and accoutrement regulations and how each of the antecedent regiments will be represented.

It is anticipated that these committees will report during the second half of 2005. Recommendations on dress will need executive approval from the Army Dress Committee before any announcement is finalised.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place on regimental *(a)* funds and *(b)* silverware for each of the three regiments due for merger into the King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment. [219043]

Mr. Ingram: A committee of representatives from The King's Own Royal Border Regiment, The King's Regiment and The Queen's Lancashire Regiment will be formed to consider how each of the antecedent regiments can be best represented following their amalgamation into the King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment. As part of its remit, this committee will consider future plans for regimental funds and silverware.

It is anticipated that the committee's recommendations will be presented to the colonels of regiments during the second half of 2005 for executive approval. As the majority of regimental assets are held in charitable trusts, the management of which are controlled by trustees in accordance with their charter, any proposals will be subject to Charity Commission approval.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what name for the new regiment in the North West was put to the Army Board by the Queen's Lancashire Regiment. [222276]

Mr. Ingram: Responsibility for putting advice to the Executive Committee of the Army Board rested, as with all Divisions of Infantry, with the Colonel Commandant of the King's Division, rather than with any individual regiment within the Division. A number of options were considered within the Division during the consultation process, and a flavour of the debate was exposed to ECAB. In the event, 'The King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment' was endorsed by ECAB as the name for the new regiment and recommended to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence, which he accepted.

Short-term Plans

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library his Department's short-term plans since financial year 1997–98. [213587]

Mr. Ingram: There is no single formal document that constitutes the Department's short-term plan. The output of the short-term planning round is a set of detailed planning assumptions and financial data which forms part of internal advice to senior management and Ministers on the overall affordability of the defence programme. It is not in a readily publishable form.

A summary of the outcome of the planning process is, however, set out in the Government's expenditure plans for the Ministry of Defence. A table of the Department's plans produced since 1997–98 is provided as follows.

	CM
1997–98 to 1999–2000	3602
1998–99	3902
1999–2000 to 2001–02	4208
2000–01 to 2001–02	4608
2001–02 to 2003–04	5109
2002–03 to 2003–04	5412

Additionally, documents produced since 1999–2000 are available at http://www.mod.uk/publications/mod_reports.htm.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal By-Products Regulation

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she has issued to officials on carrying out risk assessments before applying the Animal By-Products Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 to Intermediary Plants. [221870]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is extensive guidance available to State Veterinary Service (SVS) officials on the inspection and approval of Intermediate Plants. This guidance was produced in consultation with experienced Veterinary Officers from the SVS. In addition, officials have access to the same guidance we have produced for Intermediate Plant operators, and guidance on the loading and unloading of animal by-products. However, while there is a need to assess any risks to public or animal health, the main purpose of the inspections is to ensure that the Intermediate Plant complies with the requirements of the Animal By-Products Regulation. The instructions to vets therefore focus the legal requirements in order to ensure that the regulation is applied consistently across the country.

Avian Influenza

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice her Department is giving to poultry farmers on Avian Influenza. [221693]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department undertook a publicity campaign about the potential threat from Avian Influenza to the poultry industry in October 2003 explaining the possible threat and highlighting the clinical signs that owners should look out for. This advice is on the Defra website together with advice on biosecurity and human health and safety issues.

Officials are meeting with sections of the industry this month and will ensure that they are kept up to date on relevant aspects of avian flu.

Farm Animal Welfare Council

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's response to the Farm Animal Welfare Council report, with particular reference to the report's recommendations on Schechita. [223018]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government issued their final response to the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) report on the Welfare of Farmed Animals at Slaughter or Killing on the 8 March 2005. In the response, the Government accepts 53 of the 94 recommendations made by FAWC, partially accepts 25, and rejects 16: the recommendations accepted by Government will lead to significant improvements in animal welfare.

The Government did not accept FAWC's recommendation that slaughter without prior stunning should be banned, as we respect the rights of communities in Britain to slaughter animals in accordance with the requirements of their religion.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with Schechita UK following publication of her Department's response to recommendations by the Farm Animal Welfare Council. [223019]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government published their final response to the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) report on the Welfare of Farmed Animals at Slaughter or Killing on the 8 March 2005. Defra has not had any discussions with Shechita UK following publication.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on how many premises during the 2001 foot and mouth outbreak culling took place of *(a)* cattle, *(b)* sheep, *(c)* pigs and *(d)* other animals under the (i) infected premises, (ii) dangerous contact, (iii) slaughter on suspicion and (iv) contiguous cull schemes then operating, broken down by (A) county and (B) region; how many samples were taken; and how many positive tests were found at each premises. [220084]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The information requested has been placed in the Library of the House.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many instances of *(a)* inaccurate valuations, *(b)* deliberate spreading of infection and *(c)* claims for work not undertaken in all completed prosecutions instituted against individuals and companies for fraudulent claims arising from the 2001 foot and mouth epidemic. [221407]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The information requested is as follows.

Inaccurate valuations:

It is not clear what is meant by 'inaccurate valuations'. We did carry out a full reconciliation of all compensation payments following the outbreak. Any amendments or recalculations were done and additional payments made or overpayments recovered as appropriate. We do not have a record of each claim that was affected in this way.

The value of an animal is a subjective decision made by professionally qualified valuers, who have sight of the animal and a full knowledge of the herd/flock history as well as experience of the livestock industry. Once the valuation is agreed by the valuer, the farmer and the supervising Ministry official we are legally obliged to pay the agreed amount. There have been observations made that our control over the valuation process was poor and that this contributed to higher than necessary compensation payments. We have accepted this and improved our approach to valuations for a future outbreak.

Deliberate spreading of infection:

No formal assessment of whether farmers or anyone else deliberately sought to introduce foot and mouth disease (FMD) in order to claim compensation took place. There were many media reports at the time of allegations that such mischief was taking place. Three

files where allegations were investigated in 2001 have been traced and the allegation and outcomes are summarised as follows:

File A—on investigation this allegation of deliberate infection amounted solely to repetition by an unidentified man to a part-time journalist and recorded by the part-time journalist on tape of rumours that were then prevalent about deliberate infection. The unidentified man said

"tails from infected animals are placed in uninfected areas to spread the disease".

The part-time journalist refused to reveal the identity of his source so the investigation could not be taken any further.

File B—an anonymous voice-message in an Irish accent left on a mobile phone asked the recipient to supply

"animals infected with BSE and FMD"

turned out to be a prank from the caller. This was admitted by the prankster when he was traced by an Investigation Officer. The prankster also admitted he had dialled the wrong number and the prank was intended for a friend rather than the recipient of the call.

File C—Farmer A's cattle were slaughtered as they had been in contact with FMD. He was compensated. He bought some more cattle from Farmer B but left them on Farmer B's land for the time being. Farmer A's replacement cattle and Farmer B's own cattle contracted FMD. Both were compensated. The matter was investigated as it seemed very suspicious. There was no evidence of any deliberate misconduct but poor bio-security by Farmer A, who visited the cattle on three occasions, was identified as a possible cause of the transmission of FMD.

Completed prosecutions for fraud arising out of fraudulent claims for compensation:

Six people were prosecuted by Defra for fraud offences in connection with the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in 2001:

Three members of staff were prosecuted and pleaded guilty to making false subsistence claims and were ordered to complete Community punishment orders and to pay compensation to Defra totalling £5,883. All three were dismissed.

Three farmers were prosecuted for making false compensation claims; one farmer pleaded guilty to falsely stating the cost of feed and was fined £3,500, two other farmers were acquitted—it was alleged that both had falsely overclaimed for equipment destroyed or premises damaged during the FMD outbreak.

Fox Control

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of urban foxes which were *(a)* trapped, *(b)* poisoned and *(c)* otherwise destroyed by local authorities in England as part of their pest control or public health functions in the last year for which figures are available. [223141]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not made any assessment of the number of urban foxes which were *(a)* trapped, *(b)* poisoned and *(c)* otherwise destroyed by local authorities in England.

However, there are no pesticides approved for poisoning foxes so to do so would be unlawful. Any foxes suspected of being poisoned should be reported to Defra's Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme on freephone 0800 321 600.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what methods local authorities in England are permitted to use to dispose of *(a)* dead foxes that have been poisoned or otherwise destroyed and *(b)* live foxes which have been trapped as part of pest control or public health procedures. [223142]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are no specific controls on the disposal of either *(a)* dead or *(b)* live foxes.

However, dead foxes could be considered 'waste' within the Waste Framework Directive. As such they should be disposed of in ways which protect the environment and human health.

Any wild foxes that are suspected of being infected with diseases communicable to humans or animals must be disposed of in accordance with the Animal By-Products Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002.

Defra does not condone the live capture of foxes and their release elsewhere, although the practice is not unlawful. There are no controls on specific methods regarding the translocation of live foxes but the methods used must not contravene animal legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Protection of Animals Act 1911 or Abandonment of Animals Act 1960.

There are no pesticides approved for poisoning foxes therefore to do so would be unlawful. Any foxes suspected of being poisoned should be reported to Defra's Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme on freephone 0800 321 600.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the local authorities in England which manage or control urban fox populations as part of their pest control or public health functions. [223143]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no obligation on local authorities in England to control urban fox populations or to report any such control to Defra. Therefore the Department has no such list.

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate the Department has made of the population of urban foxes in England. [223144]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not made any estimate of the population of urban foxes in England.

Greenways

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many kilometres of greenways there are in England; how many greenways and similar projects are planned; and if she will make a statement. [222058]

Alun Michael: The Countryside Agency set up six 'pilot greenway projects' in England between 1999 and 2002, which together totalled a distance of approximately 60 km (37 miles). The Countryside Agency defined "Greenways" as a

"network of largely car-free, off-road routes connecting people to facilities and open spaces in and around towns and counties and to the countryside. For shared use by people of all abilities on foot, bike or horseback, for commuting play or leisure".

The Agency's aim was to build on existing facilities and routes and was aimed at providing:

Improved access to employment, shops, schools, leisure centres and places of interest.

Inter-connecting links between communities.

Continuity of routes.

Encouragement to increase cycling, walking and horse riding.

An improved environment—less traffic congestion and pollution.

Attractive routes for leisure and recreational purposes.

The Agency wished to link "Greenways" to other networks for non-motorised users such as the National Cycle Network, towpaths beside inland waterways, and National Trials. They include stretches of 'quiet' minor roads designed to be more attractive for people on bikes, horseback or walking.

The Countryside Agency has suggested to local authorities that through the introduction of their 'Rights of Way Improvement Plans', they could identify further routes and develop further integration with public transport, as part of the effort to reverse the trend for increasing reliance on the private car for the journey to work.

Middle East (Imports)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the *(a)* viability, *(b)* social impact and *(c)* economic impact of quality requirements for Middle Eastern produce imports; when this assessment was last reviewed; and if she will make a statement. [213234]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra has not carried out any such assessment.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many of the 15,000 homes to be built under the First Time Buyers Initiative he expects to be completed by 31 March 2008. [223278]

Keith Hill: Current estimates suggest that there could be up to 4,000 completions under the First Time Buyers Initiative by the end of 2008.

English Partnerships are continuing to develop the business model that will underpin the delivery of homes under the scheme, and this estimate is subject to revision.

However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, in conjunction with English Partnerships, is committed to delivering 15,000 starts on site under the First Time Buyers Initiative by 2010.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to publish the consultation paper on the Social Homebuy scheme. [223283]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister plans to publish a consultation paper on low cost home ownership, including proposals for an expanded Homebuy scheme, shortly.

Mr. Love: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimates have been made of the *(a)* expenditure on and *(b)* number of homes to be built under the Department's housing programmes in (i) the London borough of Enfield, (ii) Greater London and (iii) England in each year from 2005–06 to 2009–10; and if he will make a statement. [223495]

Keith Hill: For 2005–06 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister currently estimates that around 45,000 homes will be provided for rent or low cost home ownership in England. The principal source of funding is the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme which will spend around £1.65 billion.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to provide around £782 million for new rent and low cost home ownership homes for London in 2005–06 this will assist in providing around 8,000 homes. Estimates for Enfield are not available.

The regional allocations of the £5.5 billion for Regional Housing Pot for spending in 2006–07 and 2007–08 were announced yesterday. Nearly £2.3 billion has been allocated to London. Decisions on the amount of these resources to be used for affordable housing will be taken in the summer in the light of advice from Regional Housing Boards. Allocations for individual authorities will be agreed in early 2006 following the ADP bidding round.

Future funding and delivery of outputs from 2008–09 will be dependent upon the outcome of the next Spending Review in 2006.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the capital receipts generated from the Right to Buy in with-debt local authorities in 2003–04 and available to spend on capital investment was *(a)* spent on refurbishing existing housing and *(b)* loaned to a registered social landlord to build new social housing under the Local Authority Social Housing Grant mechanism. [223287]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on the way in which with-debt local authorities used the proportion of the capital receipt arising from a Right to Buy disposal which they retained.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 25 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 90–92W, how many of the homes to be provided for rent in 2005–06 will be funded through *(a)* the Approved Development Programme, *(b)* the Approved Development Programme Challenge Fund, *(c)* Transitional Local Authority Social Housing Grant, *(d)* the expanded Private Finance Initiative, *(e)* planning gain without public subsidy and *(f)* other funding streams. [223297]

Keith Hill: The following table shows current estimates of the number of homes to be provided for rent in 2005–06 by the various categories requested.

		Number
(a)	Approved Development Programme	20,000
(b)	Approved Development Programme Challenge Fund	700
(c)	Transitional Local Authority Social Housing Grant	2,200
(d)	Private Finance Initiative	500
(e)	Planning gain without public subsidy	1,300
(f)	Other funding streams	800

Estimates for sections *(a)* -*(c)* are based on Housing Corporation data as at 18 March. The reduction in the total estimate is due solely to a lower estimate in Transitional Local Authority Social Housing Grant completions for 2005–06 and reflects detailed timing of outputs.

Local Compacts

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the role the Local Compacts with the voluntary and community sector will play in delivering his Department's five-year programme, 'Sustainable Communities: People, places and prosperity'. [222953]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister supports the Compact Action Plan target for all areas to develop a local compact as a framework within which the voluntary and community sector can work in partnership with other local stakeholders for the benefit of local people. The detail of how each local compact can assist in delivering the various policies and programmes outlined in 'Sustainable Communities: People, places and prosperity' is for local stakeholders to agree.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's assessment is of the contribution that solar photovoltaics can make to reducing carbon emissions in new build housing built to latest Part L Building Regulations. [220705]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has determined that solar photovoltaic generating systems are not yet cost-effective. They were not, therefore, specifically mentioned in the Part L consultation document last year as being appropriate to the achievement of reasonable provision in compliance with the Building Regulations.

The Part L proposals include setting minimum overall building performance standards at levels much higher than at present and providing new technical guidance on low and zero carbon systems. PV is not ruled out and remains one of the technologies that builders can choose to adopt to comply with the regulations.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will extend permitted development status to the installation of small scale renewables by householders, subject to adequate controls to ensure no or minimal visual intrusion; if he will make representations to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to include this measure in the draft microgeneration strategy due to be published shortly, pursuant to section 82 of the Energy Act 2004; and if he will make a statement. [221638]

Keith Hill: In January, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister launched a review of the legislation that governs minor development by householders. Meanwhile, it is already the case that, as a general rule, those in dwellinghouses can install solar panels and photovoltaic cells without needing to make a planning application, provided the panels do not project significantly above the plane of the roof.

Where a planning application is required, Planning Policy Statement 22, Renewable Energy, urges local planning authorities and developers to consider renewable energy projects in all new developments. There are opportunities for installing solar panels, photovoltaic cells, biomass heating, small wind turbines, and combined heat and power schemes in a great many new—and some existing—buildings. Authorities should encourage such technologies through policies in local development documents.

Supporting People Programme

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his plans are for funding the Supporting People Programme over the next five years. [222047]

Yvette Cooper: Funding for the Supporting Programme is £1.72 billion in 2005–06, £1.7 billion in 2006–07 and £1.7 billion in 2007–08.

From the inception of the Supporting People programme it has been the intention to move away from the inherited distribution of funding, to ensure that funding better reflects relative need. It was recognised at the outset that services had grown up in an ad hoc way and whiles many quality services were in existence there was a need to develop a programme that would allow for a more structured approach to be adopted across the country.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is developing a needs based formula for the distribution of Supporting People funding in the longer term. We are working with local authority representative bodies and will consult widely on a revised version later this year. The extent of the increases or reductions in grant to Authorities and the rate at which they are introduced will form part of the contribution.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will monitor the impact on Administering Authorities of introducing any new needs based distribution formula.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of changes to the way funds are allocated to Supporting People from a historically based allocation formula to a needs based one on the level of support housing units provided in West Sussex. [222048]

Yvette Cooper: The Government commissioned an Independent Review into the Supporting People programme following significant late growth in estimated costs from £1.4 billion in December 2002 to £1.8 billion by March 2003. The Review reported that there are wide variations in unit costs between authorities and that £1.8 billion was too much to pay for the services provided.

Service packages work and Audit Commission inspections demonstrate that there is significant potential for making efficiency savings in the current pattern of service provision while safeguarding valuable services. Where authorities face reductions in grant as a result of moving to a pattern which better reflects needs we expect them to use the service review process to achieve these savings.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with local authority representatives on the development of a needs based formula for the distribution of Supporting People funding in the longer term. We will consult widely on a revised version later this year, including on the extent of increases or reductions in grants to authorities and the rate at which they are introduced. West Sussex will be invited to contribute to that consultation.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people currently benefit from Supporting People in West Sussex. [222049]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister estimates that the Supporting People programme in West Sussex currently funds housing related support services to approximately 12,000 individuals and households.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

European Union (International Sport)

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with EU counterparts regarding the establishment of an EU identity in international sport. [223014]

Mr. Caborn: Neither I, nor my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State have had any discussions with our EU counterparts regarding the establishment of an EU identity in international sport.

Regional Sports Boards

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Regional Sports Boards. [223453]

Mr. Caborn: As part of the overall restructuring of both Sport England and the delivery of sport in England, the nine Regional Sports Boards (RSBs) were reconstituted to determine for each region the targets that will deliver the national objective to increase participation in sport and physical activity. Since their reconstitution, each RSB has fulfilled this role by publishing its regional plan for sport and setting out its investment priorities. On the basis of these priorities, RSBs have budgeted in 2004–05 to make awards from Sport England's Community Investment Fund worth some £120 million.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total public expenditure on Regional Sports Boards has been in each year since their creation. [223469]

Mr. Caborn: Regional Sports Boards were reconstituted in their current form as part of Sport England's modernisation process and took responsibility for the distribution of Sport England's Community Investment Fund in April 2004. Details of their planned public expenditure (Exchequer and Lottery) in 2004–05 are provided in the table.

£000

Region	*Awards distributed*	*Direct delivery costs*	*Other running costs*	*Total*
East	9,128	39	989	10,156
East Midlands	14,868	44	1,041	15,953
London	12,802	60	1,066	13,927
North East	11,915	46	930	12,891
North West	26,849	74	1,249	28,172
South East	14,514	51	1,333	15,899
South West	10,394	38	952	11,384
West Midlands	13,183	46	1,061	14,290
Yorkshire	9,054	34	1,022	10,120

Sports Institutes

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total cost was, including match funding, of the capital facilities that form the UK's network of sports institutes. [222557]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England has provided just over £132 million of Lottery funding towards the English Institute of Sport's capital facilities. Sport England estimates that their funding represents approximately 87.5 per cent. of the total cost of the capital facilities with a further 12.5 per cent. (some £19 million) of the cost met by matched funding. Funding for the Scottish Institute of Sport, Sports Institute Northern

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Abolition of Slavery (Commemoration)

Mr. Tynan: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire. [223497]

Derek Twigg: The 200th anniversary commemoration provides a useful focus for schools to enrich curriculum work on slavery through opportunities in History and Citizenship education. The DfES and DCMS are jointly funding the "Slavery, Society and Port Cities" project aimed at engaging schoolchildren and teachers to utilise the unique contribution that slavery-related cultural resources bring to the debate on cultural identity and diversity.

Adult Education

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the expected average change in adult education course fees over the next two years is. [223255]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Further education colleges and local authorities will retain considerable discretion in the setting of fees for adults in 2005/06. There will be no change in the fee concessions arrangements in further education that help unemployed people, those on income based benefits, and retired people and working

families on low incomes, to access learning. Learners will also continue to have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. We will continue to make a very significant contribution to further and adult education although our assumption will remain that adults should continue to contribute to the costs of their learning unless otherwise eligible for fee concessions. Changes to the Learning and Skills Council's further education funding methodology fee assumption in 2005/06 mean that the learner contribution to the cost of their learning will increase from 25 per cent. to 27.5 per cent. of the basic course cost. Decisions about funding arrangements for 2006/07 have yet to be made.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what safeguards are planned to protect adult education classes that do not teach basic skills. [223256]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Government are committed to safeguarding learning for personal fulfilment which does not necessarily lead to qualifications. The Learning and Skills Council's budget for such learning, delivered though local education authorities, increased from £206 million in 2003–04 to £207.4 million in 2004–05 compared with £145 million in 2000–01. My Department will shortly be receiving proposals from the Learning and Skills Council on how to meet this safeguard in the long term while ensuring a fair distribution of public funding between geographical areas.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what changes she is proposing to make to adult education classes. [223257]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department will shortly receive initial proposals from the Learning and Skills Council on the reform of the Funding and. Planning arrangements for First Steps and Personal and Community Development Learning for Adults. This follows a full public consultation last year to which the Learning and Skills Council received nearly 300 replies including from individuals, local education authorities and further education colleges. The objectives are: to maintain the safeguard for the continued availability of courses for Personal and Community Development; to ensure an equitable distribution of public funding between geographical areas; and a proper balance between public funding, and financial contributions by individuals to the cost of their own learning.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she is taking to improve provision of adult education. [223414]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: On March 22 we published our White Paper setting out our policies and progress in improving adult education and skills—entitled "Skills : Getting on in business, getting on at work". It set out the key measures we have taken in this area, including creation of the new network of Sector Skills Councils and the successful Employer Training Pilots, both of which create a powerful new employer-led direction to skills provision. It also announced our plans for further improving adult provision, including the roll out of the National Employer Training Programme, the creation of new Skills Academies to deliver training in each sector, the national roll-out of the entitlement to free tuition to NVQ Level 2, and an improved and extended service to deliver advice and guidance on careers, training and support.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost per student was at current prices of providing Level 3 courses for adults at further education colleges in each year since 1997–98; what the Government's contribution was per student; and what her estimate is for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* each of the next two years. [223496]

Dr. Howells: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The costs of providing Level 3 courses for adults at further education colleges are set by the LSC and as such the Department does not collect or hold the information requested.

Mark Haysom, the Learning and Skills Council's Chief Executive will write to my hon. Friend with details of what the average cost per student was at current prices of providing Level 3 courses for adults at further education colleges in each year since 1997–98; what the Government's contribution was per student; and what his estimate is for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* each of the next two years. A copy of his letter will be placed in the House Library.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether her Department will fully fund courses for adults at Level 3 in further education colleges in 2005–06; [223498]

(2) whether she expects fees for adults for courses above Level 2 in further education colleges to rise in 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [223511]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. We will continue to provide fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income-based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all which covers the largest part of the cost of courses but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at Level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005–06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her plans are for future fee levels for adults studying at Level 2 and Level 3 at further education colleges in Cornwall in the next three years. [223501]

Dr. Howells: We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all learners which covers the largest part of the cost of courses but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at Level 2, or who are not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005–06 unless they qualify for fee

concessions. Colleges will retain considerable discretion to set fees and offer additional concessions. Decisions about funding arrangements for 2006–07 have yet to be made.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to introduce concessionary fees for those aged over 60 years who wish to study in a further education college in Cornwall. [223503]

Dr. Howells: In addition to the significant publicly funded provision available to all learners, older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. Learners of any age will also have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges in Cornwall will retain considerable discretion in setting fees, and although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding she has in place for adults studying at Level 3 at further education colleges in each local education authority area. [223504]

Dr. Howells: The Department funds provision at Level 3 through the Learning and Skills Council's learning participation budget which is £6.7 billion for 2005–06. In 2003–04, the Learning and Skills Council funded 465,000 adult learners at Level 3, at a cost of some £417 million. A further £367 million was spent on over 100,000 young people on Level 3 advanced apprenticeships. Our new Skills White Paper outlines our commitment to increasing support at this level. Information about adult budgets by local education authority area is not held centrally.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to ensure that fee concessions remain in place for those aged over 60 years who study in further education colleges. [223509]

Dr. Howells: Older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income-based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. Learners of any age will also have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges will continue to have considerable discretion in setting fees, and although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Child Poverty

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to achieve the Government's targets of *(a)* ending child poverty by 2020 and *(b)* halving it by 2010; and if she will make a statement. [219344]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 2 March 2005]:* The Government set out the steps that departments across Government are taking to achieve the targets of ending child poverty by 2020 and halving it by 2010 in the Child Poverty Review, published alongside the 2004 Spending Review and available at

http://www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/spending_review/spend_sr04/associated_documents/spending_sr04_childpoverty.cfm.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether Ministers in her Department have issued written instructions to override her Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221108]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Financial Secretary on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Departmental Dress Code

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [222539]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* My Department's commitment not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of religion or belief is set out clearly in its equal opportunities policy. Accordingly, the Department's policies do permit the wearing of the Kirpan by its Sikh employees.

Engineering (Women Students)

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to increase the number of women students undertaking *(a)* further education and *(b)* higher education in engineering. [223227]

Dr. Howells: The details of our plans to increase women's participation in science and engineering across the education sector are set out in the Government's 'Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014', published jointly last July by my Department, DTI and HM Treasury.

The Government's overall ambitions are to achieve a step change in: the quality of science teachers and lecturers in every school, college and university; the results for students studying science at GCSE level; the numbers choosing SET subjects in post-16 education and in higher education; and the proportion of better qualified students pursuing R and D careers.

English Examinations (Key Stage 3)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to ensure the timely validation of Key Stage 3 examinations in English in 2005. [223199]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's National Assessment Agency (NAA), which is responsible for test administration, has awarded the 2005 contract for test marking and data collection to Pearson Assessment and Testing. NAA is working

closely with Pearson to ensure that all lessons learnt from 2004 will be fed into improving test delivery in 2005.

However the review of 2004 test delivery conducted by the QCA led them to conclude that extra time is needed to mark Key Stage 3 English tests and validate results. This means that the 2005 Key Stage 3 Achievement and Attainment tables are unlikely to be published before March 2006.

Examination Results

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the examination results were in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004 of the three non-selective state secondary schools nearest to each of the academies opened in (i) September 2002 and (ii) September 2003. [221289]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested can be found in the following table.

School name	Distance from academy (miles)	Age range	GCSE and equivalent (percentage) 2004 5+ A*-C	GCSE and equivalent (percentage) 2003 5+ A*-C	Post 16 2004 APS per entry	Post 16 2004 APS per candidate	Post 16 2003 APS per entry	Post 16 2003 APS per candidate
Academies opening in school year 2003/04								
Walsall Academy	—	11–18	50	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Frank F Harrison Community School	1.2	11–18	48	25	140.0	52.2	124.4	50.5
Sheffield Sports and Community College	1.4	11–18	40	33	246.4	68.6	283.1	79.1
Sneyd Community School	2.0	11–18	41	35	253.5	67.0	242.6	64.5
Manchester Academy	—	11–16	8	[1]	—	—	—	—
Trinity CofE High School	0.4	11–16	61	70	—	—	—	—
Whalley Range 11–18 High School and Business and Enterprise College	1.3	11–18	58	46	209.0	73.8	202.2	71.8
St. Peters RC High School	1.6	11–16	37	34	—	—	—	—
Djanogly City Academy Nottingham	—	11–19	51	[1]	127.8	54.8	[1]	[1]
Ellis Guilford School and Sports College	1.1	11–16	39	29	—	—	—	—
Elliott Durham School	1.2	11–16	18	15	—	—	—	—
The Nottingham Bluecoat School and Technology College	1.3	11–18	51	64	263.3	70.1	294.4	73.4
Capital City Academy	—	11–19	29	[1]	81.1	32.4	[1]	[1]
Queens Park Community School	0.2	11–19	46	44	184.0	66.2	203.9	65.4
Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College	0.5	11–18	64	63	241.8	76.4	260.4	78.8
Cardinal Hinsley High School	0.7	11–19	18	27	135.0	63.0	62.1	27.2
The City Academy of Bristol	—	11–18	33	[1]	97.3	42.4	[1]	[1]
Fairfield High School	1.1	11–16	43	55	—	—	—	—
St. Thomas More Catholic Secondary School	1.2	11–16	41	27	—	—	—	—
Speedwell Technology College	1.5	11–18	23	31	159.4	55.9	107.5	49.6
West London Academy	—	11–18	35	[1]	227.3	93.4	[1]	[1]
Northolt High School	0.7	11–18	34	52	216.4	70.1	239.2	71.4
Greenford High School	1.0	11–19	63	63	222,1	69.5	219.7	67.0
The Cardinal Wiseman Roman Catholic School	1.8	11–18	90	93	284.5	75.9	249.1	76.1
City of London Academy (Southwark) 2	—	11–19	[1]	[1]	[1]	—	—	—
Aylwin Girls' School	0.3	11–16	33	27	—	—	—	—
Walworth School	0.5	11–16	56	53	—	—	—	—
St. Michael's RC School	0.7	11–16	65	53	—	—	—	—
The Academy at Peckham	—	11–18	12	[1]	[1]	—	—	—
Aylwin Girls' School	1.0	11–16	33	27	—	—	—	—
Archbishop Michael Ramsey Technology College	1.1	11–18	36	35	167.3	58.4	135.8	49.1
The St. Thomas the Apostle College	0.8	11–16	56	53	—	—	—	—
The King's Academy	—	11–18	34	[1]	—	—	—	—
The Newlands Catholic School FCJ	1.4	11–16	43	48	—	—	—	—
King's Manor School, Specialist Sports College	1.6	11–16	37	31	—	—	—	—
St. David's Roman Catholic Technology College	1.6	11–16	34	46	—	—	—	—
Academies opening in school year 2002/03								
Greig City Academy, Haringey	—	11–18	25	35	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Hornsey Secondary School for Girls	0.4	11–18	53	49	180.8	71.4	147.7	60.6
Highgate Wood Secondary School	0.8	11–18	51	46	222.9	67.8	162.1	54.4
Park View Academy	1.2	11–18	39	23	120.0	53.3	63.3	34.5
The Business Academy Bexley	—	11–18	34	21	[1]	[1]	[1]	[1]
Trinity School, Belvedere	1.4	11–18	47	39	188.3	69.3	258.5	84.7
Erith School	2.0	11–18	34	40	184.0	70.4	165.3	62.8
Welling School	2.1	11–18	36	32	179.8	65.4	165.7	54.2

School name	Distance from academy (miles)	Age range	GCSE and equivalent (percentage) 2004 5+ A*-C	GCSE and equivalent (percentage) 2003 5+ A*-C	Post 16 2004 APS per entry	Post 16 2004 APS per candidate	Post 16 2003 APS per entry	Post 16 2003 APS per candidate
Unity City Academy	—	11–18	17	16	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—
Ormesby School	0.9	11–16	21	24	—	—	—	—
The Newlands Catholic School FCJ	1.5	11–16	43	48	—	—	—	—
King's Manor School, Specialist Sports College	2.1	11–16	37	31	—	—	—	—

[1] For GCSE and Equivalent results this indicates that the institution was not published that year and for Post 16 that there were no entries for that institution.
[2] GCSE/Post 16 results are not available as it had Year 7 pupils only.

Family Resolutions Pilot

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents have taken part in the Family Resolutions Pilot Project to date; and how many have accepted mediation services as part of the project. [221881]

Margaret Hodge: As at 15 March 25 cases, comprising 50 parents, have been referred to the Family Resolutions Pilot Project and six cases, comprising 12 parents, have attended the (CAFCASS-conducted) parent planning stage of the project.

FE Funding

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the funding gap between sixth-form colleges and school sixth-forms in each of the last three financial years. [223784]

Dr. Howells: The Department's main measure for what the funding gap between school sixth-forms and further education colleges is the difference in funding rates for an AS/A2 qualification. In 2002/03 the difference was 10.5 per cent.

For the academic year 2003/04, base funding rates per qualification increased by 3 per cent. for school sixth-forms and by 4.5 per cent. for further education colleges on a broadly comparable basis. In 2004/05, funding rates for colleges meeting their targets increased by 5 per cent., while those for school sixth forms rose by 4 per cent. We expect to see this trend continue in the 2005/06 academic year.

However, there is more to overall levels of funding than differences in funding rates and I acknowledge that there are other important differences between school and FE funding.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if she will make a statement on reducing the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Cambridge; [223357]

(2) what the reasons are for the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Cambridge; and if she will make a statement. [223358]

Dr. Howells: The Department does not have information on what the funding gap is between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Cambridge specifically.

However, we have brought up funding levels for further education (FE) as we said we would, without penalising schools. The Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) funding rates per course in FE have been rising faster than school sixth forms and the gap has narrowed.

Our policy has been to raise the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

The current funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges is a direct consequence of the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act and the removal of the incorporated FE sector funding systems from local authority control. This resulted in a divergence from local authority systems which has resulted in funding level differences. These differences were made more apparent when all post-16 funding became the responsibility of the LSC in 2001.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether she expects fees for courses above Level 2 for adults to rise in Cambridge in 2005–06; [223359]

(2) whether her Department will fully fund courses for adults at Level 3 in Cambridge in 2005–06. [223361]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. We will continue to provide fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all which covers the largest part of the cost of courses, but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at Level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005–06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to ensure that fee concessions remain in place for those aged over 60 years who wish to study at a further education college in Cambridge. [223360]

Dr. Howells: Older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. Learners of any

age will also have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges in Cambridge will continue to have considerable discretion in setting fees and, although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the impact in Leeds of moving Learning and Skills Council funding to *(a)* Basic Skills and *(b)* the National Employer Training Programme on (i) the funding of courses for adults at Level 3, (ii) fee concessions for students aged over 60 years wishing to study at further education colleges and (iii) the level of fees for courses above Level 2. [223527]

Dr. Howells: The Government's Skills Strategy, reaffirmed in the White Paper published on 22 March, sets clear priorities for public funding to support the drive to ensure that employers have the skills they need to be successful, and individuals have the skills they need to be employable and personally fulfilled. These priorities include tackling the nation's legacy of low skills, with a drive to ensure that adults have the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and English language; and focussing the investment of public funds on helping individuals reach their first full Level 2 qualification. But the White Paper also recognises the importance of higher level skills, and sets out measures to strengthen support for provision at Level 3 and above. However, given that higher levels of qualifications have higher rates of return for employers and individuals, it is also important that this should be reflected in the relative contributions employers and individuals make to the costs of such training. The Learning and Skills Council has announced that its fee assumption will rise from 25 per cent. to 27.5 per cent. in 2005/06 with public funds continuing to meet at least 72.5 per cent. of learning costs. Young people, those studying basic skills or for a first Level 2 qualification will receive free tuition as will those people on income based benefits. We shall continue to offer fee concessions to older learners on income based benefits or who receive the pension (guarantee) credit.

Fischer Family Trust

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has provided to the Fischer Family Trust in each of the last five years. [221224]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not fund the Fischer Family Trust, but does contract with them for specific pieces of work. Financial records in the Department show that the following amounts have been paid to the Trust over the last five years:

	£
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	159,800
2003–04	156,529.48
2004–05	351,571.06

Former Independent Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which formerly independent schools have joined the state sector in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* local education authority and *(b)* school type. [221361]

Derek Twigg: The following schools were previously independent schools and joined the maintained sector in the years shown:

	LEA	*School name*	*Category*
2000	Brent	Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary	Voluntary aided
2001	Birmingham	Al-Hijrah Secondary	Voluntary aided
2001	Bradford	Feversham College	Voluntary aided
2004	Hackney	Ruth Lunzer Lubavitch Jewish Girls Primary	Voluntary aided
2004	Bury	Manchester Mesivta Secondary	Voluntary aided
2004	Wandsworth	Gatton VA Primary	Voluntary aided
2005 to date	Salford	Beis Yaakov Jewish High	Voluntary aided

No independent schools joined the maintained sector in 2002 or 2003.

Key Stage 3

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects the Key Stage 3 national results for 2004 to be validated. [223167]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The 2004 Key Stage 3 test results were published on Thursday 17 March 2005 with the release of the Key Stage 3 Achievement and Attainment tables.

The results published in the tables are based on data provided by the QCA's National Assessment Agency to the Department. Schools had the opportunity to check the accuracy of the data and, where reviews of marking have taken place, amend them as part of the tables checking exercise.

Looked After Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what work has been undertaken by the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate to improve the care of looked after children placed in private children's homes out of the area of the responsible authority. [222067]

Margaret Hodge: I understand from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the Commission is proposing to address this issue by strengthening the scrutiny of local authority commissioning processes. This could include a specific focus on:

the quality of placements for individual children purchased by local authorities from children's homes;

local authority benchmarking of children's homes in order to demonstrate value for money; and

the geographical distribution of the children's homes commissioned by local authorities.

In relation to out of authority placements, CSCI is also considering what further work is required to address the impact of high concentrations of children's homes on their local communities and the impact on children placed in those homes who may be poorly served by their placing authorities.

Medical Schools

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places there were at medical schools in each year since 1997; and how many applications there were in each of those years. [221627]

Dr. Howells: The latest information for England is shown in the table. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved Administrations.

Intake targets and applicants: Medical schools in England

Year of entry	*Intake targets*	*Number of applicants*[1]
1997	3,594	12,348
1998	3,614	12,061
1999	3,890	11,168
2000	4,200	10,191
2001	4,574	10,141
2002	5,033	11,897
2003	5,707	15,077
2004	5,777	18,041

[1] Includes any student who made at least one application for pre-clinical medicine.

Source:

Higher Education Funding Council for England (intake targets); Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (applicants).

Nursery Education

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many free part-time nursery education places were available in *(a)* 1998–99 and *(b)* 2004–05. [221590]

Margaret Hodge: All four-year-olds in England have been entitled to a free part-time early education place since September 1998. All three-year-olds in England have been entitled to a free part-time early education place since April 2004.

The available information on the numbers of free part-time early education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in England is shown in the following table.

The latest figures on early education places for three and four-year-olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 39/2004 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2004 (final)", which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Provisional figures for 2005 are scheduled for release in April 2005.

Number of free nursery education places[1] *taken up 3 and 4-year-olds England.*

	3-year-olds			*4-year-olds*		
Position in January each year	*Maintained nursery and primary schools*[2]	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 3-year-olds*	*Maintained nursery and primary schools*[3]	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 4-year-olds*
1999	225,700	n/a	225,700	n/a	n/a	[4]593,800
2004	215,300	[5]246,200	461,600	461,100	[6]110,000	571,200

n/a = Not available.

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.

[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.

[3] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.

[4] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Nursery Education Grant data collection exercise.

[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

[6] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Between 1999 and 2004, the number of free nursery education places taken up by four-year-olds decreased by 4 per cent. The number of four-year-olds in the population decreased by 7 per cent.

Office of Fair Access

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures will be used to monitor the performance of the Office of Fair Access in meetings its statutory objectives. [223417]

Dr. Howells: The Director for Fair Access has statutory functions and duties under the Higher Education Act 2004, but no statutory objectives. In considering how successfully the Director fulfils his functions and duties we will look at his annual report; at any feedback, especially from higher education institutions and students; and in due course at the findings of the independent commission which will be set up to examine the first three years of operation of the variable fees arrangements in higher education.

School Buildings (South Derbyshire)

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new classrooms have been built in South Derbyshire constituency since May 1997. [223220]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: This information is not held centrally.

School Staff (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time teachers, *(b)* part-time teachers and *(c)* teaching assistants there were in schools in Shrewsbury and Atcham on (i) 1 May 2001, (ii) 7 June 2001 and (iii) the latest date for which figures are available. [223156]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Information on the number of teachers and teaching assistants in service is collected in January of each year. The following table shows the number of teachers and teaching assistants in maintained schools in Shrewsbury and Atcham constituency in January 2001 and 2004, the latest information available.

Headcount and full time equivalent number of teachers and teaching assistants

	2001	*2004*
Teachers		
Full-time	610	600
Part-time	150	180
FTE	660	670
Teaching assistants		
FTE	220	380

Notes:

1. Figures include non-maintained special.
2. Teaching Assistant figures include nursery assistants, special needs and support staff and minority ethnic pupil support staff.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

Annual School Census.

Schools (Data)

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the possible effects on school pupils' health and safety of inaccuracies and unreliability of school attendance data. [223344]

Derek Twigg: The health and safety of children is of course, paramount.

The primary purpose of maintaining school attendance data is to record when pupils of compulsory school age attend education. As schools are required to conduct an assessment of potential risks to pupils' health and safety, they are likely to use school attendance data, along with other sources of information, to minimise any identified risks. The Department is not aware of any significant problems experienced by schools in meeting this requirement.

The Department would want to know of any specific instances where inaccurate or unreliable attendance data contributed to the endangerment of pupils' well being.

Schools Funding (Lincolnshire)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding her Department has provided to *(a)* North East Lincolnshire local education authority and *(b)* North Lincolnshire local education authority in each year since 1997. [223467]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Total funding includes funding via education formula spending/standard spending assessment and revenue grants allocated at an LEA level. It excludes the pensions transfer to EPS and the Learning and Skills Council, and is in real terms.

Education formula spending is part of the wider local government finance system and is supported by council tax as well as central Government grant.

Total funding (real terms), pupils aged 3–19 (£ million), North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire

	Real terms, excluding pensions transfer to EFS and LSC in 2003–04 and 2004–05	
	North East Lincolnshire	*North Lincolnshire*
1997–98	77.8	68.3
1998–99	80.7	71.7
1999–2000	84.6	75.2
2000–01	93.0	82.1
2001–02	97.0	85.0
2002–03	98.0	86.4
2003–04	100.6	90.6
2004–05	102.8	93.8

Notes:

1. Price base: Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education SSA/EFS settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EPS and LSC.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–15 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
5. Where responsibility for funding a school has transferred from an LEA, related funding no longer appears in the series.
6. Rounding: Figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
7. Status: 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Selective Education

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have *(a)* taken and *(b)* failed the 11-plus examination in each local education authority with a wholly selective secondary admissions system in each of the last eight years. [221362]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The 11-plus examinations are a matter for the LEA and the Department does not collect this data centrally.

Sure Start

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what activities Sure Start programmes in Sefton are engaging in to increase *(a)* literacy, *(b)* speech and *(c)* language developments; and what results these activities have had; [218804]

(2) what services Sure Start programmes in Sefton are engaging in to care for new mothers, with particular reference to *(a)* post-natal depression clinics and *(b)* breast feeding groups and what results these services have produced. [218865]

Margaret Hodge: There are four Sure Start local programmes in Sefton; Sure Start Litherland, Bootle, Dell and Orvell was approved in 2000; Sure Start Seaforth and Bootle in 2001; Sure Start Southport in 2002 and Sure Start Netherton in 2003. Between them the four programmes provide services to 2,800 children under four and their families living within their catchment areas. The programmes deliver a wide range of services including: training in parenting skills; health services and outreach support to children and families in their own homes.

Three of the four programmes have evaluated their activities as follows:

Sure Start Litherland, Bootle and Orrell have a 'Start Right' group who encourage learning and education through play and group settings. This involves reading, writing, dialogic play and imaginative play. Parents with no concerns about their child's language development increased from 80 per cent. in 2001–02 to 88 per cent. in 2003–04.

The community midwife provides breast feeding support sessions at birth, six weeks and 17 weeks. The take up of these sessions has gone up from 20 per cent. in 2002–03 to 23 per cent. in 2003–04 at birth; 4 per cent. to 10 per cent. at six weeks and 2 per cent. to 7 per cent. at 17 weeks.

The number of women supported by the post-natal depression group rose from 12 in 2002–03 to 29 in 2003–04.

Sure Start Seaforth and Bootle has established a mobile toy library and the early years workers provide practical support around early learning and play. Parents with no concern in relation to language development increased from 77 per cent. in 2001–02 to 79 per cent. in 2003–04.

The community midwife provides breast feeding support sessions at birth, six weeks and 17 weeks. The take up of these sessions has gone up from 34.4 per cent. in 2002–03 to 37.9 per cent. in 2003–04 at birth; 8 per cent. to 13.9 per cent. at six weeks and 4 per cent. to 8.6 per cent. at 17 weeks.

The number of women supported by post-natal depression group increased from 13 in 2002–03 to 30 women in 2003–04.

Sure Start Southport appointed a children's library worker in April 2003 and between June and December 2003, 92 new members joined from the catchment area. Breast feeding and post-natal depression data is not available for this programme.

Sure Start Netherton will provide their first report in September 2005.

The programmes' funding for the current and future years is as follows:

£

Programme name	Capital Approved	Revenue 2004–05	Revenue 2005–06	Revenue 2006–07
Litherland, Bootle and Orrell	1,000,000	675,407	692,293	692,293
Seaforth and Bootle	825,21 1	770,140	789,393	789,393
Southport	36,500	643,982	660,039	660,039
Netherton	6,000	669,999	682,033	682,033

All four programmes are developing into children's centres and will contribute towards achieving our goal of a children's centre for every community by 2010.

There are eight neighbourhood nurseries in the most disadvantaged areas in Sefton providing 291 affordable childcare places to families living there.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of whether the public service agreement target to narrow substantially the gap between education attainment and participation of children in care and that of their peers by 2006 will be met. [219264]

Margaret Hodge: The Department publishes progress against all its outstanding PSA targets in its annual departmental report and autumn performance report. Progress against our 2002 spending review targets, including the one referred to in this question, was reported most recently in the 2004 autumn report, published last November, together with commentary where appropriate.

The 2004 spending review set a new target to narrow the gap in educational achievement between looked after children and their peers and to improve their educational support and the stability of their lives. By 2008, 80 per cent. of children under 16 who have been looked after for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or placed for adoption. This emphasises the importance of stability as a prerequisite for raising educational achievement and is underpinned by educational performance indicators which mirror the three elements of the 2002 spending review target.

A copy of the Department's 2004 autumn performance report has been placed in the Library.

Teachers (Pay)

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the pay of the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest paid (i) primary and (ii) secondary school teachers were in real terms (A) in 1997 and (B) in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [222510]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In March 1997 the highest salary paid to a qualified teacher in a maintained primary school adjusted to 2002–03 real terms was £67,900. The highest in a secondary school was £87,100. By March 2003, the latest available, the figures were £84,900 and £108,600 respectively.

The minimum salary paid to qualified teachers in both maintained primary and secondary schools in March 1997, adjusted to 2002–03 real terms, was £14,400. In March 2003 the figure was £17,600.

University Admissions

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have entered higher education from school in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* England in each year since 1997. [222775]

Dr. Howells: The most recent information, showing the proportion of 18-year-olds who obtained places on full-time undergraduate courses via the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), is shown in the table. Participation rates for each parliamentary constituency are not calculated by the Department.

Proportion of 18-year-olds obtaining places on full-time undergraduate courses Academic year 2003/04

Year of entry	*South Tyneside*	*North East*	*England*
1997	15.7	17.5	20.5
1998	14.8	17.9	20.0
1999	15.2	18.2	20.0
2000	16.7	18.4	20.6
2001	17.2	19.2	21.5
2002	17.4	19.8	22.0
2003	16.6	19.0	21.4

In addition, HEFCE have recently published 'Young participation in Higher Education', (available from http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_037) which shows the proportion of young people who enter higher education at age 18 or 19, although this only covers the years up to 2000. Participation rates for constituencies based on this work are given on the supporting POLAR website (www.hefce.ac.uk/polar). The figures indicate that the proportion of young people from Jarrow who entered higher education at age 18 or 19 was 23 per cent. in 1997 and 24 per cent. in 2000.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Accredited Offending Behaviour Programmes

Valerie Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accredited offending behaviour programmes are due to be completed in 2004–05; and how many are expected to be completed in 2005–06. [223335]

Paul Goggins: Accredited offending behaviour programmes are delivered to offenders supervised by the National Probation Service and to offenders serving sentences of imprisonment. The targets for both groups of offenders have been rolled forward from 2004–05 to 2005–06: 15,000 for offenders supervised by probation and 7,000 for prisoners.

The latter target is divided between public and contracted prisons and includes a specified number of sex offender treatment programmes. The target details for the financial years 2004–05 and 2005–06 are set out in the table. The figure for 2005–06 corrects an inaccuracy in the wording of the written ministerial statement on 25 February setting out the National Offender Management Service's targets for that year—25 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 65WS.

	Target details
2004–05	7,000 offending behaviour programmes completed by prisoners, including: 5,490 living skills programmes and 1,100 sex offender treatment programmes in public prisons 330 living skills programmes and 80 sex offender treatment programmes in contracted prisons
2005–06	7,000 offending behaviour programmes completed by prisoners, comprising: 6,590 programmes in public prisons (including 1,160 sex offender treatment programmes) 410 programmes in contracted prisons (including 80 sex offender treatment programmes)

Antisocial Behaviour (North Yorkshire)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will respond to the petition he received on his recent visit to Thirsk; and what action he proposes to take against antisocial behaviour in the Vale of York. [221146]

Ms Blears: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has seen the petition and has responded to Mr. Dadd personally. I would like to refer the hon. Member to my reply of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1597W, regarding the action which is being taken to reduce antisocial behaviour in the Vale of York.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make provision for failed asylum seekers to be given temporary permission to work until they can be returned to their country of origin. [222878]

Mr. Browne: We believe that those whose asylum application has been unsuccessful should leave. The fact that they may not wish to do so cannot mean that we should routinely continue to provide support or permit them to take employment. To do either of these things would remove any incentive they may have to go voluntarily. Failed asylum seekers unable to leave immediately due to circumstances entirely beyond their control may be provided with support under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. This support is intended only as a temporary arrangement until such a time as they can return.

Civil Servants

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of the enhanced early retirement scheme for civil servants in his Department and its agencies was in each year from 1997–98 to 2003–04 and what the estimated cost will be in each year from 2004–05 to 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [211658]

Fiona Mactaggart: The cost of enhanced exits in the Home Office and its agencies for financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04 are shown in the following table.

£000

Financial year	Core Home Office	Prison Service	UKPS	CRB	Total cost
1997–98	1,405,248	-85,224	26,741	0	1,346,765
1998–99	1,403,875	1,519,160	9,000	0	2,932,035
1999–2000	1,662,050	2,839,945	-106,137	0	4,395,858
2000–01	1,360,998	2,097,528	34,000	0	3,492,526
2001–02	1,691,921	4,907,931	139,476	0	6,739,328
2002–03	6,667,783	11,700,395	21,148	0	18,389,326
2003–04	600,992	2,399,946	50,245	0	3,051,183
Total	14,792,867	25,379,681	174,473	0	40,347,021

The estimated costs for financial years 2004–05 to 2007–08 are shown in the following table.

£000

Financial year	Core Home Office	Prison Service	UKPS	CRB	Total cost
2004–2005	3,033,937	3,500,000	542,817	0	7,076,754
2005–2006	1,476,416	3,120,329	34,010	0	4,630,755
2006–2007	1,116,853	2,485,182	12,385	0	3,614,420
2007–2008	827,373	1,730,066	9,185	0	2,566,624
Total	6,454,579	10,835,577	598,397	0	17,888,553

Correspondence

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to respond fully to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birkenhead of 21 December 2004 about his constituent Mr. Calvin Zola Makongo; and if he will meet the family and Mr. Makongo's employers. [223252]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* I responded in full to my right hon. Friend on 31 January and also replied to his subsequent letter of 16 February on 23 March.

Mr. Makongo's legal advisers have lodged an appeal on his behalf. That appeal will be heard by the IAA. Accordingly it would not be appropriate to meet Mr. Makongo's family or his employers.

Design

Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the ministerial design champion for his Department is. [215650]

Fiona Mactaggart: I am the ministerial design champion for the Home Office.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what ministerial visits are planned for each Minister in his Department in the next six months; and if he will make a statement. [214020]

Mr. Charles Clarke: For reasons of security, it would not be appropriate to disclose the information requested.

Under-age Alcohol Sales

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions for the sale of alcohol to under 18-year-olds there have been in each year since 2000, broken down by local authority; and what guidance he gives to local authorities on the conduct of investigations into, and prosecutions for, such offences. [221707]

Ms Blears: Details of the numbers of persons proceeded against and those found guilty of selling alcohol to persons aged under 18 in England and Wales for the years 2000 to 2003 are shown in the table. The statistics collected centrally do not allow local authorities to be identified, but a breakdown by police force area is provided. Statistics for 2004 will be published in the autumn.

The penalty notice for disorder scheme provides for persons who commit specified penalty offences to be issued with a fixed penalty notice instead of being prosecuted. The table therefore also contains details of the provisional number of penalty notices issued for this offence in 2004.

The Government have not issued any guidance to local authorities on the conduct of investigations into, and prosecutions for, such offences. Such matters are dealt with by Trading Standards and by the police. Guidance pertaining to the test purchasing of alcohol by minors has been issued by LACORS and the Trading Standards Institute, and can be viewed at www.lacors.gov.uk.

Persons proceeded against, those found guilty and those given penalty notices for disorder for selling alcohol to persons under 18 years, England and Wales

	Selling intoxicating liquor to persons under 18[1]								
	Persons proceeded against				Persons found guilty				Persons given PNDs
Police force area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004[2]
Avon and Somerset	—	1	—	2	—	—	—	2	—
Bedfordshire	1	1	1	2	—	1	1	1	—
Cambridgeshire	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	6	—	4	16	2	—	3	5	—
Cleveland	—	1	1	4	—	1	1	1	—

Persons proceeded against, those found guilty and those given penalty notices for disorder for selling alcohol to persons under 18 years, England and Wales

	Selling intoxicating liquor to persons under 18[1]								
	Persons proceeded against				*Persons found guilty*				*Persons given PNDs*
Police force area	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[2]
Cumbria	—	2	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
Derbyshire	8	3	—	37	1	3	—	24	—
Devon and Cornwall	2	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
Dorset	—	3	—	9	—	1	—	8	22
Durham	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Essex	—	2	3	7	—	2	2	7	5
Gloucestershire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greater Manchester	20	20	39	122	7	14	28	87	—
Hampshire	3	2	4	—	1	—	3	—	1
Hertfordshire	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Humberside	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Kent	—	5	3	9	—	1	3	7	—
Lancashire	1	13	14	23	—	2	7	13	24
Leicestershire	1	—	10	15	1	—	9	11	3
Lincolnshire	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	11	—
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merseyside	1	—	14	42	1	—	6	27	—
Metropolitan police	2	19	12	113	1	3	9	77	5
Norfolk	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—
Northamptonshire	—	3	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Northumbria	17	17	8	38	8	7	4	31	1
North Yorkshire	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	1	—
Nottinghamshire	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	2	7
South Yorkshire	14	20	—	—	9	2	—	—	2
Staffordshire	—	—	3	8	—	—	3	6	—
Suffolk	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Surrey	—	—	5	4	—	—	2	2	—
Sussex	2	7	—	8	1	—	—	7	—
Thames Valley	1	3	—	6	1	2	—	4	—
Warwickshire	—	—	—	27	—	—	—	23	—
West Mercia	3	3	—	7	2	2	—	6	1
West Midlands	18	8	9	20	8	1	4	19	6
West Yorkshire	8	9	14	2	6	7	8	1	4
Wiltshire	2	2	1	6	—	—	1	3	—
Dyfed-Powys	8	3	2	5	2	1	1	5	—
Gwent	4	5	9	2	2	3	5	2	—
North Wales	2	1	1	7	—	—	1	5	1
South Wales	—	—	7	29	—	—	3	17	—
Total	130	155	168	604	56	53	105	416	85

	Wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to person under 18[3]							
	Persons proceeded against				*Persons found guilty*			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Avon and Somerset	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bedfordshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cleveland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cumbria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Derbyshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Devon and Cornwall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dorset	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gloucestershire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greater Manchester	2	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Hampshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hertfordshire	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Humberside	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	3
Lancashire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Leicestershire	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lincolnshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merseyside	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Metropolitan Police	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Norfolk	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northumbria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Yorkshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
South Yorkshire	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Staffordshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Suffolk	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Wholesaler selling intoxicating liquor to person under 18[3]

	Persons proceeded against				*Persons found guilty*			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Surrey	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sussex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thames Valley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Warwickshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Mercia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
West Yorkshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wiltshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dyfed-Powys	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gwent	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Wales	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	2	3	2	12	—	—	—	3

[1] Under the Licensing Act 1964, sections 169A and B and the Licensing (Occasional Permissions) Act 1983, section 3 (schedule para. 4(1))
[2] Provisional figures.
[3] Under the Licensing Act, section 181A(1) as added by the Licensing Act 1988, section 17.

Workers Registration Scheme

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much revenue his Department has received under the Workers Registration Scheme since it was introduced. [222338]

Mr. Browne: Since the Worker Registration Scheme commenced on 1 May 2004, the total fees received up to and including 28 February were £7,483,537.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement; [222577]

(2) how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222567]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The incidence of reported accidents in DFID's UK buildings involving our staff (including contractors working on the premises) over each of the last five years is as follows:

	Number of accidents
2000–01	32
2001–02	42
2002–03	44
2003–04	58
2004–05	51

There have been no reported accidents for any members of the public.

Accidents are monitored centrally so that appropriate action can be taken to reduce the occurrence of similar incidents in the future. Statistics on numbers of accidents are monitored by our internal Health and Safety Committee.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222632]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's Health and Safety Policy specifically states that any member of staff having an accident on official premises must report the circumstances to our Human Resources Division. The circumstances will then be investigated and where appropriate a risk assessment carried out. If necessary these would be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 legislation.

Health and safety information is provided for all new members of staff, and the Department has a programme of regular health and safety inspections, risk assessments and workstation assessments, with additional training provided where necessary for key staff such as Fire Wardens and those whose work involves manual handling. DFID is committed to ensuring that it provides a safe and healthy working environment for all its staff.

Departmental Travel

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the travel criteria used by his Department to determine when officials travel by *(a)* first class, *(b)* club class, *(c)* premium economy class and *(d)* economy class. [223159]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Within the constraints that all staff are required to use the most efficient and economical means of travel commensurate with meeting business needs, staff are entitled to the class of air travel as set in the following table that appears in DFID's Staff Handbook. While premium economy is not widely available at present and does not currently feature in the table, we are considering its adoption as part of a review of our Flexible Travel Scheme for staff on overseas assignments.

Structure	Members of the SASC Group[1]		Other staff[2]	
	Up to 2½ hours	Over 2½ hours	Up to 2½ hours	Over 2½ hours
Business/Economy	Business	Business	Economy	Business
First/Business/Economy	Business	Business	Economy	Business
First/Economy	Economy	First	Economy	Economy

[1] The Senior Appointments Selection Committee Group.
[2] Staff who are not members of the SASC Group can fly business class between Glasgow and London, and vice versa. This makes use of a special airline deal under which a business class fare is obtainable more cheaply than the standard economy fare.

CABINET OFFICE

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster how many accidents occurred at his Office's premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Office's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222562]

Mr. Milburn: Over the past five years 11 minor accidents to staff have been noted in the accident report book at the Duchy of Lancaster office, none of which were reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.

There have been no accidents involving members of the public.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether the Duchy sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220939]

Mr. Milburn: The Duchy of Lancaster has not used the eBay auction website for the disposal of surplus stock.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster what the value of sales of surplus assets from the Duchy was in each year since 2000–01. [220968]

Mr. Milburn: The values of sales of surplus assets from the Duchy for each year since 2000–01 are shown in the table.

Year	Amount
2000–2001	6,244
2001–2002	7,207
2002–2003	47,792
2003–2004	10,344
2004–2005	19,128

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Energy Use

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1141W, on energy use, what plans there are to increase the target set for the sourcing of electricity from renewable energy sources. [222331]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: We plan to keep our target in step with the target set by Government for its own buildings, which at present is 10 per cent. of electricity from renewable sources.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how much energy in kWh per square metre has been used on the parliamentary estate for each year since 1997. [222332]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The information is in the table.

	kWh per square metre
1997–98	328
1998–99	337
1999–2000	328
2000–01	326
2001–02	331
2002–03	343
2003–04	357

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to his answer of 20 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 803W, on parliamentary estates (heating), what additional information sub-metering has provided on where heat is lost on the parliamentary estate; and if he will list the areas where most heat is lost. [222253]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Our energy saving strategy includes investing in sub-metering. Engineering studies of how this may best be done are planned for the financial year 2005–06. Most heat is lost from the Palace of Westminster via the roof and the historic ventilation system.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission whether it is the policy of the House to ensure that heating systems are turned off during public holidays. [222334]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: I can confirm that it is the policy to turn off heating or reduce temperature settings during public holidays.

Environmental Performance Measures

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps he has taken to co-ordinate environmental performance measures between the House of Commons and the House of Lords. [222267]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Environmental performance measures for the two Houses together are managed as a shared service by the Parliamentary Estates Directorate.

Publications

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if the Commission will make it its policy that daily issues of the Questions Book and *Hansard* are not issued to individual members unless specifically requested by their office. [222335]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is already the longstanding custom and practice of the House that papers are only provided to hon. Members when they specifically request them, either on demand, or in the case of business papers and *Hansard* by completion of a demand form at the beginning of a new Parliament.

Recycling Points

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) if he will list the locations on the parliamentary estate of *(a)* glass and *(b)* metal can recycling points provided for the use of (i) hon. Members and staff and (ii) house authorities; and what volume of each material was collected from these points in the last year for which figures are available; [222265]

(2) what progress has been made on installing more glass and metal can recycling points in the parliamentary estate. [222266]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Glass is collected at the waste centres in Peers Court, 1 Canon Row Courtyard and 7 Millbank. Metals are extracted from our general waste by our recycling contractor at their works, so specific metal recycling points are not needed on the parliamentary estate.

In 2003–04 we recycled 173 tonnes of glass and 50 tonnes of metal.

The waste recycling contract is currently being re-tendered. The new contract will enable us to extend our recycling.

Refreshment Department

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will estimate *(a)* the quantity and *(b)* the percentage of all food products sourced by the Refreshment Department from suppliers outside the UK, broken down by (i) fruit, (ii) vegetables, (iii) bottled water, (iv) food products and (v) alcoholic drinks. [222302]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: All suppliers of foods and beverages used by the Refreshment Department are based in the UK, but the produce used by the Department originates from many countries. No record is kept of the country of origin of supplies.

The availability of UK produced fresh fruit and vegetables is generally highly seasonal, and so use of imported produce varies throughout the year. Purchases of fruit and vegetables are recorded in many different weights and measures which cannot be converted into one standard format for reporting purposes. It is therefore not possible to estimate the percentage or quantity of fruit and vegetables originating from outside the UK.

In the 11 months to the end of February 2005, the Refreshment Department purchased over 140,100 litres of bottled water, none of which was imported.

The Refreshment Department uses over 3,000 different food products in its catering operations, but not all are in stock at any given time; it has therefore not been possible to estimate the total proportion of food products that originate from outside the UK. However, the Department estimates that less than 5 per cent. of its fresh meat and poultry purchases originate from outside the UK. Most dairy products, including cheeses, and all fresh egg supplies are of UK origin.

The Refreshment Department purchases alcoholic drinks for sale in the House of Commons catering outlets, and also for the House of Commons souvenir shops to sell to visitors to Parliament. Over the past 11 months, the Refreshment Department purchased 38,051 litres of beers and ciders, of which 10,992 litres (29 per cent.) were imported, and a total of 4,519 litres of aperitifs, fortified wines and spirits, of which 358 litres (8 per cent.) were imported. Of the total wine purchases of almost 57,000 litres during the past 11 months, over 54,000 litres (95.3 per cent.) were produced outside the UK.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what quantity of alcoholic drinks, in litres, has been purchased for sale *(a)* in parliamentary bars and *(b)* by the Refreshment Department at catering functions on the parliamentary estate in each year since 1975. [222303]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Refreshment Department does not purchase drinks for specific trading areas, but issues goods as required from its central store. The quantity of alcoholic drinks consumed in the parliamentary bars was 50,474 litres in 2003–04 and 40,900 litres in the 11 months to February 2005. Consumption at functions catered or supplied by the Refreshment Department was 31,563 litres in 2003–04 and 28,169 litres in the 11 months to February 2005. No figures are available for previous years.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the Commission's policy is on the sourcing of beer for sale *(a)* in parliamentary bars and *(b)* by the Refreshment Department at catering functions on the parliamentary estate, with particular reference to sourcing from small independent UK brewers. [222304]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Refreshment Department regularly seeks the advice of the Catering Committee on the sourcing of beers for sale through its catering outlets. In the House of Commons bars, the Department offers for sale one draught ale, generally changed weekly, that is specifically sourced from a member of the Society of Independent Brewers and supplied by their distributor, East West Ales. The Department also sells beers from Young's and Co. (Wandsworth) in certain bars. Other beers sold throughout the House of Commons bars and at functions catered by the Refreshment Department are supplied by the Department's principal nominated beer supplier. This contract, which is currently in the process of being competitively tendered in accordance with the

EU Procurement Regulations, and has been advertised in appropriate trade publications, includes a requirement for the supply of a regularly changed British regional ale, to be expressly purchased by the Department's nominated beer supplier for supply to the House of Commons.

The Refreshment Department is also in the process of tendering a contract for the supply of a House of Commons gift ale pack for sale through its souvenir and gift shops. The Society of Independent Brewers have provided a list of all their members who produce bottled beers and these producers have been invited with others to attend a meeting with the Refreshment Department's Purchasing Manager.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what progress has been made by the Director of Catering Services in investigating the feasibility of implementing a strategy to minimise food miles as part of the Refreshment Department's food procurement objectives. [222305]

Mr. Dennis Turner: I have been asked to reply.

I recognise that many customers of the Refreshment Department are supportive of sustainable food initiatives. The Refreshment Department's business plan for 2005–06 acknowledges the need to develop a formal policy on this matter. Subsequent to my answer of 26 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 1095W, the Refreshment Department Purchasing Manager had a constructive initial discussion with Sustain, an organisation formed in 1999 by merging the National Food Alliance and the Sustainable Agriculture Food and Environment Alliance. Sustain are keen to assist the Department in the development of a responsible purchasing policy that supports sustainable food supplies, including the consideration of food miles. Further progress has been delayed pending completion of organisational changes within Sustain, but the Refreshment Department hopes to be able to pursue this matter over the next few months.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will estimate how many of the plastic bags issued by the Refreshment Department for customer use are *(a)* reused and *(b)* put into the general waste either within or outside the parliamentary estate each day. [222306]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is not possible to make an estimate.

Security Passes

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many House passes have been held in each year since 1975, broken down by House department. [222075]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Data are not kept on the issue of passes by year and cannot be broken down by department of the House.

Transport

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps have been taken to encourage *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* staff of the House to travel to the parliamentary estate other than by private motor vehicle. [222092]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The House of Commons Commission recognises the benefits to all those who come to the House using means other than private cars where convenient for them to do so. There are at present some 100 cycle parking spaces on the parliamentary estate and public cycle parking nearby on Millbank. In addition there are plans to reorganise parking arrangements in Star Chamber Court which will create some 15 additional cycle parking spaces. Interest free loans for annual public transport season tickets are also available for staff of the House as are bicycle loans.

Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) if he will estimate the total volume of waste that has been produced each year since 1975; and how much was *(a)* food and other organic waste, *(b)* paper products, *(c)* printer products and *(d)* plastic packaging; [222254]

(2) what the total volume of waste produced on the parliamentary estate was in each year since 1975, broken down by *(a)* amount produced and *(b)* amount recycled. [222328]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Data are available since 2002–03 for the total weight of waste, the weight of waste paper products recycled and the weight of other products recycled. Separate figures are not available for food, printer products or plastic packaging.

Tonnes

	Total weight of waste	*Weight of paper products recycled*	*Weight of other products recycled*
2002–03	1,478	263	311
2003–04	2,319	379	229
2004–05 to January	1,517	273	138

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many tonnes of waste produced from the parliamentary estate were incinerated in each of the last five years; and if he will estimate how many tonnes of *(a)* carbon dioxide and *(b)* other pollutants are produced as a result. [222326]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Approximately 1,700 tonnes of waste from the parliamentary estate were incinerated to generate electricity in 2003–04. The data is not available to calculate the tonnes of carbon dioxide or other pollutants produced as a result.

Water Usage

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of

Commons Commission pursuant to his answer of 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1142W, on water usage, (1) what volume of water he estimates has been saved from the water conservation measures implemented by the House authorities in each year since such measures were implemented; [222076]

(2) what improvements have been made in Portcullis House to reduce the amount of water drawn from the boreholes; and if he will estimate what volume of water has been conserved as a result of these improvements in each year since the building was first occupied; [222251]

(3) what targets have been set to reduce water consumption on the parliamentary estate; and what progress has been made in meeting them. [222329]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Our target is to reduce water use. At Portcullis House, borehole water use has been reduced from an average of 710,000 cubic metres for each of the two years 2002 and 2003 to 350,000 cubic metres in 2004. This reduction was achieved by reducing the rate of pumping, following changing the original control settings.

For the estate generally between 1997–98 and 2003–04 water consumption increased by some 70,000 cubic metres per annum. It is not possible to separate the estimated effect of conservation measures on one hand from the effect of increased numbers of people working on the estate on the other hand.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to his answer of 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1142W, on water usage, what volume of water has been saved on the parliamentary estate as a result of *(a)* the fitting of detectors to urinal cisterns to prevent unnecessary automatic flushing and *(b)* the fitting of flush volume reduction devices or dual flush equipment to other cisterns and lavatories. [222252]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is not practicable to make such an estimate.

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what use is made of grey water on the parliamentary estate; and what future plans have been made for its use. [222330]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Grey water is used in Portcullis House for flushing lavatories. There are no plans for other use of grey water on the estate.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Processing

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how long the average processing time was for an application for payment of *(a)* carers' allowance, *(b)* disability living allowance and *(c)* jobseeker's allowance in the last year for which figures are available; and what his Department's target is for processing each of these benefits. [223489]

Maria Eagle: The administration of carer's allowance and disability living allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Disability Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran and the administration of jobseeker's allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of Job Centre Plus.

Mr. Moran will provide a co-ordinated response and write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran to Mr. Parmjit Singh Gill, dated 23 March 2005:

I am replying to your recent Parliamentary question about the Disability and Carers Service and Jobcentre Plus.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how long the average processing time was for an application for payment of a) carer's allowance, b) disability living allowance and c) jobseeker's allowance in the last year for which figures are available; and what his Departments target is for processing each of these benefits.

The year to date, as at December 2004, actual average clearance time for claims for carer's allowance was 16.8 days with an actual average clearance target of 24 days.

The year to date, as at December 2004, actual average clearance time for claims for disability living allowance was 36.7 days with an actual average clearance target of 39 days.

The year to date, as at December 2004, actual average clearance time for claims to disability living allowance using the special rules criteria was 5.8 days with an actual average clearance target of 8 days.

The year to date, as at December 2004, actual average clearance time for claims to jobseeker's allowance was 12 days with an actual average clearance target of 12 days.

I hope this is helpful.

Child Support Scheme/Agency

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects statistics on the new child support scheme to become available; whether the statistics on the new child support scheme produced within the Child Support Agency progress report of 28 October 2004 were quality assured; and if he will make a statement on the status of previous statistics produced on the new child support system. [223485]

Malcolm Wicks: Statistics on the 'new scheme' are already available and are regularly reported and published in my right hon. Friend's progress report; last presented on 28 October 2004.

The published information provided the most current available data. The Child Support Agency has since, as a result of in-depth investigations, identified some anomalies in this information.

The next progress report is due to be published on 24 March 2005 and identifies revisions in the information as a consequence of the agency's findings. A copy of the progress report will also accompany the Government response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Bassetlaw residents have claimed Child Support Agency maintenance payments, but have yet to receive them. [222726]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Mann, dated 23 March 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many Bassetlaw residents have claimed Child Support Agency maintenance payments but have yet to receive them.

The information requested is not available, as data on Child Support Agency claims for maintenance payments is not recorded at constituency level.

Company Pension Schemes

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in what circumstances he would seek to intervene in the wind-up of a company pension scheme. [220206]

Malcolm Wicks: Ministers do not intervene in the wind-up of company pension schemes. However, Ministers do regularly meet members of schemes that are winding-up along with their trades union representatives and constituency MPs, to listen to their concerns.

The Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra) has a statutory role in monitoring scheme wind-ups. This will be carried forward to The Pensions Regulator when it assumes responsibility for the regulation of occupational pension schemes from Opra in April 2005.

The Regulator will have a range of powers to intervene if it considers that members' benefits are at risk, including the ability to remove and replace the trustees. It will also have a statutory duty to maintain a register of approved independent trustees, which will enable it to keep a check on fees charged by an independent trustee appointed to a scheme following employer insolvency.

Council Tax Relief

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what account is taken of equity release for pensioners in determining income in order to calculate council tax relief. [223016]

Mr. Pond: Payments made under an equity release scheme are taken into account as income for the purposes of council tax benefit.

Crown Immunity

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what action he takes to collate reports made to Ministers by Government Departments of incidents of deaths or serious injury from those activities of those Departments which are subject to Crown immunity; and how many such reports have been made in each of the past 10 years. [221559]

Jane Kennedy: DWP Ministers are not routinely informed of accidents and ill health within Departments that have Crown immunity.

Ministers and senior managers may be informed of accidents and ill health within the Departments for which they have responsibility. However, such arrangements are a matter for individual Departments.

HSE should receive all reports of deaths and injuries in Government Departments—with certain exemptions for MOD personnel. These reports inform discussions between HSE and Departments about their health and safety performance. Additionally, all Departments' performance on health and safety is now under scrutiny as part of the work of a ministerial task force, which I chair.

Information about reports which result in a Crown Censure or Notice is publicly available on HSE's website. Other data is available only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much of his Department's administrative expenditure was related to *(a)* pensioners, *(b)* sick and disabled people, *(c)* unemployed people, *(d)* lone parents and *(e)* other types of claimants in (i) 1997 and (ii) the latest year for which figures are available. [222607]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Department accounts for its administrative expenditure by strategic objective as set out in it's public service agreements (PSA) and by individual requests for resources (RfRs) as set out in the Departmental Estimates and Accounts, and not by claimant type. Information on administrative expenditure by strategic objective is available in the annually published Departmental Report. The Department was created from the former Department for Social Security (DSS) and Employment Services (ES) and consequently information is not currently available for the years 1997 onwards.

Jobcentre Plus

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff were employed by Jobcentre Plus, in the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* region, *(b)* parliamentary constituency and *(c)* local authority. [223487]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 23 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning how many staff were employed by Jobcentre Plus, in the most recent year for which figures are available, broken down by region, Parliamentary Constituency and Local Authority. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Using 31 January 2005 data, the most recent figures which are available, the total number of full time equivalent staff employed by Jobcentre Plus was 75,691. The table below shows the data broken down by region.

Full-time equivalent staff employed by Jobcentre Plus 31 January 2005

Region	Staff
East Midlands	4,516
East of England	4,881
London	9,596
North East	4,811
North West	11,437
Scotland	9,253
South East	6,132
South West	4,758
Wales	4,936
West Midlands	6,509
Yorkshire and the Number	8,862
Total	75,691

Source:

Departmental Staffing Database—Mandate Definitions.

I am unable to provide a statistical breakdown by Parliamentary Constituency, or Local Authority, as Jobcentre Plus does not collect this information.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal (Lone Parents)

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Edinburgh, North and Leith have gained work through the new deal programme. [222906]

Jane Kennedy: 420 lone parents in Edinburgh, North and Leith have gained work through the new deal for lone parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other new deal programmes are not available.

Pensioner Income

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what initiatives his Department has taken to reduce differences in average income between men and women pensioners; and if he will make a statement. [222918]

Malcolm Wicks: One of our guiding principles for pension reform is that the pensions system should produce fair outcomes for women. This has been a key principle that has been inherent in our action so far and will guide our approach in the future.

Through pension credit we have significantly improved the income of the poorest pensioners, the majority of whom are women. Since 1997, we have lifted 1.8 million pensioners out of abject poverty, two thirds of whom are women. As the Pensions Commission Report noted, male and female pensioners now receive a similar level of state benefit.

In addition, almost all of the 1.9 million carers and around 65 per cent. of the 5.8 million low earners who will benefit from the introduction of the state second pension are women. Other measures, such as winter fuel payments, free TV licences and one-off payments have been especially beneficial to women as they are targeted on older pensioners, the majority of whom are women.

We are publishing a report on women and pensions to look at women's pension provision in more detail later this year.

Pensioners

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much has been paid in pension credit to pensioners in Leeds West; how much of this is savings credit; and how many people have benefited. [221966]

Malcolm Wicks: Between 1 October 2003 and 31 December 2004 an estimated total of £10.8 million, was paid in pension credit in the Leeds West constituency. Of this an estimated £1.6 million was paid in savings credit. To the end of December 2004 around 5,000 households comprising around 6,000 individuals, had received pension credit since it was introduced in October 2003.

Note:

Expenditure figures have been rounded to the nearest £100,000 and are in cash (nominal) terms.

Sources:

Programme Accounting Computer System and IAD Information Centre.

100 per cent. sample , Department for Work and Pensions.

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on sources of funding for community-based projects serving the retired community in Birmingham. [223033]

Malcolm Wicks: Funding for community-based projects which assist older people is available from a variety of sources. In Birmingham these include the local authority; the Legal Services Commission; charities, such as Age Concern and Help the Aged; the Scarman Trust; WarmFront; Neighbourhood Renewal; and local businesses.

The Pension Service Partnership Fund, operated by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), is currently funding two projects for older people in Birmingham. Community Advice, Support and Advocacy Centre (CASA) and Black Country Housing and Community Services Group Ltd. have both been awarded two years funding for projects to promote the take-up of benefits and complementary services by older people in Birmingham.

The Fund has also awarded funding to another 12 organisations in the West Midlands including two in Coventry, one in Oldbury and one in Wolverhampton.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people *(a)* in the City of York local authority area and *(b)* City of York parliamentary constituency receive (i) basic state pension and (ii) pension credit; and what the average weekly value of pension credit received is in each case. [222174]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is in the table:

	Basic state pension recipients	Number of households getting pension credit	Average weekly amount of pension credit per household (£)
City of York unitary authority	34,400	6,545	34.55
City of York parliamentary constituency	17,500	4,360	34.95

Notes:
1. Basic state pension figures are taken from a 5 per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
2. Basic state pension recipient figures are rounded to the nearest 100. Pension credit recipient figures are rounded to the nearest five.
3. State pension data is as at 30 September 2004. Pension credit data is as at 31 December 2004.
4. Parliamentary constituencies and local authority areas are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.
5. A basic state pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a Category A or Category B basic state pension, either in their own right or, where applicable, on the basis of their spouse's or former spouse's national insurance contributions.

Sources:
Basic state pension—IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample;
Pension credit—IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of *(a)* women and *(b)* men are eligible for a full state pension in their own right. [223013]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. However, as at 30 September 2004, the percentage of men and women who were receiving a full basic state pension based on their own National Insurance contributions as a proportion of the total pensioner population in Great Britain, was about 87 per cent. and 13 per cent. respectively.

Notes:
1. Figures are taken from a five per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
2. Percentages are rounded to the nearest full percentage point.
3. A full basic state pension was £79.60 in 2004–05.
4. Pensioner population estimates are from mid-2003 supplied by the Office for National Statistics.
5. Pensioner population refers to females aged 60 and over; and males aged 65 and over.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, five per cent. sample.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220972]

Jane Kennedy: The DWP was formed in June 2001 from the Department of Social Security (DSS) and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment, including the Employment Service (ES). The sales for the earlier period to June 2001 given below refer to the above predecessor organisations.

Departments are required to disclose the proceeds from the sale of fixed assets consistent with the requirements of the Resource Accounting Manual (RAM) and Government Accounting.

This information is included in the Departmental Resource Accounts, copies of which are available in the Library.

The information on value of sales of fixed assets for each year is in the following table.

	£000
2000–01	1,180
2001–02	1,775
2002–03	3,596
2003–04[1]	143,375

[1] The sale of the ex-Employment Service estate was undertaken in December 2003 as an extension to the existing PRIME PFI partnership contract with Land Securities Trillium. Under the terms of the contract, the Department received total consideration of £140 million, of which £100 million was in cash.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222569]

Mr. Alexander: In 2004 there were 47 accidents reported at Foreign and Commonwealth Office premises in the UK, and 28 at Foreign and Commonwealth Office posts overseas, one of which involved a member of the public. In 2003 there were 43 accidents at Foreign and Commonwealth Office premises in the UK. Figures for previous years are not currently available.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222586]

Mr. Alexander: In 2004, there were 75 accidents reported world-wide involving employees of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The comparable figure for 2003 was 55.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222635]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth office has an accident reporting system whereby all accidents are reported to the health and safety section of Human Resources Directorate—Health and Welfare Policy Team. The health and safety advisers monitor the accident reports for trends and produce statistics for discussion at health and safety meetings.

The reporting system is compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Central African Republic

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the recent parliamentary and presidential elections held in the Central African Republic; and if he will make a statement. [223026]

Mr. Mullin: The British Government welcome the holding of elections in the Central African Republic. These mark the end of a two year period of transitional government. We are aware of some reports of irregularities in the election process, but we await the final results which are expected by 28 March.

G8 Summit

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Government's policy towards discussion of conventional arms sales at the G8 summit in June; and what resolutions will be proposed regarding Iraq. [222956]

Mr. MacShane: There are no plans to discuss conventional arms sales at the G8 Summit, and it is too early to say what discussions there might be on Iraq at the Summit.

Human Rights Norms for Business

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what role the Government envisages for the UN Human Rights Norms for Business in clarifying the responsibilities of multinational corporations with regard to human rights. [222838]

Mr. Alexander: While there is merit in clarifying minimum standards for business in relation to human rights, we believe that future action on this agenda should take into account the many codes and initiatives which exist in this field, rather than focussing exclusively on the draft norms. These include the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, the International Labour Organisation Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy and the UN Global Compact. This approach is in line with the recent report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on this issue.

Through the Business Leaders Initiative on Human Rights, a number of multinational companies have been "road-testing" the draft norms, using the content to inform their codes of practice. This process will continue until December 2006. In addition, the FTSE4Good benchmark takes the draft norms into account in its assessment of companies' performance. And some potential investors consider the draft norms in their requirement for "human rights impact assessments".

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will support the UN Human Rights Norms for Business at the UN Commission on Human Rights meeting in April. [222839]

Mr. Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to her today (UIN 222838). The UK will continue to play a constructive role in advancing the debate on corporate responsibility and human rights in the Commission. We will be active at the forthcoming Special Session of the Commission in seeking to ensure proper follow-up to the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights which addresses, inter alia, the question of the status of the draft norms.

Iran

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent negotiations have taken place between the EU3 and Iran on the future of Iran's nuclear programme; and if he will make a statement. [222882]

Mr. MacShane: Discussions between officials from Iran, Britain, France and Germany—together with officials from the office of the European Union's High Representative—continue on a regular basis. The objective of the discussions is to take forward the full implementation of the November 2004 Paris Agreement.

The most recent round of discussions took place in Geneva during the week beginning 7 March.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is regarding the Iranian authorities' use of enriched uranium; and whether the UK is participating in the US initiatives to encourage Iran not to undertake this process. [222955]

Mr. MacShane: The Government continue to have serious concerns about Iran's nuclear programme, including its plans to develop an indigenous uranium enrichment capability. Together with colleagues from France and Germany (the "E3") and the European High Representative, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has been engaged since late 2002 in efforts to encourage the Iranian authorities to address international concern about their proposed nuclear cycle.

We welcome the announcement by the United States on 11 March 2005 that it has decided to support the E3's diplomacy by dropping its objection to Iran's application to the World Trade Organisation and consider, on a case by case basis, the licensing of spare-parts for Iranian civilian aircraft, in particular from the EU to Iran.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much money from public funds was allocated to the campaign of Mr. Allawi in the Iraq elections. [218389]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 1 March 2005]:* No UK public funds were allocated to Dr. Allawi's election campaign.

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest estimate is of the number of Iraqi civilians killed in the

conflict since coalition forces entered Iraq; and what estimate he has made of the number of Iraqi civilians killed by the regime of Saddam Hussein. [223479]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* There are no wholly reliable and comprehensive figures for Iraqi civilians killed since military operations began in March 2003. The Iraqi Minister of Health's most recently released figures, based on records from some 180 hospitals, show that between 5 April 2004, when figures began to be collated, and 1 March 2005, 6,265 Iraqis were killed. The Ministry of Health points out that this figure includes all Iraqis, including civilians, Iraqi Security Forces and insurgents, killed as a result of violence.

On 22 July 2003 the United Nations Secretary-General reported to the Security Council that it was estimated that over the past three decades at least 290,000 Iraqis had disappeared in Iraq. The Iraqi Bureau of Missing Persons has registered over 1.3 million missing Iraqis. Some 270 mass graves have so far been reported from that period.

Lebanon

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Lebanese authorities on the planned withdrawal of Syrian forces; and what discussions he has had with representatives of the Maronite Christian community. [222954]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no discussions with the Lebanese authorities about the withdrawal of Syrian forces, or with the representatives of the Maronite Christian community. During her visit to Lebanon last month, my right hon. and noble Friend, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean discussed the political situation in Lebanon with Lebanese Foreign Minister Hammoud. Our embassy in Beirut has regular contact with representatives from across the Lebanese political spectrum, including the Maronite Christian community.

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* European, *(b)* US, *(c)* Syrian and *(d)* Lebanese counterparts about the situation in Lebanon and the withdrawal of Syrian forces; and if he will make a statement. [223028]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the situation in Lebanon and the Syrian withdrawal with his EU counterparts at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 16 March, and has also spoken to US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice about developments. My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, emphasised to Lebanese Foreign Minister Hammoud, when they met on 25 February, the importance that the UK places on compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559; the implementation of a credible electoral process leading to free and fair elections for the Lebanese National Assembly in line with the Lebanese constitution, free from foreign interference; and a full and transparent investigation into the bomb attack in Beirut on 14 February.

Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what bilateral discussions have taken place between the Government and *(a)* the United States, *(b)* the Russian Federation, *(c)* China and *(d)* France regarding the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in New York in May. [223322]

Mr. MacShane: We have had contact with a number of countries, including those mentioned, in the run up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place with the International Atomic Energy Agency regarding the proliferation of nuclear weapons by non-state actors. [223331]

Mr. MacShane: The Government hosted an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Conference in London from 16 to 18 March to discuss the nature of the threat of nuclear terrorism and to take forward the agenda on nuclear security. The United Kingdom, through contacts at meetings such as this in London, through its delegation to the IAEA in Vienna, and through the UK Governor who sits on the IAEA Board of Governors, remains in close touch with all aspects of the IAEA's important work.

Nuclear Security

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to combat nuclear terrorism. [223218]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) first Strategic Priority is to achieve a world safer from global terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. We work extensively to convince others to face up to these threats and to help them do so. All such efforts make it harder for terrorists and proliferators to operate and so help reduce the threat from nuclear terrorism.

There are a number of programmes specifically targeted at nuclear terrorism—the principal one being the Global Partnership which aims, among other things, to address the problems of the nuclear legacy in the former Soviet Union. My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the FCO, has also been closely involved in the International Atomic Energy Agency International Conference on Nuclear Security held in London last week, which discussed the significant risks to the international community posed by the threat of malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials and their associated facilities.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent changes have been made to the United Kingdom donation to the International Atomic Energy Agency for nuclear materials accountancy and security controls. [223219]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom has been a strong supporter of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Nuclear Security Fund since its inception. Most recently my right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, announced at the International Conference for Nuclear Security held in London 16–18 March, the donation of a further £350,000 to the Nuclear Security Fund.

In 2003–04 the UK provided £1.2 million in voluntary support to the IAEA through the UK Safeguards Support Programme. In addition, the UK donated £1.4 million to the agency in support of its Safeguards Information System Replacement Project.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the address made on 16 March by the former United States Senator Sam Nunn to the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Global Directions for the Future. [223221]

Mr. MacShane: I warmly welcome the speech made by Senator Nunn to the International Conference on Nuclear Security. Although unable to attend the conference personally, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary met with Senator Nunn on Monday 14 March to discuss these issues in depth.

We share Senator Nunn's assessment of the urgency of this threat. The UK is developing its nuclear security programme under the Global Partnership and has recently announced a contract to undertake an upgrade of physical security at a key Russian Nuclear Research Centre. The contract, to be managed by experts from the British Nuclear Group, will focus on the Nikiet Institute in the centre of Moscow. It is one of Russia's leading nuclear research centres. The project is worth up to £2 million and will focus on the provision of physical protection upgrades on fencing, lighting, CCTV and access control systems. We hope that further such projects will roll out as nuclear security work becomes an increasingly important part of the Global Partnership programmes. Overall, in this financial year the UK will have spent £35.5 million on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation programmes across the former Soviet Union.

Pakistan/Iran (Nuclear Technology)

Mr. Moore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with counterparts in *(a)* Pakistan and *(b)* other European countries regarding the passing of nuclear technology from Pakistan to Iran; and if he will make a statement. [223027]

Mr. MacShane: Iran's nuclear programme is a key issue in discussions with a large number of countries, at ministerial and official level. Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan has admitted to having supplied nuclear technology to Iran, and this information is being investigated by the International Atomic Energy Agency as well as by the authorities in a number of countries who continue to investigate the activities of Dr. Khan and his associates. Some of these associates were nationals of European countries. It would not be appropriate to comment on matters which are the subject of ongoing criminal investigations.

In response to international encouragement Pakistan is working to strengthen its controls over the export of sensitive nuclear technology, including to Iran.

Palestine Authority

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the risk posed by Hezbollah to the establishment of stable Palestinian Government in the Palestinian Territories. [223158]

Mr. Mullin: Hezbollah continues to reject the legitimacy of the state of Israel and to support Palestinian groups which reject the Oslo Accord. We are concerned that Hezbollah are in a position to undermine the current efforts being made by President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority to work towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

We have made clear that we believe Hezbollah should play a more constructive role and should support the Palestinian Authority in its efforts.

UK Embassies

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many staff are employed in the commercial sections of each UK embassy and consulate. [222029]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I have placed in the Library of the House a table of the number of full-time equivalent staff working to UK Trade and Investment's trade development and inward investment objective in commercial sections at each Foreign and Commonwealth Office Post in 2004, broken down by UK-based civil servants and locally engaged staff.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222563]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has accident records which identify how many accidents have occurred for the past three years: 2002, 2003, 2004. For 2002, no differentiation was made between accidents to staff and the public. The figures are:

	Staff	*Public*	*Total*
2002	[1]—	[1]—	467
2003	430	128	558
2004	497	166	663
2005 (to date)	58	26	84

[1] No analysis

Jon Trickett: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222579]

Mr. Lammy: Yes. It is intended that accident data will be published in the Department's report for 2005–06, when produced.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222619]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has appointed health and safety advisers across the Department who maintain systems for monitoring accidents at work to employees. The advisers investigate and report accidents via the normal management structures to ensure that control measures are identified to prevent recurrence.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether Ministers in the Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221105]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Electoral Registration

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many heads of households have been prosecuted since 2001 for failing to supply information to the electoral registration authorities in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland. [223309]

Mr. Leslie: Local Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) are responsible for compiling the electoral register for their registration area, and electoral law provides that an ERO may require any person to give information required for the purposes of that officer's duties in maintaining electoral registers. It is an offence to fail to comply with such a request. Figures are not collected centrally in respect of prosecutions arising from this provision.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans the Department has to introduce further sanctions for failing to supply correct information on an electoral registration form. [223310]

Mr. Leslie: The Electoral Commission recommended in the report "Voting for Change" that it should become an offence for an individual to fail to supply information at any time to the Electoral Registration Officer or to supply false information. We agree in principle that the existing offence of failure to supply or giving false information on the canvass form should be extended to other communications with the Electoral Registration Officer and we are considering how this might be taken forward.

EU Referendum

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether UK rules on spending during the EU referendum period will apply to spending in the UK by the UK Representation of the European Commission. [221569]

Mr. Leslie: The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 governs the conduct of the referendum and contains the rules on spending during the referendum period. The European Commission have said that they will not intervene or fund activities against the wishes of the member states.

Judges

Ross Cranston: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate he has made of the difference in cost of permanently locating a High Court judge or judges in a large commercial centre such as Birmingham compared with the costs of the present system of visiting High Court judges. [222771]

Mr. Leslie: No assessment has been made of the difference in cost of permanently locating High Court judges to the larger commercial centres as compared to the present system, although the cost effectiveness of the current arrangements for housing High Court judges while out on circuit is regularly reviewed.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many judges have been appointed in each year since 1997. [222479]

Mr. Leslie: The number of judges appointed since 1997 can be found in the following table and includes appointments to courts and tribunals administered by my Department.

The figure quoted for 1997 is for the calendar year and for full-time appointments only. The number of part-time appointments can be determined only at disproportionate cost.

Figures from 1998 are obtained from the Judicial Appointments Annual Reports to Parliament for each of the financial years from 1998–2004 and include both full and part-time appointments.

	Number of appointments
1997	66
1998–99	634
1999–2000	464
2000–01	753
2001–02	915
2002–03	697
2003–04	480

Small Claims Procedure

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases have been brought using the small claims procedure in the last year for which information is available; and what proportion have been transferred to a higher court or procedure. [223484]

Mr. Lammy: All proceedings issued in the county court are issued using the same procedure. A small proportion of these are then allocated to the small claims track. The number of such claims cases dealt with during 2004 was 45,323. These cases are dealt with by a district judge in the county court. Information is not maintained centrally about cases transferred to a higher court or any other procedure.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220951]

Mr. Leslie: The Department has no record of placing for auction any surplus stock on eBay.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the value of sales of surplus assets from the Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220970]

Mr. Leslie: The proceeds from disposal of surplus assets since 2000–01 are shown as follows.

£000

	Cash proceeds	*Accrual proceeds*
2000–01	8,206	8,206
2001–02	310	310
2002–03	4,194	4,194
2003–04	3,262	59,877

In line with the guidance in the Resource Accounting Manual and Government Accounting these figures are disclosed in the departmental Resource Accounts. Copies of the Resource Accounts are available in the Library of the Houses of Parliament.

The reason for the large difference between cash and accrual proceeds for 2003–04 is that payments are being made in stages with a further £56.6 million due to be received by the Department by the end of the 2006–07 financial year.

Travellers (Cambridgeshire)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much Government funding has been allocated to the Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative Project. [223374]

Mr. Lammy: The Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative Project is a Partnership Initiative Budget (PIB) Project funded by the Legal Services Commission. The funding allocated to the project is £60,750 over 36 months (November 2003 to October 2006). All PIB funded projects are required to have at least 25 per cent. match funding. The Cambridgeshire Travellers Initiative Project receives its match funding in kind (covering costs such as office space and supervision) from the Ormiston Children and Families Trust.

HEALTH

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the recommendation by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence that Reminyl, Aricept and Exelon should not be provided free on the NHS to patients with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. [221757]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has responded to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's (NICE'S) consultation on its draft appraisal of drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease; a copy of which is available in the Library. NICE will be issuing a final version of this new guidance later in the year, after considering responses to its consultation. Until then, its original 2001 appraisal continues to apply.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a copy of the Government's response to the consultation by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on the cost effectiveness of Arisept, Excelon and Reminyl. [222690]

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the recommendation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence not to use donepezil (Aricept) in the treatment of mild to moderate cases of Alzheimer's disease. [223094]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Members to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Edwards) on Wednesday 23 March.

Asthma

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children have been diagnosed with asthma in *(a)* England, *(b)* the East Midlands and *(c)* Leicester South constituency since 1997. [222894]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the number of children diagnosed with asthma is not collected. However according to Asthma UK, there are over 1.1 million children in the United Kingdom who suffer from asthma.

Most cases of asthma are diagnosed and managed by general practitioners (GPs). The new GP contract which came into force on 1 April 2004 significantly benefits patients by improving the quality of care and widening the range of services available at GP surgeries.

The contract is supported by a quality and outcomes framework which resources and rewards GPs on the basis of how well they care for patients rather than simply the number of patients they treat, leading to good chronic disease management in the community. Asthma is one of the diseases included in the framework.

Cancelled Operations

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been cancelled in NHS hospitals in each of the past 10 years. [219399]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* The available information is shown in the table.

	Quarter 1		*Quarter 2*		*Quarter 3*		*Quarter 4*	
	Number of cancelled operations	*Per 100 elective admissions*	*Number of cancelled operations*	*Per 100 elective admissions*	*Number of cancelled operations*	*Per 100 elective admissions*	*Number of cancelled operations*	*Per 100 elective admissions*
1994–95	11,603	1.1	10,186	0.9	11,874	1	14,466	1.2
1995–96	11,860	1	11,457	1	14,514	1.2	16,652	1.3
1996–97	11,595	1	11,055	0.9	13,023	1.1	16,374	1.4
1997–98	12,019	1	11,550	1	12,476	1	14,460	1.2
1998–99	12,384	1	11,470	0.9	14,611	1.1	17,685	1.3
1999–2000	12,313	0.9	12,017	0.9	15,769	1.2	20,143	1.5
2000–01	17,033	1.3	16,965	1.2	18,844	1.4	24,976	1.8
2001–02	20,833	1.6	20,901	1.6	20,036	1.5	19,973	1.5
2002–03	14,808	1.1	14,826	1.1	17,706	1.3	19,914	1.4
2003–04	14,092	1.1	14,364	1.0	17,782	1.3	20,065	1.4
2004–05	14,677	1.1	14,931	1.1	17,402	1.3	[1]—	[1]—

[1] Quarter 4 2004–05 data are not available

Source:

Department of Health www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity

Chiropody

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the Government's plans are regarding the compilation and publication of the KT23 figures on chiropody; and if he will make a statement. [223308]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The Department plans to publish KT23 figures for the year 2004–05 in September.

As part of the initiative to reduce the burden of bureaucracy in the national health service, the KT23 return was reviewed during 2004. As a result of this [illegible] the return is to be discontinued from 1 April [illegible]. The total number of chiropody and podiatry contacts will continue to be collected by the Department for reference costing purposes.

Critical Care

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the optimal staffing levels for *(a)* level 1, *(b)* level 2 and *(c)* level 3 critical care beds; and what the average staffing levels have been in England for each level in each year since 1997. [222828]

Mr. Hutton: It is for national health service trusts to assess staffing within critical care, taking account of levels of patient dependency, and to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of staff to undertake the various tasks required of the service.

The information requested on average staffing levels for levels one, two and three care is not collected centrally.

Dentistry

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dental practices in Merseyside are accepting *(a)* children, *(b)* pensioners and *(c)* adult NHS patients, broken down by primary care trust. [223382]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is shown in the table.

	Providing occasional national health service treatment to non registered patients	*Registering charge exempt adults for NHS treatment*	*Registering charge paying adults for NHS treatment*	*Registering children aged 0–18 years for NHS treatment*
Cheshire and Merseyside strategic health authority	139	170	164	219
Bebington and West Wirral primary care trust	9	13	13	14
Birkenhead and Wallasey PCT	18	20	19	23
Central Cheshire PCT	4	7	4	15
Central Liverpool PCT	20	18	18	22
Cheshire West PCT	9	13	10	16
Eastern Cheshire PCT	3	3	3	15
Ellesmere Port and Neston PCT	9	8	9	9
Halton PCT	4	12	12	13
Knowsley PCT	12	17	17	16
North Liverpool PCT	14	15	15	15
South Liverpool PCT	544	4	—	—
South Sefton PCT	16	19	19	20
Southport and Formby PCT	5	—	—	1
St. Helens PCT	11	16	16	17
Warrington PCT	—	5	5	19

Note:
The totals do not differentiate between pensioners and adult patients. However, it does differentiate between "charge exempt" and "charge paying" adults.
Source:
www.nhs.uk (11 March 2005)

Deafness

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Health through what mechanism he plans to ensure that the guidelines in the National Institute for Mental Health in England and Department of Health report, Mental Health and Deafness—"Towards Equity and Access"—Best Practice Guide, are effectively implemented. [222468]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The guidelines outlined in "Towards Equity and Access" will be implemented by primary care trusts in the normal way for national health service developments. They will be assisted in this task by an implementation group drawn from the voluntary sector, the National Institute for Mental Health in England and the providers of specialist services.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the total cost is of providing a digital hearing aid on the NHS including *(a)* assessment, *(b)* fitting, *(c)* follow-up and *(d)* purchase of the aid; [221995]

(2) what the *(a)* assessment, *(b)* fitting and *(c)* follow-up costs for a (i) digital hearing aid and (ii) an analogue hearing aid are; [221996]

(3) what costs are included in the NHS reference cost for the *(a)* assessment, *(b)* fitting and *(c)* follow-up of digital hearing aids on the NHS. [222687]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department collects unit cost and activity data from all national health service providers in England each financial year. This information is available on the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/FinanceAndPlanning/NHSReferenceCosts/fs/en.

The latest data available are for the financial year 2003–04, but, following a change in accounting procedures, data on the costs of digital hearing aids are no longer included. For analogue aids the data show:

The average cost of an attendance with provision of a standard analogue aid was £63.

The average cost of an attendance with provision of a superior analogue aid (including directional control) was £88.

Under the heading of the fitting of hearing aids and counselling (including tinnitus) the average costs were:

Assessment—£50

Fitting—£57

Follow-up—£36.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 986W, on digital hearing aids, how many students he expects to graduate in the BSc in audiology in the next four years; how many such graduates he expects to recruit to the NHS; and how many patient journeys he expects to be added to capacity over that period. [222685]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally. Strategic health authorities (SHAs) plan to commission 171 Bachelors of Science in Audiology training places in 2004–05.

In line with our policy of shifting the balance of power, it is for primary care trusts (PCTs), in partnership with SHAs and other local stakeholders, to plan, develop and improve services for local people, including audiology services.

Employee Checks

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps are taken to ensure that individuals deemed unsuitable to work with children, are not able to gain access to other vulnerable client groups. [223474]

Dr. Ladyman: The protection of vulnerable adults (PoVA) list started operating on 26 July 2004. Since that date any referral for inclusion on the Protection of Children's Act list, including ones already made, have also been considered for inclusion on the PoVA list, a process known as cross-referral. The staff who maintain both lists are co-located and work closely together.

Doctor/Nurse Numbers

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses on average were employed in (i) 1997 and (ii) 2003 at (A) Diana, Princess of Wales hospital, Grimsby and (B) Scunthorpe general hospital. [223460]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the following table.

National health service hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) medical and qualified nursing staff within specified trusts[1]

Numbers (headcount)

	As at 30 September each year			
	1997		*2003*	
	Doctors	*Nurses*	*Doctors*	*Nurses*
Total for specified trusts	350	1,664	432	1,564
North East Lincolnshire NHS trust RF6	199	924	n/a	n/a
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole hospitals NHS trust RJL	n/a	n/a	432	1,564
Scunthorpe and Goole hospitals NHS trust RF7	151	740	—	n/a

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] In 2001, North East Lincolnshire NHS trust merged with Scunthorpe and Goole hospitals NHS trust to form Northern Lincolnshire and Goole hospitals NHS trust.
Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Drug Prices

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes have taken place in the price to the NHS of drugs produced by *(a)* GlaxoSmithKline and *(b)* other pharmaceutical companies in each of the last seven years. [221750]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The prices of branded prescription medicines and the profits that companies are allowed to make on their sales to the national health service are controlled by the Pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme. A new five-year scheme commenced on 1 January 2005 and included a price reduction of 7 per cent. on all products covered by the scheme, which will deliver annual savings of £370 million for the NHS in England. The 1999 scheme also included a price reduction of 4.5 per cent. and has delivered annual savings to the NHS of some £250 million. In addition, the reimbursement prices of four generic medicines were reduced in 2003 and 2004 to save £300 million a year.

The mechanisms and criteria for price changes are complex and apply to over 200 companies and thousands of products. The information requested can only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

EU Prescribing Regulations

Mr. Bruce George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what obligation the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency has for consulting patients on the implementation of new EU prescribing regulations in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [220528]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently no obligations for the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to consult patients on the implementation of changes to product information resulting from European scientific advice or harmonised regulatory action. The MHRA's independent scientific advisory committee, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) has lay members. The advice of CSM informs the United Kingdom position in discussions within Europe. The MHRA values patients' views and opinions, which is reflected in the current proposals to reform the advisory committee structure. The proposals, which are subject to consultation, aim to increase lay members on these advisory committees.

Freedom of Information Act

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS personnel have been employed on processing requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 since 1 January. [222524]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The information requested is not held centrally.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on *(a)* costs to the NHS and *(b)* services to customers of

the NHS of the coming into effect of the full provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 since 1 January. [222525]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Each national health service organisation is responsible for managing the impacts of changing governance arrangements, including Freedom of Information, within its own boundaries. Information about the detailed management of those governance arrangements is not held centrally.

General Practitioners

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for Health who is responsible for commissioning general practitioner services for people living in residential care homes. [222464]

Mr. Hutton: All patients in residential care homes are entitled to the full range of personal medical services and the same rights of access to primary care as any other patient group. It is for primary care trusts to ensure general practitioner services are commissioned to meet the needs of their local population.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average salary of a GP was in real terms *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* in the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [222511]

Mr. Hutton: Figures for the relevant years are shown in the table. The final column uprates the 1997 figure using gross domestic product (GDP) deflator figures into 2003–04 terms.

£

	Original IANI[1]	*'Real' IANI*[1] *(2003–04 terms)*
1997–98	46,031	53,250
2003–04	[2]67,040	[2]67,040

[1] Intended average net income.
[2] denotes forecasted figure

Genito-Urinary Medicine

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent estimate he has made of the average waiting times for urgent genito-urinary medicine appointments. [223291]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on genito-urinary medicine clinic waiting times are collected and published on behalf of the Department by the Health Protection Agency. The latest data are contained in the report "GUM Waiting Times Audit November 2004", freely available on the Health Protection Agency's website at www.hpa.org.uk

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations took place at the Great Ormond Street Hospital in each of the last 10 years. [222012]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the table. This shows that the number of finished consultant episodes at Great Ormond Street Hospital has risen every year since 1997.

Count of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) with an operation: Great Ormond Street Hospital National Health Service Trust, 1994–95 to 2003–04

	FCEs
1994–95	5,176
1995–96	5,916
1996–97	6,177
1997–98	6,152
1998–99	6,891
1999–2000	8,343
2000–01	8,448
2001–02	9,216
2002–03	10,245
2003–04	12,815

Health Statistics (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pharmacies in Shrewsbury and Atcham there were in each year since 1997. [223153]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not held centrally in the format requested.

Information prior to 2002 is available by health authority (HA). Shrewsbury and Atcham was within Shropshire HA. Table 1 shows the number of community pharmacies in Shropshire HA for the years 1997–98 to 2001–02.

Since 2002, the former Shropshire HA has been covered by Shropshire county primary care trust (PCT) and Telford and Wrekin PCT. Table 2 shows the number of community pharmacies for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Table 1. Shropshire HA: number of community pharmacies

	Number
1997–98	66
1998–99	66
1999–2000	66
2000–01	66
2001–02	66

Table 2. Shropshire county and Telford and Wrekin PCTs: number of community pharmacies

	2002–03	*2003–04*
Shropshire county PCT	41	41
Telford and Wrekin PCT	26	29

Health Technology Assessment

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the National Institute for Clinical Excellence will announce the topics for its health technology assessment programme for the 11th wave; and whether it will include adjuvant use of taxotere. [221787]

Ms Rosie Winterton: An announcement will be made shortly on the 11th wave of topics referred to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence.

Human Eggs

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many human eggs were donated for *(a)* fertility treatment and *(b)* research purposes in each year from 1991 to 2004. [222949]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has informed me that information on human eggs donated by in vitro fertilisation (IVF) patients for the treatment of others is only available from 1999. The number of eggs donated is as shown in the table.

Human eggs donated for fertility treatment between 1999 and 2004

1999[1]	9,924
2000	15,164
2001	14,720
2002	12,664
2003	11,739
2004	12,139

[1] Information not collected prior to 1 April 1999.
Source:
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority

Data on human eggs donated for research purposes are not collected routinely by the HFEA. However, information obtained by the HFEA from licensed centres suggests that approximately 1,500 human eggs have been donated for research purposes since 1991.

Data on the HFEA's register are currently being audited to improve the accuracy of the information available. It may therefore be subject to future amendment following the completion of the modernisation programme in March 2006.

Intermediate Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Answer of 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 799W, on intermediate care, what further plans his Department has to increase access to intermediate care services on top of the NHS Plan targets for extra beds and care places; and what steps he expects local primary care trusts to take further to expand intermediate care services at a local level. [222612]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The key priorities of the Department are designed to ensure that local health and social care systems continue to invest in and develop the concept of intermediate care alongside mainstream primary, community and social care services.

In addition, we are investing £60 million over the years 2006–07 and 2007–08 to set up joint projects between councils, their national health service and other partners to test and evaluate innovative ways of establishing sustainable arrangements for prevention work including intermediate care services that will provide early and better targeted interventions for older people; which will maintain and enhance their independence and quality of life; and avoid the need for hospital or other high intensity care.

Medical Treatment (Coventry)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients living in the Coventry area have had *(a)* operations and *(b)* other medical treatments funded by the NHS in European countries in each of the last three years. [223068]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Mental Health Care (Suffolk)

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mental health beds were available in Suffolk in each year since 1997. [223499]

Dr. Ladyman: The number of mental health beds available in Suffolk, local health partnership national health service trust is only held centrally for 2000–01, 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04. The figures are shown in the following table.

	Number of beds
2000–01	324
2001–02	300
2002–03	289
2003–04	284

Mr. Ruffley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Suffolk residents were placed in mental health beds outside the county of Suffolk in each year since 1997. [223502]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the cost-sharing agreement in ensuring the provision of therapies for people with multiple sclerosis; and what assessment he has made of whether a similar model could be applied in the provision of treatments for Alzheimer's disease. [221868]

Dr. Ladyman: Currently over 9,000 people are being treated with disease modifying drugs under the multiple sclerosis (MS) risk sharing scheme. This exceeds the number, 7,500 to 9,000 or 12.5 to 15 per cent. of the estimated MS population, whom it was estimated would benefit at the start of the scheme in May 2002.

No assessment has been made of the feasibility of introducing similar arrangements for the provision of treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

Myasthenia Gravis

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he will take to increase the number of NHS *(a)* nurses and *(b)* consultants qualified to diagnose and treat myasthenia gravis. [222130]

Mr. Hutton: Post-registration training needs for national health service staff are determined against local NHS priorities, through appraisal processes and training needs analyses informed by local delivery plans and the needs of the service.

Access to training is affected by a number of factors, such as the availability of funding, whether staff can be released, the availability of appropriate training interventions, mentors and assessors. It would not be practical for the centre to be prescriptive on this.

National Programme for IT

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made on the national programme for IT as it affects community pharmacists; and if he will make a statement. [222325]

Mr. Hutton: Within the national health service national programme for information technology (NPfIT) a system for the electronic transmission of prescriptions (ETP) will make it easier for general practitioners (GPs) or other prescribers to issue prescriptions and more convenient for patients to collect their medicines. Prescriptions will be transferred electronically to a pharmacist or other dispensing contractor and to the Prescription Pricing Authority to authorise payment. Following development work, the ETP service went live successfully at an initial GP practice and community pharmacy in Keighley, West Yorkshire, on 21 February 2005.

Discussions with other potential initial implementer sites are underway. The purpose of the initial implementer sites is to prove the system, and to look at local prescribing and dispensing processes in light of the introduction of the new service. This will ensure that the benefits of the new service are maximised and lessons learned before a wider roll out.

The national programme has brought together GP and community pharmacy user groups to provide advice and guidance during the development and implementation of the service. For the time being patients will continue to get a paper prescription.

A wider roll out of the service will commence later in the year, with full implementation expected by 2007.

Neonatal Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list the neonatal special care units which are operational; and how many cots are available in each; [222024]

(2) which hospitals with neonatal units *(a)* offer free on-site accommodation for parents and *(b)* make accommodation available but charge for it; [222026]

(3) if he will list the *(a)* neonatal intensive care units and *(b)* high dependency care neonatal units, which are operational; and how many cots are available in each; [222064]

(4) what the average stay of babies in *(a)* special care, *(b)* high dependency and *(c)* intensive neonatal units was in the last period for which figures are available; [222080]

(5) what his plans are for funding neonatal care over the next five years. [222081]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the average daily number of cots available in wards classified as 'Intensive Care: Neonates' during 2003–04 has been placed in the Library.

Information on parental accommodation at neonatal units is not collected centrally, nor are data on the average length of stay for babies admitted to units.

An extra £20 million has been provided yearly to national health service primary care trusts (PCTs) for neonatal intensive care. This is in addition to the PCTs' general funding allocation, which is set to increase over the next five years and which may also be used to increase neonatal capacity where needed.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the nurse to baby ratio is in each neonatal unit in NHS hospitals; [222027]

(2) when he expects to achieve British Association of Perinatal Medicine Standards for nursing levels. [222689]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the nurse-to-baby ratio in each neonatal unit is not collected centrally.

It is for local hospital trusts to ensure that there are appropriate nursing levels within neonatal units relative to the number and criticality of the infants on the unit, as set out in the report of the neonatal intensive care services review group, which was published in April 2003.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* whole time equivalent and *(b)* head count specialist neonatal (i) nurses and (ii) doctors have been employed in the NHS in each of the last 10 years. [222063]

Mr. Hutton: Information is not collected on the number of specialist neonatal nurses or doctors.

NHS Estate

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the NHS estate was compliant with *(a)* fire safety and *(b)* health and safety legislation on 1 April 2004; and if he will make a statement. [217582]

Mr. Hutton: At 1 April 2004, the national health service reported an increase to 92.9 per cent. in the proportions of the NHS estate, based on the total patient occupied floor area, that was fully compliant with fire safety requirements. The equivalent figure for health and safety increased to 91.2 per cent. Trusts make every effort to remedy any concerns from local enforcement bodies as quickly as possible.

The small area of the estate reported as non-compliant covered a wide variety of conditions, including that which is just below standard, and these figures do not indicate significant levels of risk.

NHS Professionals

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much funding NHS Professionals received from his Department in financial year 2003–04; and how much it will receive in 2004–05; [223505]

(2) if he will make a statement on recent performance against targets set for NHS Professionals; [223506]

(3) what percentage of bookings received by NHS Professionals in 2004 were successfully filled by NHS Professionals using its own nurse database; [223507]

(4) if he will break down his Department's funding for NHS Professionals by budget subhead; and whether Government funding is intended to cover running costs, with particular reference to *(a)* staff salaries, *(b)* recruitment costs, *(c)* infrastructure, *(d)* premises, *(e)* marketing and *(f)* advertising costs. [223508]

Mr. Hutton: The 2004–05 business plan for the NHS Professionals Special Health Authority is available from the Library. NHS Professionals is currently working with officials in the Department to develop a business plan and corporate strategy for 2005–06 and beyond so that it can become self-financing and prepare to take on independent status from 2007–08 as recommended by the Department's review of its arm's length bodies.

The Department invested £23.2 million in NHS Professionals 2003–04 and £26.6 million in 2004–05. This represents a contribution to the wider running costs and activities of NHS Professionals and is not directly attributable to specific budget headings. The flexible careers scheme was included until the establishment of the special health authority in April 2004. Funding for the scheme was £9,124,033 for 2003–04.

Information relating to the percentage of bookings successfully filled using the NHS Professionals database is not held centrally.

NHS Staff (Devon)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* medical and *(b)* non-medical staff were employed by (i) East Devon Primary Care Trust, (ii) Mid Devon Primary Care Trust, (iii) North Devon Primary Care Trust, (iv) South Hams and West Devon Primary Care Trust, (v) Plymouth Primary Care Trust, (vi) Torbay Primary Care Trust, (vii) Teignbridge Primary Care Trust, (viii) Exeter Primary Care Trust, (ix) North Devon Healthcare NHS Trust, (x) Royal Devon and Exeter Healthcare NHS Trust, (xi) South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust, (xii) Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, (xiii) Devon Partnership NHS Trust, (xiv) South West Peninsula Strategic Health Authority and (xv) Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust in each year since 2001. [223307]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) staff, general medical practitioners and practice nurses medical and non-medical staff for specified organisations—England, as at 30 September

Number (headcount)

		2001					
		Medical staff			Non-medical staff		
		Doctors	of which: HCHS doctors[1]	General medical practitioners[2]	Non-medical staff	of which: HCHS non-medical staff	Practice staff[2]
South West Peninsula	Q21	3,145	1,934	1,211	34,732	31,105	3,627
of which:							
East Devon PCT	5FT	90	2	88	941	679	262
Exeter PCT	5FR	110	6	104	717	430	287
Mid Devon PCT	5FV	85	6	79	788	532	256
North Devon PCT	5FQ	141	13	128	899	577	322
Plymouth PCT	5F1	228	61	167	2,740	2,126	614
South Hams and West Devon PCT	5CV	94	0	94	778	515	263
Teignbridge PCT	5FY	81	0	81	234	13	221
Torbay PCT	5CW	95	0	95	337	20	317
South West Peninsula StHA	Q21	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
North and East Devon Partnerships NHS Trust	RWV	52	52	0	1,723	1,723	0
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	RK9	500	500	0	4,623	4,623	0
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	RA9	292	292	0	4,572	4,572	0
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust	RH8	349	349	0	3,942	3,942	0
North Devon Healthcare Trust	RBZ	170	170	0	1,410	1,410	0
Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust	RJ9	0	0	0	1,295	1,295	0

		2002					
		Medical staff			Non-medical staff		
		Doctors	of which: HCHS doctors1	General medical practitioners2	Non-medical staff	of which: HCHS non-medical staff	Practice staff3
South West Peninsula	Q21	3,205	1,999	1,206	35,931	31,970	3,961
of which:							
East Devon PCT	5FT	93	2	91	1,062	798	264
Exeter PCT	5FR	119	14	105	796	499	297
Mid Devon PCT	5FV	92	10	82	918	634	284
North Devon PCT	5FQ	137	12	125	939	632	307
Plymouth PCT	5F1	231	64	167	2,766	2,152	614
South Hams and West Devon PCT	5CV	85	0	85	839	552	287
Teignbridge PCT	5FY	83	1	82	751	530	221
Torbay PCT	5CW	98	0	98	947	457	490
South West Peninsula StHA	Q21	6	6	0	69	69	0
North and East Devon Partnerships NHS Trust	RWV	72	72	0	2,379	2,379	0
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	RK9	544	544	0	4,769	4,769	0
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	RA9	290	290	0	3,135	3,135	0
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust	RH8	353	353	0	4,029	4,029	0
North Devon Healthcare Trust	RBZ	132	132	0	1,510	1,510	0
Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust	RJ9	0	0	0	1,428	1,428	—

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

		2003					
		Medical staff			Non-medical staff		
		Doctors	of which: HCHS doctors1	General medical practitioners2	Non-medical staff	of which: HCHS non-medical staff	Practice staff3
South West Peninsula	Q21	3,420	2,196	1,224	36,962	33,163	3,799
of which:							
East Devon PCT	5FT	92	2	90	1,022	734	288
Exeter PCT	5FR	118	11	107	805	512	293
Mid Devon PCT	5FV	96	15	81	834	617	217
North Devon PCT	5FQ	148	13	135	1,018	699	319
Plymouth PCT	5F1	227	60	167	2,865	2,251	614
South Hams and West Devon PCT	5CV	78	0	78	862	577	285
Teignbridge PCT	5FY	81	1	80	789	568	221
Torbay PCT	5CW	99	0	99	873	513	360
South West Peninsula StHA	Q21	7	7	0	111	111	0
North and East Devon Partnerships NHS Trust	RWV	94	94	0	2,285	2,285	0
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust	RK9	614	614	0	4,926	4,926	0
South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust	RA9	297	297	0	3,223	3,223	0
Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Trust	RH8	396	396	0	4,241	4,241	0
North Devon Healthcare Trust	RBZ	139	139	0	1,699	1,699	0
Westcountry Ambulance Services NHS Trust	RJ9	0	0	0	1,495	1,495	—

n/a = not applicable.

[1] Excludes hospital medical hospital practitioners and hospital medical clinical assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.

[2] All practitioners include GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (para. 52 SFA), PMS other, GP retainers, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

[3] Practice staff includes practice nurses, direct patient care, admin and clerical and other.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census

NHS Office Equipment

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines or regulations govern the purchase of office equipment by NHS hospitals. [222136]

Mr. Hutton: As public bodies, national health service trusts must comply with all relevant United Kingdom and European procurement regulations.

The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency has jointly negotiated separate national framework agreements for photocopiers (multi-functional devices) and fax machines with Office of Government Commerce buying solutions. These agreements require that all appointed suppliers comply with all the relevant health and safety legislation and the European waste electronic and electrical equipment Directive. They both also actively encourage support of sustainable development.

NHS Waiting Times

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times were for patients at *(a)* West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust and *(b)* Addenbrookes Hospital NHS Trust for (i) general surgery, (ii) urology, (iii) trauma and orthopaedics, (iv) ear, nose and throat, (v) ophthalmology, (vi) oral surgery and (vii) obstetrics and gynaecology for each year since 2001–02. [222295]

Dr. Ladyman: The average waiting times for patients at West Suffolk Hospital National Health Service Trust and Addenbrookes Hospital NHS Trust for general surgery, urology, trauma and orthopaedics, ear, nose and throat, ophthalmology, oral surgery and obstetrics and gynaecology for each year since 2001–02 are shown in the tables.

Addenbrookes hospital (now known as Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust1): average waits in weeks by specialty

	March			
Specialty	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04)	2004–05 (December)
General surgery	17.69	16.20	10.83	8.28
Urology	11.74	12.23	9.10	10.93
Trauma and orthopaedics	18.67	15.86	13.03	12.41
Ear, nose and throat	19.77	16.08	12.07	12.44
Ophthalmology	11.87	12.14	8.86	7.05
Oral surgery	6.97	7.29	7.32	6.22
Gynaecology	11.68	10.33	10.02	8.45
All specialties	12.73	12.24	9.89	8.61

Note:

Figures shown are the median wait for each of the specialties requested.

Source:

Department of Health waiting time statistics.

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust: median waits in weeks by specialty

	March			
Specialty	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05 (December)
General surgery	17.69	18.23	11.99	14.26
Urology	11.91	10.79	9.26	11.20

West Suffolk Hospitals NHS Trust: median waits in weeks by specialty

Specialty	March 2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05 (December)
Trauma and orthopaedics	21.52	16.78	15.68	14.52
Ear, nose and throat	17.65	18.83	15.09	18.23
Ophthalmology	24.25	18.24	11.53	6.30
Oral surgery	21.89	16.45	15.73	18.28
Gynaecology	13.06	11.71	9.78	10.05
All specialties	19.34	16.09	12.55	12.32

Note:
Figures shown are the median wait for each of the specialties requested.
Source:
Department of Health waiting time statistics.

NIMHE

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, to whom the National Institute for Mental Health, England is accountable. [222015]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) is part of the Modernisation Agency, which is part of the Department, until 31 March 2005. The Secretary of State for Health is ultimately accountable.

From 1 April 2005, the NIMHE will become part of the care services improvement partnership, hosted by the prescription pricing authority, and will be accountable to the care services directorate in the Department.

Each NIMHE regional development centre is hosted by a separate National health service organisation and is accountable, in the first instance, to the boards of their employing organisations, then to the NIMHE and ultimately to the Secretary of State for the central programme work they carry out.

Speech Therapy

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many complaints have been received by the NHS Healthcare Commission in each of the last six months regarding *(a)* waiting times for speech therapists and *(b)* access to speech therapists. [221155]

Mr. Hutton: I understand from the Chairman of the Healthcare Commission that information about complaints relating to speech therapists cannot be readily retrieved and separately identified without incurring disproportionate costs.

Nurses

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average pay of a fully qualified NHS nurse was in real terms *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* the last year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [222507]

Mr. Hutton: The average pay of a fully qualified national health service nurse is shown in the table. The earliest year for which the Department holds figures is 1999.

Average annualised earnings[1] of qualified nurses: 1999 and 2002—England

	Average annualised earnings[2] in real terms (£)[3] 1999	2002
2002–03 as reference year	22,900	24,500

[1] The NHS earnings survey is based on the payroll of a sample of approximately 50 per cent. of NHS trusts in August.
[2] Figures rounded to the nearest 100.
[3] Figures uprated to "real terms" values using the gross domestic product (GDP)deflator index
Sources:
1. Department of Health national health service earnings survey.
2. Her Majesty's Treasury GDP deflator index.

Obesity

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of the adult population was obese in each of the last five years for which figures are available; how many individuals that percentage represents in actual terms in each of those years; how many obese persons he estimates died in each of those years; and how many individual adults became obese in each of those years. [217667]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information is not available in exactly the form requested. The figures for the percentage of the adult population that was obese in the five years from 1999 to 2003, taken from the Health Survey for England, are shown in the table. The Health Survey for England provides estimates of the underlying population figures but, because of the small sample size any representation of the figures as a number of the total population should be treated with caution. Although Health Survey data for 2003 are weighted to provide a better match to the general population, un-weighted data for 2003 are shown here for consistency with previous years' data, which have not yet been weighted. Figures for the incidence of obesity are not available.

Adults classed as obese (body mass index greater than 30): 1999–2003

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Obese as a proportion of the total sample (percentage)	20.0	21.2	22.4	22.5	23.2
Sample base[1] (number)	6,903	6,963	13,681	6,478	13,056
Estimated number of obese adults in the total population (million)	7.6	8.1	8.6	8.8	9.0

[1] Aged 16 and over with both valid height and weight measurements.
Source:
Health Survey for England.

With regard to how many obese people died in each of those years, the fact that a person was obese is not routinely recorded at death certification. However, data on deaths where the underlying cause was certified as obesity or where this condition contributed to the death are collected. The following table shows the number of deaths in England and Wales where obesity was the underlying cause of death and where obesity contributed to the death, for the calendar years 1999 to 2003.

Number of deaths where obesity—International Classification of Diseases (ICD)—9278.0; ICD-10 E66—was the underlying cause of death or contributed to the death: England and Wales, 1999–2003

	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Underlying cause	165	161	183	182	219
Contributed to death	597	626	695	732	885
Total number of deaths from all causes	556,118	535,664	530,373	533,527	538,254

Note:
Data are for occurrences of death per calendar year.
Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Opticians

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to bring dispensing opticians within the scope of NHS regulation; if he will change General Ophthalmic Services regulations to allow optometrists and ophthalmic opticians to refer patients directly to hospital eye services; what plans he has to amend section 24 of the Opticians Act 1989 to allow professionals other than ophthalmic opticians, optometrists and registered medical practitioners to conduct sight tests; for what reasons dispensing opticians are not paid for the general ophthalmic services they supply; and if he will make a statement on the progress of his review of the General Ophthalmic Service. [221960]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Dispensing opticians do not provide general ophthalmic services (GOS) and are therefore not paid by the national health service. We are planning to review the GOS arrangements shortly. This will include considering the relationship of dispensing opticians with the NHS, but we have no plans to amend section 24 of the Opticians Act 1989 to allow professionals other than ophthalmic opticians and registered medical practitioners to conduct sight tests.

The national health service (General Ophthalmic Services Supplementary List) and (General Ophthalmic Services Amendment and Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2005, which come into force on 1 April 2005, amend regulations to allow optometrists to refer patients directly to ophthalmic hospitals.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government has established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [219947]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No new regional bodies, institutions, taskforces or panels have been established since 1997. Some new or merged bodies have however set up regional presences or offices including:

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health.
Commission for Social Care Inspection.
Health Protection Agency.
Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.
National Patient Safety Agency.
NHS Appointments Commission.
NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service.
NHS Litigation Authority.
NHS Pensions Agency.
NHS Professionals.
UK Transplant.

South West London and St. George's NHS Trust

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the forecast expenditure against budget for South West London and St. George's NHS Trust is in 2004–05. [223551]

Dr. Ladyman: The audited information in respect of the 2004–05 financial position of national health service trusts will be published in their individual annual accounts. This information will be available centrally in autumn 2005. We have no plans to publish un-audited information.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what role is fulfilled by the third special adviser in his Department. [210486]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Special advisers in this Department are appointed under the terms and conditions set out in "Code of Conduct for Special Advisers".

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the speeches his special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210565]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All meetings held by special advisers and all speeches given by special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the "Code of Conduct for Special Advisers".

Springfield Mental Hospital

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been sectioned at Springfield Mental Hospital, Tooting, in each of the last 10 years. [222001]

Dr. Ladyman: The information on the number of patients sectioned is not held centrally. Information on the number of detentions under the Mental Health Act,

1983, of patients, on admission and subsequent to admission in South West London and St. George's Mental Health National Health Service Trust is shown in the table. Information is collected on a NHS trust basis rather than by individual hospital units.

	Total detentions (on admission and subsequent to admission)	*Detentions on admission*	*Detentions subsequent to admission*
2003–04	935	539	396
2002–03	1,299	528	771
2001–02	1,180	588	592
2000–01	988	410	578
1999–2000	948	526	422
1998–99	796	489	307
1997–98	628	470	158
1996–97	589	403	186

Notes:

1. Figures exclude previous legislation (fifth schedule) and other acts.
2. A patient may be detained more than once.
3. Detentions subsequent to admission include changes from Section 136 to Sections 2 and 3 and Informal to Sections 2 and 3, 5(2) and 5(4).
4. The table shows detentions for South West London and St. George's Mental Health NHS Trust from 1996–97 to 2003–04. Data is not available in a comparable format for earlier years.

Smoking

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce adult smoking rates to 21 per cent. or less by 2010 will be met; [219247]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce adult smoking rates among routine and manual groups to 26 per cent. or less by 2010 will be met. [219248]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The public service agreement (PSA) targets for smoking prevalence in 2010 were set in summer 2004. A delivery plan for the White Paper, "Choosing Health", has been developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders to contribute to achieving the PSA target.

The delivery plan, together with the tobacco control strategy currently in place, will see an expansion of the national health service stop smoking services and additional support to help smokers quit; further measures to reduce peoples exposure to second-hand smoke; further restrictions on tobacco advertising and promotion; continued highly effective national smoking campaigns; work with Her Majesty's Customs and Excise to reduce the supply of smuggled and counterfeit tobacco and measures to combat underage sales. All these measures will contribute to delivery of the PSA target.

Latest prevalence figures, for 2003, published in December 2004 are shown in the following table.

Prevalence of cigarette smoking (persons aged 16 and over, England)

Percentage	*2003*
Routine and manual socio-economic group	32
All persons	25

Source:
Office for National Statistics General Household Survey 2003.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 24 March 2005

NORTHERN IRELAND

Air Links (Europe)

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support the Government are providing to facilitate the reintroduction of a direct flight between Northern Ireland and Brussels. [223189]

Mr. Gardiner: To date an application for support to the Air Route Development Fund for a Brussels route has not been made by any of the Northern Ireland Airports in relation to a Brussels route. The Fund is fully committed at present and consideration of any further new routes must await the outcome of the current review of the Scheme.

Asthma

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many asthma-related admissions have been made to hospitals in the Province in the last 12 months. [223661]

Angela Smith: During 2003–04 (the latest year for which information is available) there were 2,515 admissions to hospitals in Northern Ireland where the primary diagnosis was asthma.

Cannabis

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1653W, on cannabis, how many of those arrested for *(a)* possession and *(b)* sale of cannabis in each police district command unit area in Northern Ireland since its reclassification were prosecuted. [223305]

Mr. Pearson: To date a total of 81 persons have been proceeded against for offences of possession or intent to supply class C drugs during the period 29 January 2004 to 31 January 2005. A number of cases in relation to this period are still pending in the courts.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of prosecutions by police district command units.

Children (Street Selling)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what Police Service of Northern Ireland investigations are ongoing into young children acting as street sellers in central and south Belfast; how many arrests have been made in connection with this problem; and what efforts are being made to prosecute those who have organised such activities. [221785]

Mr. Pearson: The Regulatory Services Department of Belfast city council takes the lead on the issue of illegal street trading. Since July 2004 Enforcement Officers from the Regulatory Services Department, supported by the PSNI, have conducted a total of 21 operations aimed at illegal flower selling. As a result of these operations a significant number of real and imitation flowers to the value of £64,750 have been seized.

No persons are currently being prosecuted by Belfast city council for selling flowers in Belfast city centre. To date no arrests have been made by police officers in relation to this issue.

Economy (Greater Antrim)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the economic impact of the Junction 1 retail park on the greater Antrim area economy since its opening. [223172]

Mr. Gardiner: Government have made no such estimate.

EU Nitrates Directive

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his latest estimate is of the cost to farmers in the Province of compliance with the EU Nitrates Directives; and what public funds and reliefs are being allocated to assist with the costs. [223174]

Mr. Pearson: Officials have been working closely with the industry in developing the Nitrates Directive Action Programme proposals that are currently subject to consultation and include measures to address both nitrogen and phosphorus.

Details of the economic cost of compliance are outlined in the Nitrates Directive Consultation Paper, which was published on 21 February 2005. A copy of this document is available from www.dardni.gov.uk.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has made available £45 million under the Farm Nutrient Management Scheme for capital grant support to assist compliance with the Nitrates Directive. A phased approach to implementation has also been drawn up to assist farmers.

Global Point International Business Park

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the Answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1328W, on Global Point International Business Park, for what reasons the first operational company expected to locate at the Business Park is conditional upon completion of the public inquiry into the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan; and when he expects the inquiry to conclude. [221195]

Mr. Gardiner: The draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) has zoned additional lands for employment/industry at Ballyhenry. These lands are identified as a single zoning along with the existing Invest NI Global Point site.

The weight that the Planning Service would give to the draft BMAP in determining Invest NFs current application for the development of Global Point depends on a number of factors including the

representations received by BMAP during the consultation period. Work is on-going on the assessment and collation of all representations received up to the closing date of 25 January 2005.

Until the impact of BMAP on the current application is determined, Invest NI has had to assume that the Ballyhenry lands will be considered as a single zoning. From liaison with Planning Service it is understood that issues concerning zoning will probably be required to be addressed at public inquiry, hence the response to the hon. Member's earlier question (219688).

It is too early in the process to give an indication of when a public inquiry will be held to consider representations to the draft BMAP.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the new building proposed in Derry by Invest Northern Ireland was agreed in principle by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment; if he will make a statement on the progress with the project; how many evaluations of the project have been carried out; and what target date he has set for the commencement of the building. [223365]

Mr. Gardiner: Ministerial approval, which allowed the project to proceed to final negotiation of the legal contracts with the preferred developer, was granted on 10 December 2004. These negotiations have proven to be difficult. However Invest NI is making every possible effort within the requirements of public accountability to reach a satisfactory and timely resolution to the outstanding issues. Other than the normal tender evaluation process and an associated economic appraisal, there has been no subsequent evaluation of the project. A target date for the commencement of building cannot be established until completion of the contract negotiations and legal documentation.

Northern Ireland Assembly

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the level of payment is for MLAs who are members of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission; when the payment was authorised; by whom; and what the responsibilities of those individuals have been since the Assembly was suspended. [222917]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Under the Northern Ireland Assembly (Members Salaries) Determination 1999 as provided for by section 47 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, members of the Assembly Commission received an increased salary entitlement of £10,864.

Following suspension of the Assembly, I made the Northern Ireland Assembly (Members Salaries) (Amendment) Determination 2002 which had the effect of reducing the increased entitlement for members of the Assembly Commission to zero from 5 November 2002.

Under paragraph 8 of the schedule to the Northern Ireland Act 2000, the Assembly Commission is unable to meet and its functions are exercised by me.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for how long Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly will continue to be paid salaries and allowances while the Assembly remains in suspension. [223685]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The current salaries of Members of the Assembly are kept under regular review. However I fully recognise that continuing to pay these amounts is not an option which can be sustained indefinitely.

Police Stations

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his plans are for *(a)* opening hours and *(b)* allocation of manpower to police stations at (i) Toome, (ii) Randalstown, (iii) Crumlin and (iv) Templepatrick in each year from 2005 to 2009. [223170]

Mr. Pearson: The current opening hours in Antrim DCU are as follows:

Antrim—24 hour opening.

Crumlin—Monday 3 pm to 5 pm, Tuesday 5 pm to 7 pm, Wednesday 5 pm to 7 pm, Friday 5 pm to 7 pm and Saturday 5 pm to 7 pm.

Randalstown—5 pm to 7 pm Monday to Saturday, closed Sunday and public holidays.

Templepatrick—Not open to public.

Toome—Not open to public.

The allocation of resources and opening hours of all stations in the DCU are kept under constant review by the DCU Commander.

Renewable Energy

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what percentage of electricity in Northern Ireland is produced from renewable sources. [224004]

Mr. Gardiner: An up-to-date estimate of the percentage of total electricity which will be supplied in Northern Ireland from indigenous renewable sources in 2004–05 is 3.2 per cent. If imports of electricity obtained from renewable sources are included this figure rises to 5.5 per cent.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in reaching targets regarding the provision of renewable energy in Northern Ireland. [224005]

Mr. Gardiner: Northern Ireland's single renewable energy target is that, by 2012, 12 per cent. of all electricity supplied to Northern Ireland consumers will come from indigenous renewable generation. Annual targets have not been set, however in the past year total electricity supplied from renewable energy sources in Northern Ireland has increased from 2.7 per cent. to 3.2 per cent.

If imports of electricity obtained from renewable sources are included this figure rises to 5.5 per cent.

Roads

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken to consult local farmers and residents between Randalstown and Toome on the proposed building of a new motorway to replace the existing A road. [223169]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. David Burnside, dated March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what steps he has taken to consult local farmers and residents between Randalstown and Toome on the proposed building of a new motorway to replace the existing A road. I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The A6 Randalstown to Toome Road forms part of the Key Transport Corridor linking Belfast and Londonderry. In recognition of its strategic importance, Roads Service is proposing to replace the existing road with a high standard dual carriageway from the end of the M22, west of Randalstown, to Castledawson, incorporating the recently completed Toome Bypass.

As part of this process, Roads Service held a public exhibition to inform local farmers and residents of progress on the planning of the scheme. The purpose of the public exhibition was to obtain comments on the alternative alignments that have been developed. Members of the public, whose property may be affected by these alignments, were individually invited to visit the exhibition and to express their views or preferences and the exhibition was advertised in the press. All visitors had the opportunity to record their comments at the exhibition, by completing a questionnaire, or by writing to Roads Service at a later date.

Following the public exhibition, Roads Service officials attended meetings with local representatives and landowners, to receive further comments and, where possible, to address their concerns.

Roads Service officials are now considering all comments received during this consultation process and will take these into account in the selection of the preferred alignment. If necessary, a further public exhibition will be held before a single preferred alignment is proposed. The preferred route alignment will then, of course, be subject to the statutory procedures process, which gives further opportunity for public comment.

I hope this information is helpful.

RUC Garden of Remembrance

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what arrangements are in place for *(a)* foreign politicians, *(b)* hon. Members from Great Britain and *(c)* representatives of the media visiting the Province to be shown the RUC Garden of Remembrance at the Police Service of Northern Ireland headquarters at Knock, Belfast. [223683]

Mr. Pearson: The RUC GC Garden is open to anyone who wishes to visit it. All visits to the garden are arranged on an appointment basis through the RUC GC Foundation which has responsibility for the garden. Visitors are met and escorted around the garden by one of the many volunteer guides.

Although the foundation does not keep specific records of who has visited the garden, I can confirm that since it opened in September 2003 almost 7,000 people have visited it, including a number of Members of Parliament.

SCOTLAND

Dangerous Goods (Transportation)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) who is responsible for policing the regulations relating to dangerous goods safety advisers in Scotland; [223134]

(2) which Government departments in Scotland are responsible for *(a)* the Transport of Dangerous Goods (Safety Advisors) Regulations 1999, as amended and *(b)* the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004 (S.I., 2004, No. 568). [223136]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* Policy responsibility on transport of dangerous goods in Scotland is reserved and rests with the Secretary of State for Transport.

The Transport of Dangerous Goods (Safety Advisors) Regulations 1999 were revoked by the Carriage of Dangerous Goods and use of Transportable Pressure Equipment Regulations 2004.

The 2004 Regulations (SI 2004/568) were drafted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after consultation with a wide range of organisations in Scotland and elsewhere. The Regulations are the policy responsibility of the Department for Transport. Competent authority functions are primarily shared between the Department for Transport and the HSE.

The HSE are the lead agency for enforcement of the legislation relating to dangerous goods safety advisors. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency and the police also have enforcement responsibilities under a Memorandum of Understanding with the HSE.

Fishing Industry

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met the Scottish Executive Minister for Environment and Rural Development to discuss prospects for the Scottish fishing industry. [223468]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Scottish Ministers about a wide range of matters.

Office of Civil Nuclear Security

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State who is responsible for the Office of Civil Nuclear Security in Scotland; and whether the Office has field inspectors based solely in Scotland. [223135]

Mrs. McGuire *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry is responsible for nuclear security in the UK, and this is carried out on her behalf by the Director of Civil Nuclear Security.

Office for Civil Nuclear Security inspectors are allocated responsibility for sites according to the security need; there are none dedicated solely to Scotland.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220944]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has sold no surplus stock on the eBay auction website.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220966]

Mrs. McGuire: The value of sales of surplus Scotland Office assets since 2000–01 was £567.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Abandoned Cars

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much has been spent on dealing with abandoned cars in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England since 1997. [223642]

Alun Michael: The Defra Abandoned Vehicle Survey of 2002–03 reported that 111,000 was spent on the abandoned vehicle service in Leicester City. Over the same period it is estimated that the cost for England as whole was £26.9 million. We do not hold figures for other years.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of her Department; and if she will make a statement. [222587]

Alun Michael: Defra's Departmental Health and Safety Unit publish an annual report each April, which gives detail on all aspects of the core-Department's safety performance, including accident statistics. The agency safety advisers also provide this data for their own agency reports. Historically, the Defra departmental report has also published data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of the Department.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of her Department are in place; and if she will make a statement. [222618]

Alun Michael: Within the core-Department accident reports are collated centrally by the Departmental Health and Safety Unit. These are investigated by the internal health and safety specialists and the risk assessments relating to that activity form part of the investigation. A formal programme of auditing is undertaken in order to spot any accident/ill-health trends and focus risk management arrangements to reduce accidents/incidents.

Under current policy line managers must investigate each incident in relation to the effectiveness of their health and safety procedures and monitor all such reports in relation to their local risk assessment programme.

Defra agencies have equivalent accident reporting procedures and monitoring arrangements in compliance with the Defra Safety Policy.

Area Aid

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the level of area aid scheme inaccuracy was as a percentage of total claims in each EU country in the last year for which figures are available. [222976]

Alun Michael: The following table shows IACS inspection results on declarations of area for 2002 (relating to claims paid in 2003).

Member state	*Applications with errors (percentages)*
Belgium	0.7
Denmark	0.7
Germany	0.7
Greece	3.9
Spain	2.5
France	0.7
Ireland	0.2
Italy	3.3
Luxembourg	2.8
Netherlands	2.3
Austria	1.9
Portugal	1.1
Finland	0.8
Sweden	2.9
UK	0.4
Total 2002	1.7

Figures taken from the European Court of Auditors Annual Report concerning the financial year 2003.

Bees

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that under the proposed EU directive 2004/28/EC on Veterinary Medicines *(a)* medicines available to beekeepers for the treatment of pests and diseases will be exempt from the regulations set out and will not require a prescription and *(b)* the proposed inspectors will be qualified experts who provide and use antibiotics in the treatment of disease and not veterinary surgeons who have no training in bee health. [221410]

Mr. Bradshaw: The amending directive, 2004/28/EC, was published by the European Commission on 30 April 2004 following a major review of EU medicines legislation. Member states are required to implement its provisions by 30 October 2005. It includes a provision requiring all medicines for food-producing animals, including bees, to be available only on veterinary prescription.

This provision was introduced with the intention of strengthening the control of these medicines and related consumer safeguards. While there are valid reasons for restricting some veterinary medicines to prescription supply, we do not consider this appropriate for all medicines for use in food-producing animals. Neither the Commission, nor the majority of member states supported the UK view and the requirement was consequently included in the amending directive.

However, the UK successfully negotiated the inclusion of a provision that allows medicines that meet certain criteria, to be agreed subsequently, to be exempt from the prescription requirement. This provision also allows the current distribution arrangements to remain until a list of exemption criteria is agreed, or until January 2007 if no list has been agreed by then. The exemption list is to be proposed by the Commission and voted on by the member states. We are well aware of concerns expressed by UK beekeepers and will continue to argue strongly for medicines for routine use in bees that do not meet any of the other criteria for prescription only status to be included on the list.

In addition to pressing for routine bee medicines to be exempted from the prescription requirement, we have proposed new distribution categories for the UK that include tiered categories of prescription only medicines. If adopted, these will comply with the directive's provisions while allowing most medicines for food-producing animals that are currently available without prescription to be supplied by pharmacists or suitably qualified persons without the need to involve a veterinary surgeon.

Antimicrobial resistance is a serious problem in human medicine resulting in increasing concerns about the use of antimicrobial products, including antibiotics, in human medicine, veterinary medicine, agriculture and horticulture. It is therefore likely that any veterinary medicines containing antibiotics will be under veterinary control. There is one antibiotic authorised for use in bees, for the treatment of Nosema. Officials at the Veterinary Medicines Directorate will be discussing how this antibiotic is to be supplied with beekeeper representatives.

Betton Abbots Landfill Site

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the long-term viability of the Betton Abbots landfill site. [223150]

Mr. Morley: Betton Abbots landfill site is operated by Shropshire Waste Management (SWM). In 2002, SWM applied to the Environment Agency for a permit under the provisions of the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) Regulations to significantly extend the existing site. As part of the application process the company needed to demonstrate that the underlying groundwater resources would not be affected.

A survey carried out by SWM for the extension of the landfill demonstrated that the geology beneath the site is primarily sandstone, which contains a major aquifer. Environment Agency guidance, based on the requirements of the EU Landfill Directive, precludes the authorisation of any new landfill sites located on major aquifers unless substantial low permeable barriers such as certain types of clay protect them. This does not exist at Betton Abbots and as a consequence SWM have withdrawn their permit application.

In addition to the pollution control issues, there are outstanding planning issues before the site could be considered for further importation of waste materials, these relate mainly to the provision of a new road into the site.

Carbon Emissions (National Allocation Plan)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria she used in making the decision that 736 million tonnes of carbon emissions was appropriate for the National Allocation Plan; for what reasons steps were taken to increase the amount to 756 million tonnes; and what assessment she has made of the impact of not achieving the increase. [223500]

Mr. Morley: The provisional total of 736 million tonnes included in the UK's National Allocation Plan was calculated by estimating the projected emissions from the sectors covered by the EU ETS and subtracting the additional savings of 5.5 $MtCO_2$ which the Government decided the EU ETS would deliver. This calculation was based on provisional emission projections and this was made clear when submitting the UK's National Allocation Plan (NAP) to the European Commission in April 2004.

Following the finalisation of emissions projections and Climate Change Agreement targets UK emissions for the period 2005–07 are now estimated to be around 56 $MtCO_2$ higher than in April last year. These latest projections are more consistent with recent historic emissions levels.

Rather than increase the total by that amount, the UK proposed to increase the total number of allowances by around 20 million to 756 million, which ensures that the UK strikes a balance between the concerns of business about potential competitiveness impacts and the UK's leadership on climate change. However, the Commission has made it clear that it does not consider that the provisional total of 736 million allowances can be exceeded and is not prepared to consider any increase.

On 11 March the Government announced their intention to issue allowances in line with the NAP approved by the Commission (736 million) as soon as possible to allow operators to fully participate in the EU ETS, while initiating legal proceedings against the Commission, seeking to require the Commission to consider the substance of the amendment.

In accordance with earlier announcements, the additional reduction will be taken from the electricity supply industry. As this industry is more insulated from international competition than others, this approach will have less of an impact on UK competitiveness than reducing the allocation to other industries. The Government do not expect this approach will have a material impact on electricity prices which will reflect the price of allowances in the EU-wide market, rather than the number of allowances allocated free to generators. In the event of a successful challenge, the additional allowances would be distributed between the installations in the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) sector.

Countryside (Access)

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what research the Countryside Agency has carried out to determine the effects of the introduction of the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in the

(a) South East and *(b)* lower North West; and how many members of the public have taken advantage of this new access provision; [222379]

(2) what effect the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 has had on the *(a)* numbers of people accessing the countryside and *(b)* number of walks undertaken in the (i) South East and (ii) lower North West areas; [222380]

(3) what plans *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the Countryside Agency have for monitoring the effects on (i) access and (ii) outdoor recreation of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. [222381]

Alun Michael: The Countryside Agency is developing a monitoring programme on the effects of the introduction of the new right of access under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which will provide information at a national and regional level on the numbers of people taking advantage of the new right.

The monitoring programme will also explore issues such as visitor behaviour, enjoyment and satisfaction with access rights in more depth. The main elements of the monitoring programme include additional interviews in the continuing England Day Visitor Survey, which measures public use of access land, and using an Omnibus Survey to track public awareness and understanding of access rights and of what constitutes responsible visitor behaviour both in the countryside in general and in relation to access land. In addition there will be on-site surveys to establish a more in-depth profile of visitors and visitor behaviour on access land and an on-line (website) survey of access land users seeking to establish qualitative data on views, perceptions and levels of public satisfaction in relation to access land. The Agency's monitoring programme will include a land manager survey to assess the impact of the new rights of access on land managers and also a nature conservation monitoring element through an extension to the Breeding Bird Survey, operated by the British Trust for Ornithology.

The England Day Visitor Survey records day visits to the countryside and will for the first time separately identify visits to open access land and to English National Parks. The Agency will publish the results of the England Day Visitor Survey and Omnibus Survey in April 2006. The report will include an assessment of the impact of the Act on the number of people accessing the countryside including the effect on the number of walks undertaken in the South East and Lower North West. This assessment will be possible once a full year of data is available to compare against the visits recorded by the Great Britain Day Visit Survey 2002–03. The other elements of the monitoring programme are scheduled to commence from summer 2005 and the Agency will publish reports from these early in 2006.

Decontamination (Corby)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions *(a)* she and *(b)* the Environment Agency have had with Corby borough council concerning the decontamination of the land formerly occupied by the British Steel ironworks at Corby. [222274]

Mr. Morley: My officials have been in contact with Corby borough council over funding of intrusive investigations at various sites. Subsequently, the Environment Agency has been asked by the council under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to inspect on its behalf one site in the ironworks area, and other sites in the borough, as potential special sites. They are meeting to discuss this shortly. Investigations under Part IIA help to establish the level and nature of any risk to human health or the environment from land contamination, and may inform decisions about subsequent remediation.

The Agency has also been consulted by the borough about several planning applications, as a statutory consultee under Town and Country Planning legislation for certain types of application. Such consultations enable the Agency to comment on risks to controlled waters in connection with development proposals.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's budget for 2005–06; and what the projected change in expenditure is for each component of the budget in each year between 2004–05 and the latest year for which projections have been made. [223034]

Alun Michael: The 2004 Spending Review Settlement provided Defra with its Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) profile for the years 2005–06, 2006–07 and 2007–08, as shown in the following table. In 2004–05 the Department's DEL is £3,085 million resource and £331 million capital.

£ million

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*
Resource	3,276	3,314	3,420
Capital	339	339	339
Total DEL	3,615	3,653	3,759

In addition, Defra estimates Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) and income from the EU as set out in the following table.

£ million

	Annually managed expenditure (AME)	*EU income*
2004–05	2,445	-3,280
2005–06	2,351	-3,393
2006–07	2,367	-3,258
2007–08	2,375	-3,211

A more detailed breakdown of planned spending will be published in the departmental report 2005 later this year.

Environment Campaigns

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the national environment campaigns promoted by the Government since 1997; and what the *(a)* resource costs, *(b)* capital expenditure costs and *(c)* staffing costs were of each at today's prices. [208189]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows.

Waste and resources action programme[1]

	Expenditure	£000 Expenditure at 2004–05 prices
1997–98	—	—
1998–99	—	—
1999–2000	—	—
2000–01	—	—
2001–02	—	—
2002–03	—	—
2003–04	[2]517	528
2004–05	[3,4,5]5,431	54

[1] The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is funded by Defra, the Devolved Administrations, and currently the DTI. WRAP was formed in 2000 and began work 2001. Figures supplied by WRAP.

[2] Staff numbers 2 (rounded estimate), staff cost £55,000.

[3] Staff numbers 4.5, staff cost £115,000.

[4] WRAP have committed a total of 10 million to a national campaign "Recycle Now" over the three year period 2003–06.

[5] Full year estimate.

ENCAMS

	Expenditure	£000 Expenditure at 2004–05 prices
1997–98	3,997	4,734
1998–99	3,697	4,256
1999–2000	3,762	4,238
2000–01	3,542	3,944
2001–02	3,762	4,085
2002–03	[1]3,597	3,777
2003–04	3,574	3,650
2004–05	[2]4,542	4,542

[1] In addition to this expenditure Defra allocated an additional £1 million to local authorities through ENCAMS for the Local Environmental Quality Pathfinder Programme that forged partnerships between local authorities and the local community. Some of the projects developed reduced fast food litter, railway land litter and schools litter.

[2] Encams baseline grant was increased by £1 million in 2004–05, and is being increased by a further £1 million in 2005–06.

Government funding is provided to ENCAMS (formerly Tidy Britain Group) annually. This funding supports ENCAMS work on a range of local environmental quality issues, including programmes to discourage littering.

Staff and resource figures are not available

Carbon Trust

	Expenditure	£000 Expenditure at 2004–05 prices
1997–98	—	—
1998–99	—	—
1999–2000	—	—
2000–01	—	—
2001–02	—	—
2002–03	[1,2]700	735
2003–04	3,300	3,371
2004–05	3,600	3,600

[1] The Carbon Trust was formed in 2001–02 but did not begin marketing activity until 2002–03. Figure for 2002–03 is total marketing expenditure. Figures for 2003–04 and 2004–05 represent expenditure on awareness campaigns.

[2] Figures for resource breakdown not available as Carbon Trust do not distinguish between these categories in the funding information they provide to Defra.

In addition to Government environmental promotions, the Carbon Trust, an independent company funded by Defra, spent the following on marketing campaigns targeted at business and the public sector.

Energy Saving Trust

	Expenditure	£000 Expenditure at 2004–05 prices
1997–98	[1]3,31 3	3,924
1998–99	3,532	4,066
1999–2000	3,726	4,198
2000–01	4,208	4,687
2001–02	6,542	7,105
Staff	(488)	(530)
Resource	(6,054)	(6,575)
2002–03	5,742	6,029
Staff	(487)	(511)
Resource	(5,255)	(5,519)
2003–04	6,038	6,167
Staff	(560)	(572)
Resource	(5,478)	(5,595)
2004–05	[2]8,511	8,511
Staff	(600)	(600)
Resource	(7,901)	(7,901)

[1] Figures for 1997–98 to 2000–01 inclusive show advertising expenditure only and include a small amount of Scottish Executive support.

[2] Figure for 2004–05 also includes a separate campaign to promote energy efficiency in the run-up to the start of the Energy Efficiency Commitment for 2005–08.

In addition to Government environmental promotions, the Energy Saving Trust, an independent company funded by Defra, spent the following on its "Energy Efficiency" Consumer Marketing Campaign.

DETR/Defra: Are you doing you bit? campaign

	Expenditure	£000 Expenditure at 2004–05 prices
1997–98	0	0
1998–99	3,809	4,385
1999–2000	7,666	8,637
2000–01	9,976	11,110
2001–02	525	570
2002–03	[1]0	0
2003–04	0	0

[1] This campaign served to raise public awareness and to encourage individual action to help the environment. However, in the absence of an underpinning legal requirement, it was considered to be of lower priority than the Department's other environmental programmes which bodies such as the Energy Savings Trust and NGOs will deliver. Winding down the campaign will help deliver savings of £3.4 million pa from 2005–06 onwards.

Staff and resource figures are not available.

All expenditure at 2004–05 prices has been calculated using the GDP deflator tables from HM Treasury.Since similar questions were answered there have been changes in accounting practices which have given rise to variations in some of the figures given in this answer.

G8 Environment and Development Ministers Meeting

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what matters were *(a)* discussed and *(b)* agreed at the special joint meeting of G8 Environment and Development Ministers in Derby on 16–17 March; if she will (i) post on the departmental website and (ii) place in the Library copies of (A) papers submitted and (B) the final declaration of the meeting; and if she will make a statement. [223581]

Mr. Morley: At the G8 Environment and Development Ministerial on 17–18 March Ministers met to discuss climate change in Africa and action to tackle illegal logging and had informal discussions on the Commission for Africa Report, reform of humanitarian aid and the importance of biodiversity for sustainable livelihoods. Ministers also met with civil society representatives.

Ministers agreed that African countries are particularly vulnerable to climate variability and climate change and discussed what more needed to be done, including assistance to reduce vulnerability by building resilience to climate variability and by developing capacity to adapt to climate change. Ministers then identified the key elements needed for an effective international response as building scientific capacity and integrating measures to address the impact of climate change in international development assistance and regional and national development plans. The vulnerability of developing countries to climate change in Africa and throughout the developing world will be discussed by Heads of State and Government at the Gleneagles summit in July.

G8 Ministers agreed that further action was needed to help support timber producing countries to improve governance of their forest resources and tackle wildlife trafficking and to deal with the demand for illegally logged timber, including action to halt the import and marketing of such timber, and using public procurement policies. Ministers also agreed that illegal logging policy experts would meet to review progress towards these commitments in 2006.

Copies of the papers for and outcomes from the ministerial will be placed in the Library of the House and on the Defra website.

Inspection and Enforcement Costs

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of inspection and enforcement activities carried out by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* regulatory bodies and agencies sponsored by her Department was in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2003–04. [217778]

Alun Michael: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Plastic Waste

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government is taking to encourage *(a)* retailers and *(b)* manufacturers to reduce the amount of plastic waste produced in the UK. [223539]

Mr. Morley: The Government are taking a number of measures to reduce the amount of waste produced, including plastic waste.

The Government-funded Envirowise programme offers UK businesses free advice and support on practical ways to minimise their waste and reduce their environmental impact.

Additional revenue generated from increases to the landfill tax will be redistributed to business through the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) programme to encourage and support resource efficiency, waste minimisation and diversion of waste away from landfill.

As part of their Retailer Initiative, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) are working with retailers to reduce waste from supermarkets. Part of this work is looking at design issues around packaging and the scope for reduction.

There are two sets of regulations that encourage producers and retailers to minimise packaging. The Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997 (as amended) are intended to increase the recovery and recycling of packaging waste and incorporate a cost incentive to reduce the overall amount of packaging. The Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 2003 place a number of requirements on all packaging placed on the market in the UK, including a requirement that packaging should be manufactured so that the packaging volume and weight are limited to the minimum adequate amount to maintain the necessary level of safety, hygiene and acceptance for the packed product and for the consumer.

Protected Birds

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to extend the protected bird species listed in Schedule 4 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; and if she will make a statement. [221457]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* In 2002 Defra carried out a full public consultation on the bird registration scheme with the key results that the scheme be retained with some minor changes to the administration process and that a study be commissioned by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) firstly to agree scientific criteria for including species on Schedule 4 and then to apply those criteria to candidate species.

The study has now been completed and the recommendations in their report are likely to form the basis for a full public consultation where interested parties will be invited to comment on the proposals and to submit further evidence for consideration.

Single Farm Payment

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what impact she expects the delay in the single farm payment to have on smaller farmers. [222298]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency has announced that it expects to begin payments under the single payment scheme in February 2006, well before the deadline of 30 June 2006 set in EU legislation. To the extent that farmers have made plans based on receiving a payment earlier, they may face cash-flow problems. Whether that happens in practice depends very much on the individual circumstances of the farm business rather than its size.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria were used to define severely disadvantaged areas; and for what reason the Moorland Line was not used in determining areas eligible for the lower rate of the single farm payment. [222463]

Alun Michael: The severely disadvantaged areas (SDAs) form part of the less favoured areas (LFAs) of the UK as listed in EU Council Directive 84/169/EEC. The LFAs are further divided for domestic purposes between SDAs and disadvantaged areas (DAs), the distinction being one of degree, most significantly of land quality. Upland SDAs are disadvantaged relative to non-SDA land in respect of a number of handicaps. These include higher altitude, harsher climate with a shorter growing season, low soil fertility, difficult topography, and remoteness.

Both the SDAs and the Moorland Line have been taken into account in establishing English areas for the purpose of the single payment scheme (SPS.) In view of the considerable redistributional effects that would flow from a single flat rate payment under the SPS, it was initially concluded that England would be divided into two areas, SDAs and other land. However, following representations from a number of key stakeholders (including the NFU and the CLA) this has been amended so that the area boundaries that will apply in England divide the country into three, broadly corresponding to land types and still using existing boundaries. One area comprises the upland severely disadvantaged area (SDA), another the Moorland Line within the SDA and the third area will be all land outside the SDA.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the value of sales of surplus assets from her Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220973]

Alun Michael: The following table shows the value of sales of surplus assets in fiscal years since the Department was formed in 2001, up to 31 January 2005 in the current year. There are no figures provided for Defra's predecessor Departments as this information could be provided only by incurring disproportionate cost.

	£000
2001–02	18,024
2002–03	7,879
2003–04	18,892
2004–05[1]	3,530

[1] to 31 January 2005

This information is included in departmental Resource Accounts, copies of which are normally available in the Library.

Timber

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of whether Denmark's inclusion of social criteria in its policy for timber procurement complies with the requirements of the European Forestry Certification Scheme; and if she will make a statement on the implications for inclusion of social criteria in UK policy. [222183]

Mr. Morley: The UK Government accept that social criteria are complementary to environmental and economic criteria in the context of sustainable forest management and that international guidelines, including the Pan European Operational Level Guidelines, recognise this principle. The UK Government timber procurement policy has been devised so that one outcome will be the enhancement of forest dependent peoples' well being through an increase in the amount of legal timber and timber from well managed forests being supplied.

European procurement directives require public sector contracting authorities to limit their contract specifications to criteria that are relevant to the product or service being purchased. The UK Government believe that forest dependent people play a part in sustaining forest health and vitality. However, as far as the procurement directives are concerned, their well being does not appear to be sufficiently relevant to the subject matter of contracts to warrant inclusion as contract specification criteria. The UK's interpretation of the directives is based on legal advice and on advice from officials responsible for procurement policy. It would appear that a different view is taken by Denmark. However, if it were ever to be established beyond reasonable doubt that the well being of forest dependent people could feasibly be included as a requirement in public sector contracts, then the UK Government would reconsider its position.

Trade

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of the World Trade Organisation appellate body's decision on the Brazil-United States cotton case WT/DS267/AB/R for the eligibility of the Common Agricultural Policy's single payment scheme as a green box measure as defined by the WTO. [222589]

Alun Michael: The implications, if any, of the appellate body's ruling are not immediately apparent, not least because it does not set a directly applicable precedent under WTO law, and an individual case

relating to the single payment scheme would be considered on its own merits. However, we will discuss further with the European Commission which has indicated that it will also be considering the implications of the ruling for the EU.

Warm Front (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many pensioners have received assistance from the Warm Front Scheme in Newcastle-under-Lyme. [223232]

Mr. Morley: Between the launch of the Warm Front scheme in June 2000 and the end of February 2005 approximately 1,100 pensioner households in Newcastle-under-Lyme received assistance from the scheme.

Of these, 440 received assistance under Warm Front and 650 from Warm Front Plus.

Waste Management

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether she met a delegation of representatives from the waste management industry on 15 March; and if she will make a statement; [222966]

(2) what plans the Government have to ease the zero-tolerance policy towards contamination of sorted municipal waste. [222967]

Mr. Morley: I met with representatives of the waste management industry on 15 March to discuss the issue of exports of household recyclables.

Exports of waste destined for disposal are prohibited from the UK. Export of mixed municipal waste is regarded as waste destined for disposal and is thus prohibited. Suitably separated, clean recyclable material is acceptable for export subject to certain controls, which may require pre-notification of the shipment. Operators must check the relevant rules. The Environment Agency has recently issued a regulatory guidance note on this issue.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Government have to change the guidelines to local authorities on recycling and collection of sorted municipal waste to increase efficiency. [222968]

Mr. Morley: Following a public consultation in 2004, Defra will shortly be publishing Guidance for Waste Collection Authorities on the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003. The Act requires English local authorities to collect at least two types of recyclable material separately from the remainder of the waste by 2010.

The Waste and Resources Action Programme's (WRAP) Recycling and Organics Technical Advisory Team (ROTATE) advises local authorities on best practice for recyclate collection methodologies. In addition, the Environment Agency has just issued regulatory guidance on the export of household recyclables for recovery.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the costs to farmers of implementing the *(a)* Waste Framework Directive, *(b)* the Landfill Directive and *(c)* the Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2005. [223820]

Mr. Morley: I announced that the Government have published for consultation the draft Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 on 9 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 106WS. The main purpose of the draft Regulations is to repeal the current exclusion in section 75(7)*(c)* of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to apply to agricultural waste the national controls that are already in place to comply with the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive. The consultation paper is available in the Library of the House and on the Department's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/agwaste-regs/index.htm.

The consultation paper includes a Regulatory Impact Assessment which estimates the total disposal cost to farmers of complying with the extension of controls to agricultural waste to be £26.5-£65.3 million per annum with the mid-point of the range being £45.9 million pa.

Water Quality/Supply

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to ensure that increases in water charges are used to *(a)* improve (i) reliability of supply and (ii) water quality and *(b)* reduce (A) sewer flooding and (B) pesticide run-off. [222975]

Mr. Morley: Water companies may increase their charges only within the price limits set by Ofwat. Ofwat's approach to setting price limits is to allow no more than is necessary for efficient companies to finance their functions. In co-operation with the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate, Ofwat monitor companies' delivery of their functions and levels of service and takes regulatory action where their performance falls short.

In the period covered by new price limits, 2005 to 2010, companies will be undertaking a range of measures in order to meet their water supply duties. Companies will, for example, take measures to increase the security of supply where supply is most at risk, including measures to reduce leakage. They will be making improvements to water treatment works to continue to meet the standards of drinking water quality, as well as improving the taste, colour and odour of drinking water in areas where this has been an issue of local concern. They are also expected to reduce the number of homes at risk from sewer flooding so that by 2010 no more than 0.01 per cent. of properties will be at risk of internal flooding from overloaded sewers at least once every 10 years.

The reduction of pesticide run-off is the responsibility of the farmers and growers who apply the pesticides to their crops not the water companies. The Government

encourage farmers and growers through advice and Codes of Practice to minimise their use of pesticides to avoid the risk of run-off to surface waters.

Zoological Parks

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many zoological parks there are in the West Midlands. [223385]

Mr. Morley: The Department's records indicate that there are seven establishments in the West Midlands which are licensed as zoos under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. Definitive records of licensed zoos are kept by local authorities.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much land is occupied by zoological parks and gardens, broken down by individual park. [222852]

Mr. Morley: The Department does not hold information on how much land is occupied by zoological parks and gardens, either in total or broken down by individual park.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the revenue generated by zoological parks and gardens in England in 2004. [222853]

Mr. Morley: The Department does not estimate or hold information on the revenue generated by zoological gardens in England.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance the Government have issued regarding the keeping of animals in captivity. [222854]

Mr. Morley: The keeping of animals in captivity is a very broad subject, potentially covering everything from zoos and aquaria to farmed animals, game birds and companion animals—including exotic species. The Department has issued a wide range of guidance relevant to these matters. For example, the Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice set out the standards recommended for keeping animals in zoos. A list which includes a number of other relevant publications can be found on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/publications/pubcat/anh.htm

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the expansion of zoological parks and gardens; and if she will make a statement. [222855]

Mr. Morley: Zoos are subject to a comprehensive system of licensing and inspection, under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981, to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained.

Beyond the regulation provided by this Act, the Department has no further policies specifically addressing the issue of expansion of zoological parks and gardens, either in relation to total numbers of zoos or expansion of individual zoos. Both matters are likely to be subject to controls under the Town and Country planning regime.

I believe well-managed zoos can play an important role, both in raising public awareness about wild animals and their habitats, and participating in wildlife conservation activities.

CABINET OFFICE

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Office was in each year since 2000–01. [220969]

Mr. Miliband: The value of sales of surplus assets in my Department for each year since 2000–01 is set out in the table.

Sales proceeds on income from disposal of fixed assets

	£000
2003–04	4,856
2002–03	176
2001–02	529
2000–01	153

The higher level of sales for 2003–04 is the result of the disposal of land and buildings.

This information is contained within notes of the Resource Accounts available in the Library (Note 10: 2001–02, 12: 2002–03, 13: 2003–04).

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

General Election

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will invite international observers to assess whether the forthcoming general election is fair. [223786]

Mr. Leslie: As a participating member of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, we would normally invite its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights to send election observers to any elections held in the UK. I fully expect us to repeat our previous practice of doing so once the date for the next general election is announced.

Human Rights Act (Gibraltar)

Mr. Key: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether his Department treats the Human Rights Act 1998 as applying to *(a)* residents of Gibraltar and *(b)* locally employed Ministry of Defence employees in Gibraltar. [223348]

Mr. Lammy: No.

PRIME MINISTER

Peerages

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Prime Minister what the principal address at the time of elevation was of each peer created since 1 September 2004, broken down by *(a)* nation within the UK and *(b)* region of England for peers resident in England at the time of elevation. [223782]

The Prime Minister: Three people have been elevated to the peerage since 1 September 2004. The place of residence at the time of their elevation is shown in the following table.

Residence at time of elevation	*Number*
England	
Yorkshire	1
London	2

Transcript

Andrew Selous: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1509, to the right hon. and learned Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard), if he will place a copy of the transcript to which he refers in the Library. [223806]

The Prime Minister: No transcript was made by my office.

As I made clear in my answers to the right hon. and learned Member for Folkestone and Hythe (Mr. Howard) on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1509, the Government acted on the advice of the Police and the Security Agencies to bring forward new Counter Terrorism legislation. These new powers will be used against those people engaged in or plotting terrorist acts. The powers would not be used against protestors, unless they were engaged in terrorist activities.

TRANSPORT

Blind Junctions

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of the impact of installing convex mirrors at blind junctions on the level of road accidents; and if he will make a statement. [223854]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has made no overall assessment of the impact convex mirrors have had on road accidents. The Department's view is that the use of traffic mirrors presents more disadvantages than benefits and their use on public roads should be considered only in exceptional circumstances if no better solution is available.

Car Clubs

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much funding has been provided for car clubs in each financial year since 1997–98; what the projected funding to 2006–07 is; and if he will make a statement. [223920]

Charlotte Atkins: In 1999, the Department contributed setting up costs of £150,000 to establish the Edinburgh City Car Club.

The Department has also been supporting the CarPlus car club advisory service with the following annual grants:

£

	Annual grant
1999	37,000
2000	38,000
2001	103,000
2002	53,000
2003	60,000
2004	60,000

CarPlus have requested further funding for 2005–06. This is currently under consideration.

Channel Tunnel Rail Link

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his letter of 22 December 2004 to the hon. Member for Chatham and Aylesford in respect of residents living near the channel tunnel rail link, when he will provide a full reply to the issues raised. [223819]

Mr. McNulty: Department for Transport officials are working with the Department's advisers and Union Railways on possible options for a compensation model for residents concerned about the noise and vibration impacts arising from the operation of the channel tunnel rail link at the North Downs tunnel. However, this is a complex matter which needs to be given careful consideration. I hope to write to the hon. Gentleman soon setting out our proposals to resolve this issue.

Concessionary Travel

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what additional resources he plans to make available to *(a)* Wychavon district council and *(b)* Worcester city council to fund the concessionary bus fare scheme for pensioners and the disabled announced in the Budget. [223746]

Charlotte Atkins: £350 million will be provided to English local authorities to cover the additional costs of free fares on local bus services. This sum will be added to the annual local government finance settlement. The amount each authority will receive will be determined as part of this settlement.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether the concessionary travel announced in the Budget statement will be paid to local authorities through the revenue support grant; [223910]

(2) whether the concessionary travel funding announced in the Budget statement *(a)* will be paid directly to local authorities and *(b)* will be based upon the costs of individual schemes within each authority; [223911]

(3) how local authorities deemed to be floor authorities for the purpose of receiving revenue support grant will be treated in respect of the grant for concessionary travel announced in the Budget

statement; whether the floor will be applied to the grant to these authorities; and whether they will be expected to absorb the full costs of concessionary travel. [223912]

Charlotte Atkins: The additional funding for local authorities to implement the move to free concessionary fares for older and disabled people on off-peak local bus services will be paid to local authorities through the revenue support grant. It will be distributed according to the overall revenue support grant settlement formula.

No decisions have yet been taken on possible floor schemes for 2006–07 onwards.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many pensioners in Chorley he expects will benefit from free bus transport. [223789]

Charlotte Atkins: From April 2006, the Government are extending the existing statutory minimum requirement for concessionary fares so that people aged 60 and over and disabled people in England will be guaranteed free off-peak travel on their local bus services, with no charge for the pass.

In Chorley, all residents over 60 will benefit from free local bus travel. According to the 2001 census, there were then 16,813 pensioners (men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over) and 19,421 people over 60 in Chorley.

Railways

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list companies which have submitted accreditation questionnaires to the Department as part of the pre-qualification procedure for the operation of the new Great Western Franchise. [222773]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority is continuing to evaluate the submissions. A list of all companies submitting questionnaires will be released when the successful pre-qualified bidders are announced.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220965]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department for Transport was formed on 29 May 2002 and has published Resource Accounts since 2002–03, copies of these accounts are laid before the House and are available in the Library.

In their Resource Accounts Departments are required to disclose the proceeds from the sale of fixed assets consistent with the requirements of the Resource Accounting Manual (RAM) and Government Accounting.

The proceeds from the sale of fixed assets were:

	£ million
2002–03	4.756
2003–04	12.024

Transport Services (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many trains into Leicester *(a)* have arrived late in the last (i) three and (ii) six months and *(b)* arrived late in 2004. [223645]

Mr. McNulty: Trains are timed at their final destination station and Leicester is not the final destination station for the majority of trains serving it. The train operators do not compile the requested information.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what financial support he has made available for bus services in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [223652]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department has made available funding to local authorities in England under the Urban Bus Challenge (UBC) Competition. Leicester has been successful with two UBC awards, for the Braunstone Community Service (£1.130 million awarded in 2001) and the for the Service 54 Enhancement (£82,000 awarded in 2003).

Since 1998 the Department has also made available funding to local authorities in England under the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) and the Rural Bus Challenge (RBC) Competition. The following table shows the total amounts made available under all three grant schemes in England by year:

	£ million[1]
1998–99	43.7
1999–2000	49.3
2000–01	53.7
2001–02	77.3
2002–03	85.7
2003–04	88.4
2004–05	51.0

[1] Includes totals awarded to RBC and UBC schemes in the year of award. Expenditure on Challenge projects is typically spread over 2–3 financial years. Challenge competitions were not held in 2004.

The majority of funding for local bus services is available through the Government's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) to local authorities. It is a matter for each authority to decide how much of their RSG resources are used to support bus services.

Bus services throughout England will also have benefited from the Department's Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) and support for local transport capital expenditure.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many violent attacks there have been against *(a)* staff on Leicester buses, *(b)* staff employed at Leicester Railway Station and *(c)* Leicestershire's traffic police in each year since 1997. [223654]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

(a) Data on bus staff assaults are only recorded at a national level for England and separately for London.

(b) The BTP have provided the following data concerning attacks against staff employed at Leicester Railway Station. The data are shown by performance year 1 April-31 March since 1998. Due to the significant changes in the way that crime was recorded due to new Home Office Counting Rules on 1 April 1998, the BTP have informed me that there are no comparable data for 1997:

Offence	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Actual Bodily Harm	2	1	0	2	1	0
Causing Racially Aggravated Harassment, Alarm or Distress	0	0	0	1	1	0
Common Assault	3	6	1	1	3	7
Total	5	7	1	4	5	7

(c) The Department does not collect data on attacks on traffic police, who are part of local authority police forces.

TREASURY

Conception Rates

Mrs. May: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average conception rate for those under 18 years was in each year since 1998; if he will list the 20 per cent. of wards with the highest conception rates for those under the age of 18 in each year; and what the average total conception rate for those under the age of 18 was in each year, calculated from those wards designated as belonging to the 20 per cent. with the highest rates of under-18 conceptions. [221445]

Margaret Hodge: The following table shows the rate of under-18 conceptions for each year from 1998 (the baseline year for the teenage pregnancy strategy) to 2003 (the latest year for which data are available). This shows that the rate has declined by 9.8 per cent. since 1998.

Table 1: Under-18 conceptions in England: 1998–2003

	Under-18 conception rate[1]	*Percentage change since 1998*
1998	46.6	0
1999	44.8	-4.1
2000	43.6	-6.4
2001	42.5	-8.9
2002	42.6	-8.6
2003	42.1	-9.8

[1] Per thousand females aged 15–17

Source:

Office for National Statistics and Teenage Pregnancy Unit, 2005

Aggregated ward-level data for 2000–02 shows that the average rate in the 20 per cent. of wards with the highest rates is 76.8 per 1,000 females aged 15–17. A table containing the names of the 1,608 highest rate wards has been placed in the Library.

Customs and Excise

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the current rental cost is of office space occupied by Customs and Excise in *(a)* Birmingham and *(b)* Droitwich Spa; [223767]

(2) what estimate he has made of the cost of transferring computer equipment and systems from the Customs and Excise office in Droitwich Spa to Birmingham, including the cost of contractual changes with suppliers; [223769]

(3) when the Offices of Customs and Excise in Droitwich Spa were most recently refurbished; what the total cost was of the refurbishment, separately identifying the costs of *(a)* redecoration, *(b)* double glazing, *(c)* provision of office equipment and computer contracts and *(d)* lighting; [223726]

(4) what his estimate is of the costs of providing alternative office accommodation for staff to be moved from the Customs and Excise Office in Droitwich Spa including *(a)* the cost of rented space and *(b)* refurbishment costs of office space in Birmingham; [223727]

(5) whether his Department has undertaken a full cost-benefit analysis of the decision to close the Droitwich Spa office of Customs and Excise. [223728]

Mr. Timms: No decision on relocation has yet been made. The Droitwich office is owned by the Ministry of Defence who have confirmed their intention to close the building and have given notice to Customs and Excise to find alternative accommodation. In these circumstances, Customs have not undertaken a cost analysis of the closure. Until relocation details are agreed it is not possible to provide costings for the alternative office space or for the cost of transferring equipment and systems.

The rental of the premises cannot be separately identified, as a single payment is made to the MoD encompassing both rent and rates. The space occupied by Customs in Birmingham was transferred to Mapeley Ltd. as part of a PFI deal in April 2001. A Facility Price is payable for this space which is for fully serviced accommodation. Again, a figure for rental alone is not available.

Records show the most recent office refurbishment took place in 1995, but detailed information is not readily available.

Employment (Pudsey)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Pudsey in the last 10 years. [223521]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Truswell, dated 24 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about long-term unemployment. (223521)

Information on the number of people who are unemployed is calculated from the Labour Force Survey. However, the Labour Force Survey sample size for the Pudsey Parliamentary Constituency is too small to provide the estimates requested.

The Office for National Statistics also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including Parliamentary Constituencies. The attached table gives the annual average numbers of residents in the Pudsey Parliamentary Constituency claiming JSA benefits for over 12 months in each year from 1996 to 2004: *(a)* who were aged 25 or over; and *(b)* who were aged 18 to 24. Comparable information is not available for earlier years.

JSA claimants resident in the Pudsey parliamentary constituency claiming for 12 months or more

Annual averages	*Adult claimants (aged 25 and over)*	*Youth claimants (aged 18–24)*
1996	390	50
1997	250	20
1998	155	10
1999	140	5
2000	140	5
2001	115	5
2002	70	5
2003	55	5
2004	45	5

Source:
Jobcentre Plus Administrative system

Freedom of Information

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library a list of those individuals who sent e-mails to the official responsible for inadvertently sending information to the BBC about the UK's departure from the ERM which was not to be released in response to the *Financial Times'* request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in the 48 hours up to the dispatch of the information; and what the *(a)* titles and *(b)* copy recipients were of each e-mail. [216792]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 21 February 2005]:* No one in the Treasury knew that the information concerned had been inadvertently sent to the BBC on 4 February until the BBC reported the fact on 9 February. As the Treasury has made clear, no Treasury Minister or political adviser received any communication relating to, or had any involvement in, any decision concerning the Freedom of Information Act disclosure in question. It has been the long established practice under successive Administrations not to release the names of individual officials when answering questions about internal communications within a department.

Gaelic Language

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's policy is on the use of the Gaelic language; and what plans his Department has to prepare and implement a Gaelic language scheme. [217099]

Mr. Timms: Action to support the Gaelic language is primarily the responsibility of Scottish Ministers.

The Treasury regards the promotion and protection of the Gaelic language as an important responsibility, in line with the UK's obligations under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament does not extend statutory obligations on UK public bodies in Scotland in relation to the preparation or implementation of Gaelic language plans. However, UK departments and public bodies which operate in Scotland may—like comparable Scottish public bodies—have a role to play in facilitating the use of the language.

The Treasury has been working with colleagues in the Scotland Office and the Scottish Executive on the role we can play, voluntarily, in securing the status of Gaelic.

Gas Appliances

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people died from carbon monoxide poisoning in their homes in the last year for which figures are available. [223564]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Barry Sheerman, dated 24 March 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many people died from carbon monoxide poisoning in their homes in the last year for which figures are available. (223564)

The latest year for which figures are available is 2003.[1] The number of deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning[2] in the deceased's own home[3] in England and Wales in that year was 154.

[1] Deaths occurring in 2003

[2] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code T58.

The majority of deaths due to 'toxic effect of carbon monoxide' are suicides. Some deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning are also of undetermined intent, homicides or the result of fires. A small proportion are the result of accidental poisoning.

[3] Place of death—own home

Ministerial Directions

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list ministerial directions that his Department has been notified of since 30 October 2003. [221878]

Mr. Boateng: The Treasury has not been notified of any ministerial directions for the period since 30 October 2003.

Pensioner Travel (Merseyside)

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account will be taken in his Budget proposals for free local transport for pensioners of the position of local authorities which have previously funded free local travel for pensioners, with particular reference to Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority; and if he will make a statement. [223747]

Mr. Boateng: Local government will receive increased funding to help meet the costs of providing free concessionary fares for older and disabled people on local off-peak bus services. The additional funding will be provided through Revenue Support Grant as part of the annual local government finance settlement. The amount received by each authority, including the

constituent authorities of the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority, will be determined by the settlement in the usual way.

Pensions

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the Government Actuary's Department's latest estimate is of the net value of the Government's liability for pensions to be paid to its employees; and how much of this sum is in respect of *(a)* funded and *(b)* unfunded schemes; [223818]

(2) what estimate he has made of the unfunded liabilities of public sector pension schemes; what the liabilities were in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and what proportion of gross domestic product these figures represented in each year. [223799]

Mr. Timms: The total liabilities of unfunded public service pension schemes at 31 March 2004 are estimated to be £460 billion. The last comparable estimate of total liabilities was £425 billion at 31 March 2003; the estimates for the years prior to 2003 were not made on a comparable basis. Comparable information is not held on the liabilities of the funded Local Government Pension Scheme or other funded public sector pension schemes.

Expenditure arising from these liabilities will be spread across many decades into the future.

As a proportion of Gross Domestic Product in the financial year in which the liabilities were assessed, the figure of £425 billion can be expressed as 40 per cent. of the 2002–03 Money. GDP figure of £1,058 billion and the figure of £460 billion can be expressed as 41 per cent. of the 2003–04 Money GDP figure of £1,118 billion. However, as detailed in the Long-term Public Finance Report of December 2004 annual expenditure on these pensions was 1.5 per cent. of GDP in 2003–04 and is projected to rise to 2.2 per cent. of GDP over the 50 years to 2053–54.

Road Expenditure

Mr. Cash: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what basis the Office for National Statistics defines current spending for repairs and maintenance on roads as capital expenditure. [222370]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. William Cash, dated 24 March 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking on what basis the Office for National Statistics (ONS) defines current spending for repairs and maintenance of roads as capital expenditure. (222370)

ONS classifies all current spending for repairs and maintenance of roads as current expenditure and none as capital expenditure. The basis for classifying ordinary maintenance and repairs as current expenditure is from the 1995 European System of Accounts, paragraph 3.108.

ONS found that it had incorrectly used a combination of two approaches for recording road maintenance expenditure in the public sector current budget, resulting in double counting. This has now been corrected. This correction was initially, on 18 February, described as a reclassification from current to capital expenditure. However, in a News Release of 28 February, accompanying a technical note of the revision it was pointed out that the revision was most easily explained as removing depreciation from both the current budget and net investment. It was not a conceptual reclassification of repair and maintenance expenditure.

RU64 Suitability Standard

Mr. Spring: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment his Department has made of the effects of the extension of the RU64 suitability standard to all stakeholder financial services products on *(a)* the provision of financial advice to those at whom stakeholders products are aimed and *(b)* consumer choice in the financial services market; what representations he has received on those matters from (i) financial services providers and (ii) consumer groups; and what discussions he has had with the Financial Services Authority on these matters; [223623]

(2) when the Financial Services Authority expects to publish further guidance on the RU64 suitability standard; and if he will make a statement; [223624]

(3) when the Financial Services Authority expects to publish its consultation paper on the RU64 suitability standard that has applied to the sale of personal pensions since 1999; what the timescale for the consultation will be; and if he will make a statement. [223625]

Mr. Timms: The FSA is responsible for setting standards about the quality of advice on investment products. It indicated in its consultation paper 04/11, published in June 2004, that it did not intend to extend the particular suitability test that currently applies to the sale of stakeholder pensions—known as 'RU64'—to the wider suite of stakeholder products that will be launched in April 2005. The FSA has confirmed to me that this position has not changed since the publication of that paper.

The FSA has more recently made public its intention to consult shortly on removing 'RU64' from its rules in relation to stakeholder pensions. The issues that this proposed action would give rise to will be discussed fully in the FSA's consultation document when it is published. Officials meet with representatives of industry, consumer groups and the FSA from time to time to discuss a variety of issues regarding financial services.

Stamp Duty

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the reduction in stamp duty yield from residential property which would result from raising the threshold at which stamp duty is applicable at 1 per cent. from £60,000 to £100,000. [222950]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 85–86W, to the hon. Member for Perth (Annabelle Ewing) The stamp duty threshold for residential property at which the 1 per cent. rate applies has been raised from £60,000 to £120,000 with effect from 17 March 2005.

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many transactions there were of residential property sales between *(a)* £60,000 and

£120,000 and *(b)* £250,000 and £500,000 in Greater London in each of the last five full financial years; and how much stamp duty was raised from them in each year. [223593]

Mr. Timms: Estimates of the numbers of residential property transactions and amount of stamp duty raised from residential property sales in Greater London between £60,000 and £120,000 and between £250,000 and £500,000 are given in the following table:

	£60,000-£120,000		*£250,000-£500,000*	
	Number of transactions (thousand)	*Stamp duty (£ million)*	*Number of transactions (thousand)*	*Stamp duty (£ million)*
1999–2000	69	65	20	180
2000–01	52	50	24	260
2001–02	47	40	29	305
2002–03	35	20	33	360
2003–04	19	5	32	350

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many properties in England and Wales on which stamp duty was levied at a rate of one per cent. were sold at between £60,000 and £120,000 in each year since 2000; and how many of these properties were sold to first time buyers in each year. [223802]

Mr. Timms: Estimates of the number of residential properties selling for between £60,000 and £120,000 in England and Wales, on which stamp duty was levied at 1 per cent. are given in the following table for 2000 to 2003 inclusive. Estimates for 2004 will be available later in the year.

It is not possible to provide this information for first time buyers.

Thousand

	Estimated number of residential properties sold for between £60,001 and £120,000
2000	430
2001	447
2002	453
2003	338

Tax Credits

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how his Department plans to ensure that those who are entitled to claim tax credit are informed of their eligibility. [223384]

Dawn Primarolo: Around 6 million families are benefiting from tax credits. The Inland Revenue encourage people to claim tax credits and they maintain awareness of tax credits through a range of advertising and publicity activities. In particular, information about tax credits is included in the "Bounty Bags" that new mothers receive. And there is an ongoing advertising campaign designed specifically to encourage claims from ethnic minority communities is another priority, using local radio and advertising in the ethnic press and magazines and appropriate intermediary organisations through in-community work.

All our advertising campaigns, whether aimed at encouraging early renewal of awards, or about reporting changes of circumstances serve to maintain awareness of tax credits generally—research shows 95 per cent. awareness—and experience has shown that such campaigns do prompt people to make inquiries to the Tax Credits Helpline.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Affordable Homes

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable homes he plans to deliver *(a)* over the forthcoming spending review period and *(b)* in each year after the end of that period; and if he will make a statement. [223451]

Keith Hill: The funding provided in the Spending Review will, along with efficiency improvements, produce 75,000 social rented homes and 40,000 homes for low cost home ownership (including essential public sector workers) over the three years to 2007–08.

In addition, "Sustainable Communities: Homes for All" sets out the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's plans to deliver more affordable housing over the five years to 2009–10. Measures include assisting over 80,000 first time buyers and keyworkers to achieve their home ownership aspirations.

The delivery of outputs from 2008–09 will be dependent upon the outcome of the next Spending Review in 2006.

Civil Justice (Repossessions)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 332W, when the Civil Justice Council and Department for Constitutional Affairs will issue a pre-action protocol for possessions cases; and when the cross-Whitehall group on possessions and evictions will issue good practice guidance. [223780]

Keith Hill: A consultation exercise on the pre-action protocol for possession cases is planned to take place this summer. The cross-Whitehall group aim to issue their good practice guidance on possessions and evictions in summer 2005. This group has been working closely with the Civil Justice Council and the Department for Constitutional Affairs to ensure that the pre-action protocol and the guidance are complementary. This will be a practical guide on the management of rent arrears, which make up 93 per cent. of possessions cases; and is aimed at all social housing organisations and specifically cabinet and board members, housing practitioners and stakeholders. It will set out the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's policy position that possession action should only be taken where strictly necessary.

Community Wardens

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the local authorities that have received central government funding for community and neighbourhood wardens since 1997; for how long that funding was allocated; and which local authorities which have received it no longer receive such central funding. [216296]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have funded three rounds of warden pilot schemes. The information is in the following table. Funding for the first round of warden pilots began in 2000–01, with rounds two and three starting in 2001–02 and 2002–03 respectively. Funding for the first round of warden pilots ended in March 2004, funding for the second round will end in March this year and funding for the third round will end in March 2006. Of the 84 round 1, neighbourhood warden schemes, 70 (83 per cent.) have been sustained after the end of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's funding and continue to operate as successful warden schemes. For the 122 round 2, street warden schemes, the majority already have future funding agreed although in some areas decisions have yet to be taken. Guidance has been issued to all round 2 street warden schemes whose funding ends in March 2005. This includes information on how other schemes achieved continued funding, a list of funding sources and guidance for schemes on how they can contribute to Government floor targets. Sustainability events have been organised regionally by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's funded warden resource centres. Letters of support from senior officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and visits from trained consultants are also available to schemes who are seeking future funding. In addition at least 150 more warden schemes have been set up by LAs, RSLs on other bodies without pilot funding.

ODPM funded warden schemes led by local authorities

Local authority	*Funding round 1*	*Funding round 2*	*Funding round 3*	*Total number of schemes*
Allerdale DC	1	0	0	1
Amber Valley BC	0	1	0	1
Avon and Somerset DC	0	1	0	1
Barnsley MBC	1	1	0	2
Bedford BC	0	1	0	1
Birmingham city council	2	2	1	5
Blackpool DC	0	0	1	1
Bolton MBC	1	0	0	1
Boston BC	1	0	0	1
Bradford CC	0	1	1	2
Bristol CC	0	2	2	4
Burnley BC	1	1	0	2
Bury MBC	1	1	0	2
Caerphilly CC	1	0	0	1
Calderdale CC	0	1	0	1
Cambridge CC	0	1	0	1
Cannock Chase DC	0	1	0	1
Canterbury CC	1	0	0	1
Charnwood BC	0	1	0	1
Cherwell DC	0	1	0	1
Chester CC	0	1	0	1
City of Cardiff	1	0	0	1
City of Swansea	1	0	0	1
Colchester BC	0	1	0	1
Congleton BC	0	1	0	1
Cornwall MBC	0	1	0	1
Coventry city council	1	0	1	2
Dacorum BC	1	0	0	1
Darlington CC	1	0	0	1
Dartford BC	0	1	0	1
Derby BC	1	0	0	1
Derwent and Solway MBC	0	1	0	1
District of Bolsover	0	1	0	1
Doncaster MBC	1	1	0	2
Easington DC	0	1	0	1
Eastbourne BC	0	1	0	1
Exeter CC	1	0	0	1
Gateshead MBC	1	1	0	2
Gosport BC	1	0	0	1
Great Yarmouth CC	0	1	0	1
Guildford BC	1	1	0	2
Gwynedd CC	1	0	0	1
Hastings B.C.	1	1	0	2
Horsham DC	1	0	0	1
Hull city council	1	0	0	1
Huntingdonshire DC	1	1	0	2
Ipswich BC	0	1	0	1
Kerrier CC	1	0	0	1
Kirklees BC	1	1	0	2
Knowle West MBC	0	1	0	1
Knowsley BC	1	0	0	1
Lancaster city council	0	1	0	1

ODPM funded warden schemes led by local authorities

Local authority	*Funding round 1*	*Funding round 2*	*Funding round 3*	*Total number of schemes*
LB Barking and Dagenham	0	1	0	1
LB Barnet	1	1	0	2
LB Basildon	0	1	0	1
LB Brent	0	0	1	1
LB Camden	0	1	1	2
LB Croydon	0	0	1	1
LB Ealing	0	0	1	1
LB Greenwich	0	1	0	1
LB Hackney	1	0	0	1
LB Hackney	0	0	1	1
LB Hammersmith and Fulham	0	1	0	1
LB Haringey	0	0	1	1
LB Harrow	0	1	0	1
LB Hounslow	1	0	0	1
LB Islington	1	0	1	2
LB Lewisham	1	1	1	3
LB Merton	1	1	0	2
LB Newham	0	0	1	1
LB Redbridge	0	1	0	1
LB Southwark	1	1	1	3
LB Streatham	0	0	1	1
LB Tower Hamlets	1	1	1	3
LB Walthamstow	0	0	1	1
LB Wandsworth	0	1	1	2
LB Westminster	0	0	1	1
LB Havering	1	0	0	1
LB Hillingdon	1	0	0	1
Leeds city council	1	1	1	3
Leicester city council	1	0	0	1
Lincolnshire DC	0	1	0	1
Liverpool city council	2	0	1	3
Luton BC	0	1	0	1
Macclesfield DC	1	0	0	1
Malvern Hills DC	0	1	0	1
Manchester MBC	4	0	1	5
Mansfield DC	0	1	0	1
Merthyr Tydfil county BC	1	0	0	1
Middlesbrough BC	1	1	0	2
Milton Keynes council	1	0	1	2
Newark and Sherwood DC	0	1	0	1
Newcastle CC	0	1	0	1
North Tyneside DC	1	0	0	1
Northumberland CC	2	1	0	3
Norwich city council	1	1	0	2
Nottingham city council	1	1	1	3
Oldham BC	1	0	0	1
Oxford DC	0	0	1	1
Peterborough BC	0	1	0	1
Portsmouth city council	1	0	0	1
Preston DC	0	1	1	2
Reading BC	0	1	1	2
Redcar and Cleveland DC	0	1	0	1
Rotherham BC	1	1	0	2
Royal Borough of Kingston	0	1	0	1
Salford city council	1	1	1	3
Sandwell MBC	0	2	0	2
Sedgefield DC	1	0	0	1
Sevenoaks DC	0	1	0	1
Sheffield CC	2	1	1	4
Slough BC	1	1	1	3
Solihull MBC	0	1	0	1
South Gloucestershire CC	1	0	0	1
South Kesteven CC	0	1	0	1
South Manchester	0	0	1	1
South Tyneside council	1	1	0	2
Spelthorne MBC	0	1	0	1
Stevenage borough council	1	0	0	1
Stockport MBC	0	1	1	2
Stockton DC	1	1	0	2
Stoke on Trent city council	1	0	0	1
Sunderland BC	1	0	0	1
Sutton DC	1	0	0	1

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ODPM funded warden schemes led by local authorities

Local authority	*Funding round 1*	*Funding round 2*	*Funding round 3*	*Total number of schemes*
Swindon BC	0	1	0	1
Tameside MBC	0	1	0	1
Tamworth BC	0	1	0	1
Test Valley BC	0	1	0	1
Thanet CC	0	1	0	1
Thurrock council	0	1	0	1
Torbay CC	0	1	0	1
Trafford MBC	2	1	1	4
Vale of White Horse DC	1	0	0	1
Vale Royal BC	0	1	0	1
Wakefield DC	1	0	0	1
Walsall MBC	1	1	1	3
Wealdon DC	0	1	0	1
Wear Valley DC	0	1	0	1
Welwyn Hatfield DC	0	1	0	1
West Bromwich BC	0	0	1	1
West Lancashire DC	1	0	0	1
Wigan BC	1	0	0	1
Wirral DC	1	0	0	1
Wolverhampton MBC	1	0	1	2
Wyre Forest DC	2	0	0	2
Total	82	90	38	210

Council House Repairs

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department met its target to reduce the council house repairs backlog by at least 900,000 properties by April 2004; if he will set a new target further to reduce the council house repairs backlog; and if he will make a statement. [223447]

Keith Hill: Repairs to council housing are now covered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's target to ensure that all social sector homes reach the decent homes standard by 2010. By reducing the number of non-decent homes we are also reducing the repairs backlog.

Council Tax

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will rank in descending order for each *(a)* county council and *(b)* district council the change in the level of council tax levied (i) between 1996–97 and 2005–06 and (ii) between 2000–01 and 2005–06; and if he will make a statement. [223715]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House.

Empty Homes (Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty homes there are in *(a)* North Somerset and *(b)* the parliamentary constituency of Weston-Super-Mare. [223368]

Keith Hill: The answer for *(a)*, ie the total number of empty properties in North Somerset UA, is 2,200 at 1 November 2004. This figure comes from the council tax records. A figure for *(b)* is not available because no such data are collected below local authority district level and Weston-Super-Mare is only part of North Somerset UA.

Gypsies and Travellers

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reasons Brentwood borough council has been directed to draw up a Gypsy and Traveller development plan document. [223211]

Yvette Cooper: The reason for the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, being minded to direct Brentwood borough council to prepare an additional development plan document is set out in a letter of 7 March from the Government Office for the East of England, a copy of which has been made available in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans his Department has to amend planning guidance to facilitate the development of Traveller sites on green belt land. [223371]

Keith Hill: The Government's guidance on Green Belt remains as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 (PPG2).

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received concerning illegal traveller camps and unauthorised encampments. [223418]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received a range of representations on this subject, including correspondence from Members of Parliament, their constituents and various stakeholder groups.

Heathrow

John McDonnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the procedure for the determination of planning applications relating to the future development of Heathrow airport *(a)* runways and *(b)* terminals. [222222]

Keith Hill: It would be inappropriate for a Minister in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to discuss an individual planning case because of the appellate function of the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

Provisions in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase 2004, which are due to commence in May 2005, provide that the Secretary of State, my right. hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, may direct that an application for planning permission or an application for the approval of a local planning authority required under a development order may be referred to him if he thinks the development to which the application relates is of national or regional importance. In such cases an inspector must be appointed to consider the application and make recommendations to the Secretary of State, my right. hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, on such matters relating to the application as are prescribed.

Local Authority Staff

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the employment of people over the age of 65 by local authorities. [221906]

Phil Hope: Information on the number of people currently over the age of 65 employed by local authorities is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. Local authorities will recognise for themselves the benefits of recruiting, training and retaining staff of all ages which will help encourage a move towards a more diverse workforce in local government.

The Government have concluded that legislation should set a default retirement age of 65, but also create a right for employees to request working beyond a compulsory retirement age, which employers will have a duty to consider seriously. Provided that they have the consent of their employer, people over the age of 65 will be able to stay in employment. Legislation from 2006 will make unjustified age discrimination in recruitment, training, promotion and dismissal unlawful for workers of all ages.

Non-decent Homes Target

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department achieved its target of cutting the number of non-decent homes by a third over the 2001 baseline by December 2004. [223448]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's 2004 Autumn Performance report, published in December, provides a comprehensive update on progress against the decent homes public service agreement (PSA) target, and is available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website, at: www.odpm.gov.uk.

Parking (Medical Centres)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will re-examine the planning guidelines relating to parking requirements at primary care medical centres. [223798]

Keith Hill: Government planning policies on parking are laid down in Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 13 Transport. We want to promote accessibility, the use of public transport, walking and cycling and to reduce the need to travel, especially by private car. The availability of parking is an important factor in people's transport choices, so we encourage local authorities to develop and implement policies on parking that, as part of a package of planning and transport measures, ensure levels of parking provided in association with development will promote sustainable transport choices. There should be no minimum standards for development, other than parking for disabled people, and policies in development plans should set maximum levels of parking for broad classes of development.

PPG13 sets national maximum standards at Annex D for certain classes of use, and local authorities should follow these unless the applicant has demonstrated that a higher level of parking is needed. Primary care centres are not one of the uses where the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has set specific standards but officials have been asked to keep this under review for any future guidance that might be issued.

Regional Housing Boards

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the role is of the regional housing boards. [223372]

Keith Hill: The boards are non-statutory bodies comprising representatives of organisations with a key role in the delivery of sustainable communities, brought together at the request of Ministers to take a complementary, strategic approach towards addressing regional and national housing priorities. Ministers have asked each to produce a Regional Housing Strategy (integrated with their region's planning and economic strategies), and to advise on the allocation of funds to support housing capital investment to address the priorities identified in the strategy.

Departmental Dress Code

David Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221669]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's commitment not to discriminate unfairly on the grounds of religion or belief is set out clearly in its equal opportunities policy.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no objection to its Sikh employees wearing the Kirpan, except where security policy dictates otherwise, and similar items are also banned.

Social Housing

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he will allow local authorities to submit their stock option proposals after his July deadline. [223196]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects local authorities to comply with the guidance on stock options appraisals, which is to submit proposals for sign-off by the end of July 2005.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) if he will replace his Housing Action Task Force with a task force to help and advise those councils which decide to retain their housing stock; [223208]

(2) when he intends to disband his Community Housing Task Force; and whether the individual contracts of its members will run beyond July. [223213]

Keith Hill: The Community Housing Task Force is available to advise all local authorities on their options appraisals regardless of their chosen delivery route.

Once options appraisals are signed off by the end of July this year, local authorities may require continued support to ensure that the chosen options translate into successful outcomes.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is discussing with Government Offices how best to provide this support, including the role of the Community Housing Task Force. We have no plans to disband the Task Force.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable housing units there were in the schemes rejected by his Department in June 2003 for funding through transitional local authority social housing grant. [223288]

Keith Hill: The Housing Corporation ran a competitive bidding round which closed in June 2003 for funding through the transitional local authority social housing grant arrangements. The Corporation, in consultation with Government Offices, assessed the submitted bids. Results were announced in October 2003: those bids that were not successful comprised some 4500 dwellings.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 25 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 902W, on social housing (right to buy), for what reasons his Department estimates that receipts from right to buy sales will decline between 2003–04 and 2007–08. [223299]

Keith Hill: The Government's announcement in January 2003 that they intended to modify the right to buy scheme led initially to higher sales. They expect sales to revert to longer-term trend levels over the next few years.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the reasons are for the change in the number of affordable housing units expected to be built over the 2003–04 to 2005–06 period with transitional local authority social housing grant since the written answer of 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 345W to the hon. Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr. Hammond); [223302]

(2) if he will release further transitional local authority social housing grant funding to ensure that his Department delivers the 14,000 affordable housing units referred to in the written answer of 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 345W to the hon. Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr. Hammond). [223303]

Keith Hill: The number of homes expected to be provided in the 2003–04 to 2005–06 period with transitional local authority social housing grant was based on all approved schemes completing. Some schemes are not coming to fruition due to planning difficulties or because they have subsequently failed to meet the criteria set. Some of these have received funding through the Approved Development Programme (ADP). The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to extend the transitional arrangements for local authority social housing grant beyond 2005–06.

Stamp Duty Exemption

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which electoral wards in *(a)* Cleethorpes and *(b)* Great Grimsby constituencies qualify for stamp duty exemption. [223459]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The following wards, as at 7 May 1998, are qualifying areas for stamp duty land tax disadvantaged areas relief:

Cleethorpes constituency: Park (Cleethorpes) and Croft Baker.

Great Grimsby constituency: North East, Marsh and South.

Relief is available for purchases of residential property in qualifying areas where the consideration does not exceed £150,000.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Office was in each year since 2000–01. [220985]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established on 29 May 2002. The value of the sales of assets is shown in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's published accounts.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Energy Use

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1417–18W, on energy use, what target has been set for energy use for financial year 2005–06; if he will list the members of the Energy Savers group on the parliamentary estate; on what dates this group met; and what the outcome was of each meeting. [222396]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: I have written to the hon. Member.

Escalators

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what factors have led to the conclusion that escalators on the parliamentary estate should not be set to a motion-activated setting. [222268]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The escalators at Portcullis House are not currently motion-activated for reasons of safety and the high traffic rate during working hours.

They are put to manual control outside sitting hours. The escalator to the underground car park remains on motion-activated setting.

Motor Vehicles

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many motor vehicles are owned and operated by the House authorities on the House of Commons estate. [222250]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Two vehicles are owned and operated by the authorities on the House of Commons estate: an electric-powered delivery van owned by the Refreshment Department and a delivery van owned by the Works Services Directorate of the Serjeant at Arms Department.

Parliamentary Estate

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many extra buildings and what additional square feet of office space has been acquired by the parliamentary estate in each year since 1975. [222397]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Acquisitions on the House of Commons part of the parliamentary estate since 1975 are as follows:

Building	*Year acquired*	*Net internal area (sq m)*
Norman Shaw North	1975	10,940
Norman Shaw South	1977	5,578
1 Canon Row	1987	3,451
1 Parliament Street	1991	9,948
7 Millbank	1992–94	13,780
Portcullis House	2000	20,694

During that time some property was disposed of.

Water Usage

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission pursuant to the answer of 15 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1142W, on water usage, what the budget for water economy investments and energy-saving measures have been for each year, in real terms, since 1997, broken down by measure. [222333]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The annual cash budgets for tactical energy saving measures were:

	Cash budget (£)
1997–98	50,000
1998–99	50,000
1999–2000	25,000
2000–01	50,000
2001–02	30,000
2002–03	30,000
2003–04	30,000
2004–05	50,000

The sum is not allocated in advance to specific measures.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum claims from Burmese citizens are outstanding. [223689]

Mr. Browne: Information on asylum claims outstanding by nationality is unavailable and could be produced only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

9,800 cases were awaiting an initial decision at the end of December 2004, the lowest level for more than a decade; of these 5,300 cases were work in progress i.e. the application had been outstanding for six months or less.

As at 31 December 2004, there were an estimated 5,000 appeals lodged with the Home Office which had not been sent to the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA); a proportion of appeals lodged do not result in appeal bundles being sent to the IAA. The total asylum work in progress in the IAA as at 31 December 2004 was 21,600 (10,300 at the Adjudicator Tier, 6,200 applications for permission to appeal to the Tribunal, and 5,200 Tribunal Appeals).

Information on the number of cases awaiting an initial decision or appeal outcome is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North dated 16 February regarding a constituent, ref. M4496/5.[223342]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* I wrote to my hon. Friend on 23 March 2005.

Early Release Schemes

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the earliest possible release time is of a prisoner convicted of a standard list offence, assuming eligibility for all of the early release schemes, having been sentenced to *(a)* four months', *(b)* six months', *(c)* 10 months', *(d)* 12 months', *(e)* 18 months', *(f)* 24 months', *(g)* four years', *(h)* six years' and *(i)* eight years' detention. [217728]

Paul Goggins: Under the provisions contained in Section 34A of the Criminal Justice Act 1991, eligible prisoners serving sentences of between three months and under four years may be considered for release under the Home Detention Curfew Scheme (HDC). The time the prisoner will spend under curfew is tapered according to the length of sentence. Prisoners must serve a quarter of the sentence in custody subject to a minimum of 30 days before they can be released on HDC. The earliest release dates for eligible prisoners is set out in the following table.

Sentence length	Earliest possible point of release
4 months	After having served 30 days in custody
6 months	After having served 1 ½ months in custody
10 months	After having served 2 ½ months in custody
12 months	After having served 3 months in custody
18 months	135 days before the halfway point of sentence
24 months	125 days before the halfway

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for the Implementation of the Programme of Exchanges, Training and Co-operation Between Law Enforcement Authorities (OISIN) met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217815]

Caroline Flint: The Oisin funding programme expired on 31 December 2002. The Management Committees last met on 23 and 24 July 2002 to agree the successful projects for funding for that final year. They have since been replaced by a single funding programme known as AGIS.

During the period 1 July 2003 to 31 December 2004 the AGIS Management Committee met three times. On 14 October 2003 it met to discuss the draft annual work programme and call for bids for 2004. On 27 May 2004 it discussed the evaluation of bids for 2004. On 16 September 2004 it met to discuss the draft annual work programme and call for bids for 2005.

Before each meeting the Home Office conducted preparatory consultations with past bidders, stakeholders, agencies and devolved administrations to discuss the UK's position in the Committee.

The Committee meetings take place in Brussels. The UK is generally represented at meetings of these Committees by Home Office officials and an official from the UK Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels.

The composition of the UK delegation is always agreed beforehand and it is possible for Scottish Executive officials to attend meetings of the Committees as part of the British delegation.

Free Passports

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pensioners aged over 75 years have applied for a free passport. [223466]

Mr. Browne: Since the scheme was announced on 19 May 2004, the United Kingdom Passport Service has issued 114,504 passports free of charge to British nationals born on or before 2 September 1929.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of Holocaust Memorial Day in helping to teach the lessons of the Holocaust; and what plans he has for future national commemorations of the Holocaust. [222951]

Fiona Mactaggart: Home Office quantitative polling research in August 2004 and February 2005 show a significant increase in awareness with 77 per cent. of those interviewed in February 2005 having heard of HMD compared with 53 per cent. in August 2004. 66 per cent. agreed that events like HMD have an important part to play in combating racism and discrimination compared with 51 per cent. in August 2004.

To give a comparison, in February 2004 a BBC survey revealed only 55 per cent. of the UK's population had ever heard of Auschwitz. A new BBC survey conducted in January 2005 has shown that now 94 per cent. of the population in the UK has heard of Auschwitz. This awareness is not just superficial, with half of the UK population feeling that they now know quite a lot about the Holocaust, compared to only 30 per cent. last year. In establishing HMD the Government wanted to drive up awareness and understanding of the Holocaust. The televised national event in January, preceded by a reception for survivors at St. James's Palace in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen and supported by other media programming about the Holocaust, has succeeded in this aim. Understanding the continuum of hatred and marginalisation that led from racist abuse to mass genocide will help new generations to stand up to anti-Semitism, racism and intolerance.

The 2005 commemoration provides an excellent basis for the work of the new Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, which will shortly be launched and will assume responsibility for the delivery of HMD from now on.

Immigration Centres

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases of physical or racial abuse at the immigration centres were reported to his Department in 2004. [220897]

Mr. Browne: Six alleged cases of physical abuse and 21 alleged cases of racial abuse were reported during 2004. All were investigated and found to be unsubstantiated. Every report or allegation of inappropriate treatment against detainees is reported to the contract monitor and investigated. All allegations of assault or inappropriate use of force, which includes incorrect handcuffing, are also referred to the police as the appropriate authority to investigate such matters.

As I announced on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 94WS, there will be an independent inquiry by Stephen Shaw into the allegations contained in the BBC programme Detention Uncovered: the Real Story. As part of this inquiry, Stephen Shaw will be examining the processes in place for investigating reports of physical or racial abuse, and the way these are monitored. Once he has reported back and made recommendations we will be able to consider any implications for the remainder of the detention estate.

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date he expects the arrangements for transferring removal centres from the Prison Service to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to be completed. [223800]

Mr. Browne: Arrangements are in place to complete the transfer of Dover and Haslar Immigration Removal Centres from the Prison Service to the Immigration and Nationality Directorate by 30 June 2006.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the members of the senior management of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate are. [222965]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to the Home Office website, where this information is available. It can be found on http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/about_us/organisational structure.html?

Imprisonment (Non-UK Nationals)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the procedures followed by his Department in respect of non-UK nationals who are imprisoned for serious offences and who have come to the end of their sentences; and what steps his Department takes to ensure the rapid repatriation of such individuals when that is the appropriate course of action. [223337]

Mr. Browne: Prison Service Order 4630 issued in September 2004 makes it a mandatory requirement for all prisons to notify the Immigration and Nationality Department Criminal Casework Team of all foreign nationals sentenced to a term of imprisonment in order to determine their liability to deportation.

Those who are convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment are liable to deportation, either if the court makes such a recommendation or if the Secretary of State considers their presence is no longer conducive to the public good. Each case is examined on its merits taking into consider a person's age, length of residency, conduct, ties to the United Kingdom, compassionate circumstances and representations before taking a decision whether to make a deportation order.

Deportation proceedings are normally initiated 12 months before the earliest point of release, but there is a right of appeal, which will inevitably delay the case. However, where a prisoner waives the right of appeal or the appeal is dismissed, the early removal scheme introduced in the Criminal Justice Act 2003 provides for removal up to 135 days in advance of the conditional release or parole eligibility date, with the exception of a small number of prisoners whose offence is listed in appendix 4 to Prison Service Order 6000.

Money Laundering

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many suspicious activity reports were made to the National Criminal Intelligence Service in connection with suspected money laundering, in *(a)* each month in 2004 and *(b)* to date in 2005. [222611]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The total number of disclosures on suspected money laundering (commonly known as Suspicious Activity Reports) received by the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) in each month in 2004, and in January and February 2005 is as follows:

	Number
2004	
January	8,192
February	10,704
March	12,811
April	12,271
May	12,040
June	14,042
July	14,404
August	12,639
September	13,068
October	12,233
November	14,865
December	17,267
2005	
January	14,490
February	13,305

Offenders (Drug Testing)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of offenders are tested for illicit drugs at the time of arrest; and what proportion of those test positive. [219123]

Caroline Flint: Drug testing on arrest is a provision within the Drugs Bill currently before Parliament. The provision builds upon the existing drug testing on charge scheme and will mean that persons who are in police detention having been arrested for a trigger offence (or an offence to which an inspector has reasonable grounds for suspecting that misuse of a specified Class A drug contributed), may be tested earlier than at present. The Drugs Bill also contains provision for those who test positive to be required to attend an assessment of their drug use and related issues. Assessment in this context has previously been voluntary on the part of the arrestee.

However, the New English and Welsh Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (NEW-ADAM) programme tested a sample of arrestees at 16 custody sites from 1998–2002. The survey, which was not nationally representative, found that 69 per cent. of arrestees tested positive for any drug and 38 per cent. of arrestees tested positive for opiates and/or cocaine/crack.

Ribble Valley

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Ribble Valley and Fulwood constituency, the effects of changes to his departmental policy since 1997 on the constituency. [221997]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government have put in place policies in the areas of crime reduction, anti-social behaviour, policing and active communities that are yielding considerable benefits for the Ribble Valley constituency, as well as for all parts of the UK.

For example, between March 1997 and September 2004, the number of police officers in Lancashire police force increased by 297 from 3,247 to 3,544. The Government's introduction of community support officers (CSOs) in 2002 has put 117 CSOs on Lancashire streets, with funding available to recruit a further 57 by end of March 2005 to tackle crime and anti-social

behaviour. Between 1997 and 2003–4, the Lancashire police force area has seen a reduction in recorded domestic burglary crimes of 41 per cent. and in recorded vehicle crimes of 39 per cent.

Lancashire police force is receiving £190.8 million in general grants for 2005–06, an increase of 4.31 per cent. (£7.9 million) over 2004–05. Lancashire police also gains around £0.4 million from the Amending Report for 2003–04, bringing the overall increase to 4.52 per cent. General grants funding to Lancashire has increased by 29.9 per cent. between 1997–98 and 2005–06. In addition to general grants, Lancashire will also receive around £17.4 million in specific grants funding for targeted initiatives and capital provision in 2005–06. The distribution of resources locally is a matter for the Police Authority and the chief constable.

As crime prevention requires action across communities, every area has had a local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) since 1998 which brings together the police, health services, drugs agencies and council and community representatives to decide how to prevent and deter crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Crime Reduction Programme (CRP) was a pioneering Government intervention programme which ran for three years from April 1999 in England and Wales and took an evidence-based approach to crime reduction. Grants of over £340 million were allocated to over 1,470 projects, including CCTV, under 20 initiatives that formed part of the programme. One CCTV project in the Ribble Valley CDRP area received a total of £572,151 from the CRP.

Since 2001, successive initiatives have provided direct funding to each of the 376 Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships in England and Wales. These initiatives include communities against drugs, the safer communities initiative, the small retailers in deprived areas scheme and the building safer communities fund. Since 2001, a total of £298,794 has been allocated to Ribble Valley CDRP under these initiatives. A further £2.32 million has been provided over the two years 2003–04 and 2004–05 to the Home Office regional director in the north west for CDRP capacity building across the region.

It is estimated that out of a million active offenders, 100,000 have three or more convictions and are responsible for half of all crime. There is a prolific and other priority offenders (PPO) scheme in Ribble Valley set up to target those offenders who cause a disproportionate amount of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the community.

The Government's crime reduction website provides further information on the work being done to reduce crime across the country, including information about action and results in local areas. It is available at http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk.

New legislation has given local agencies a raft of powers, from antisocial behaviour orders to local dispersal orders and crack house closure powers, to work with local people to tackle anti-social behaviour and nuisance. In Ribble Valley a total of 10 antisocial behaviour orders have been issued as of 17 March 2005. Local contacts for tackling anti-social behaviour can be found on http://www.together.gov.uk/authority.asp.

Tackling drug misuse is a priority of this Government and their policy is set out in the 10-year National Drug Strategy launched in 1998 and updated in December 2002. (A copy of the Updated Drug Strategy 2002 is held in the House Library.) Under this, the Government have invested substantially in measures to reduce the harms caused by illegal drugs, focussing on the four strands of:

reducing the supply of illegal drugs;

preventing young people from becoming problematic drug users;

providing effective treatment to all who need it; and

reducing drug-related crime.

Direct annual funding nationally to tackle drug misuse amounted to £1,244 million in 2003–04, rising to £1,344 million in 2004–05. Lancashire has seen a significant increase in direct funding for tackling drugs, in particular for drug treatment services and the throughcare and aftercare elements of the Drug Interventions Programme. In 2003–04 the allocation for Lancashire drug action team amounted to £5.47 million, rising to £7.61 million in 2004–05. Details of action taken to tackle drugs in the Ribble Valley constituency can be obtained from the Lancashire drugs action team, for contact details see http://www.drugs.gov.uk/Links/DrugActionTeams .

The Government are working to ensure that citizens, communities and the voluntary sector are more fully engaged in tackling social problems, and there is more equality of opportunity and respect for people of all races and religions. Active community participation in England has increased by 1.5 million people between 2001 and 2003. Charities have been supported more effectively, and £125 million is being invested across the country through the futurebuilders fund in voluntary and community organisations that help provide valuable public services. Advice on ways to engage local people in helping their communities is available on the Active Citizenship Centre website http://www.active-citizen.org.uk.

The Home Office has funded a Time Limited Development Fund (TLDF) project in the Ribble Valley, the Trinity Community Partnership (Clitheroe) Ltd. They were awarded £113,930 for three years (the project finishes 31 March 2005). The project has recruited, trained and developed mentors for young people, particularly for those excluded or in danger of being excluded from school or on the periphery of offending, and has encouraged young people to take up volunteering.

This year, 2005, is the year of the volunteer which is being delivered by the Home Office in partnership with community service volunteers and Volunteering England. This will include a whole range of events in local communities across the country that aim to celebrate the contribution which volunteers make to the quality of people's lives, and encourage more people to volunteer.

We are particularly keen to encourage young people, black and minority ethnic groups, those with no qualifications and disabled people to get involved. More details can be found at www.yearofthevolunteer.org .

Detailed information on the impact of Home Office policies across the full range of responsibilities is set out in the Home Office Annual Report and in the Strategic Plan for 2004–08, available on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Art Galleries

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many publicly-funded art galleries there are in England; and how many are open to the public. [223711]

Estelle Morris: There are 94 art galleries in England that receive public funding directly from Arts Council England (ACE) or my Department.

ACE directly funds 91 art galleries and DCMS sponsors three major national art galleries: the National Gallery; the National Portrait Gallery; and the Tate. In addition, two of the national museums we sponsor, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection, hold substantial art collections.

All are open to the public.

Many art galleries and museums also receive public funds through their involvement in programmes such as Renaissance and Creative Partnerships, or from their local authority.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many civil servants in her Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223918]

Mr. Caborn: There have been no civil servants from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport who have *(a)* been relocated or *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the most recent figures are for her Department's budget *(a)* in 2005–06 and *(b)* in each year for which projections have been made, broken down by budget sub-head. [223760]

Mr. Caborn: The information is not yet readily available in the form requested by my hon. Friend.

I have therefore set out as follows the summary details of the resource budget allocations to the Department's sectors arising from the Spending Review. The information requested will be available in the Department's Annual Report which is expected to be published at the end of April.

DCMS allocations from the 2004 Spending Review

Resource	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*£000 2007–08*
Museums, Galleries and Libraries	549,188	578,115	596,115	620,115
Of which:				
Museums and Galleries	384,883	400,126	415,605	423,400
Renaissance	20,000	30,000	32,000	45,000
British Library	120,768	124,751	127,493	129,295
Arts	367,921	412,996	412,996	412,996
Of which:				
Arts Council	367,155	412,155	412,155	412,155
Heritage (including Royal Parks)	179,578	180,858	182,358	188,858
Of which:				
English Heritage	121,355	123,836	125,336	126,336
National Heritage Memorial Fund	—	—	—	5,000
Quality and Innovation fund for Culture	0	0	0	6,000
Tourism	54,143	54,614	55,614	55,614
Of which:				
VisitBritain	48,580	49,051	50,051	50,051
Gambling	3,478	2,684	2,684	2,684
Of which:				
Gaming Board	3,478	2,684	2,684	2,684
Broadcasting and CI	123,660	123,151	123,151	123,751
Of which:				
Film Council UK	24,154	23,545	23,545	23,545
Sport	120,643	123,912	151,412	156,912
Of which:				
Sport England	81,118	87,616	87,616	87,616

DCMS allocations from the 2004 Spending Review

Resource	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*2006–07*	*£000 2007–08*
UK Sport	27,738	29,532	29,532	29,532
Football Licensing Authority	1,128	1,264	1,264	1,264
Other Sport	—	—	27,500	33,000
Total allocations	1,398,611	1,476,330	1,524,330	1,566,930

London 2012

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether it is her policy that new sports facilities built in London should support the London 2012 bid. [223692]

Tessa Jowell: The plans for the London 2012 Olympic venues have been developed in close co-operation with sports bodies to ensure that, if the bid is successful, facilities meet the needs of sports in the capital and around the country for many years to come.

On 16 March, Sport England launched Active Places Power, which has been designed to help local authorities and sports organisations to identify gaps in provision and to form strategies for sports facility investment. This will be particularly important if London stages the 2012 Olympic games, in order to plan for new training venues around the country.

At present, the UK does not have adequate training facilities for domestic or visiting athletes and the new Lee Valley athletics centre, at Pickett's Lock, is just one example of a facility that will help to meet this shortfall, thus complimenting the proposed Olympic venue competition provision.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what criteria were used in making the decision to locate the new athletics facility for London announced on 21 March at Pickett's Lock rather than the proposed site for London 2012. [223693]

Tessa Jowell: The decision to locate a new athletics centre in the Lee Valley, at Pickett's Lock, was taken in 2002 by UK Athletics following a detailed site selection exercise. The overall selection criteria included: site compatibility; lottery funding criteria; capital viability; revenue viability; deliverability and readiness; location; planning permission; transportation; regeneration and other miscellaneous issues in relation to support for elite athletes.

The Lee Valley athletics centre will be completed in 2006 and is part of UK Athletics' London wide strategy to have a synthetic outdoor track in every London borough, supported by a range of indoor centres across London.

At present, the UK does not have adequate training facilities for domestic or visiting athletes and the Lee Valley athletics centre will help to meet this shortfall, thus complimenting the proposed Olympic venue competition provision.

Sports Funding

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what Sport England's policy is on sports' national governing bodies discussing reductions in their funding with the media. [223694]

Mr. Caborn: Sport England announced its four-year funding for 32 National Governing Bodies of Sport on 1 February 2005. All Governing Bodies were informed of these decisions prior to the publication of the funding media release on the Sport England website. Substantial press coverage followed the announcement, with both increases and decreases in funding widely covered. The Governing Bodies were at full liberty to discuss their funding with key internal and external audiences. Sport England has not changed—nor does it intend to change—this policy of open discussion.

UK Sport

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether the new Chair of UK Sport was the candidate recommended by the interview panel. [223696]

Tessa Jowell: In accordance with the Code of Practice of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the panel offered Ministers a choice of candidates judged to be suitable against the established selection criteria.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Anti-corruption

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of business supported by the Export Credits Guarantee Department for Rolls-Royce under interim anti-bribery and corruption arrangements between May and November 2004. [219354]

Mr. Alexander: Zero.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value was of business supported by the Export Credits Guarantee Department for BAE Systems under interim anti-bribery and corruption arrangements between May and November 2004. [219356]

Mr. Alexander: £750 million.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what changes there have been in the rules in respect of bribery and corruption in contracts involving UK businesses in recent months; and if she will make a statement. [207276]

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Mr. Alexander: ECGD introduced new anti-bribery and corruption procedures in May 2004. Revised procedures came into force on 1 December 2004, which took account of concerns expressed by customers and their representative trade associations about the workability of some aspects of the procedures.

On 18 March 2005, the Export Credits Guarantee Department launched a consultation on the changes to its anti-bribery and corruption procedures introduced in December 2004. Details of this can be found on its website at www.ecgd.gov.uk

Arms Sales (Indonesia)

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) on what date the Export Credits Guarantee Department was informed of the decisions by Alvis to use Mrs. Siti Rakhmana as an agent in connection with the sale of Scorpion and Stormer vehicles to Indonesia, supported by the Export Credits Guarantee Department; [217434]

(2) pursuant to the answer of 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1786W, on arms sales (Indonesia), what the name was of the agent that the Export Credits Guarantee Department were aware Alvis had employed in relation to the sale of Scorpion and Stormer vehicles to Indonesia; [217611]

(3) on what date the Export Credits Guarantee Department was made aware that Alvis had employed an agent in relation to the sale of Scorpion and Stormer vehicles to Indonesia. [217610]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 24 February 2005]:* ECGD was informed by Alvis as part of the application process that at least one agent would be employed in connection with contracts to export Scorpion and Stormer vehicles to Indonesia. The original applications were dated June 1994 and March 1995. At that time, ECGD's application process did not require customers to disclose the names of agents to be employed. ECGD has not been informed subsequently by Alvis (or the BAE Systems group) of the name of any agent that was employed.

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's assessment is of the environmental sustainability of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [213686]

Mr. Alexander: ECGD, with the assistance of independent environmental and technical consultants, carried out a rigorous assessment of the environmental, social and human rights impacts and financial and project risks of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project before making its decision on support. Its conclusion was that the environmental, social and human rights impacts of the project had been properly and sufficiently addressed and that the project, as specified, complied in all material respects with relevant guidelines and standards. ECGD's decision to provide support was announced to the House on 17 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 138WS, and a note of its decision placed in the Libraries of the House and on the ECGD website on the same day.

ECGD receives regular reports from the project company and from independent consultants that are monitoring the implementation of the project on behalf of all members of the Lender Group. As a result of these reports, ECGD continues to believe that the project is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether breaches of the World Bank's involuntary resettlement policy (OD 4.30) constitute breaches of the project agreements for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [218293]

Mr. Alexander: A breach of the World Bank involuntary resettlement policy (OD 4.30) would represent a breach of the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) loan agreement for the project if it were considered to have a material effect on the project. Breaches not rectified within a reasonable period, in accordance with the project's Environment and Social Action Plan and the ECGD loan agreement, would constitute an incident for which an event of default could be called.

A Social and Resettlement Action Plan (SRAP) Monitoring Panel, made up of international resettlement and social development experts, has been monitoring the implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan, including the expropriation of land for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline project. The SRAP panel's reports are sent to the lender group and are also published on the project website at: www.caspiandevelopmentandexport.com.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what audits of record-keeping have been carried out by her Department on *(a)* quality control and *(b)* health and safety on the Turkey section of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [218294]

Mr. Alexander: None.

WorleyParsons and D'Appolonia, independent expert consultants acting on behalf of ECGD and the other lenders to the ETC project, directly monitor and report to the lenders on quality control and health and safety issues.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when the Export Credits Guarantee Department was supplied with a copy of Trevor Osborne's 18 June 2004 report on the field assessment of coating damage to the Georgian pipeline; and when she first read the report; [218554]

(2) when the Export Credits Guarantee Department first received the results of ShawCor tests on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline; [218558]

(3) when the Export Credits Guarantee Department first received the results of the BP-commissioned Advantica Laboratory tests on SPC 2888 used on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [218559]

Mr. Alexander: The Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) has not seen these reports.

ECGD, and the other members of the lender group, rely on the expert analysis of independent consultants who monitor compliance with appropriate standards and provide ECGD with regular progress reports. Although they may take account of relevant reports

produced by interested parties which are brought to their attention, with the exception of some of the Advantica laboratory tests, the independent consultants have not seen these particular reports.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessments of alternative anti-corrosion systems were requested by the Export Credits Guarantee Department prior to the selection of SPC 2888 for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [218557]

Mr. Alexander: None.

ECGD and the other members of the lender group receive advice from independent consultants on the technical aspects of the project.

The role of the independent consultants was not to re-design the project, nor to seek alternatives, but to confirm that aspects of the pipeline, including SPC 2888, were fit for purpose. As it was content that this was the case, it was not obliged to request assessments of alternatives.

Business Support (Hartlepool)

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the *(a)* financial and *(b)* other assistance, excluding regional development agency grants, her Department has given to businesses in Hartlepool since 1997. [215272]

Nigel Griffiths: Total Core funding of £5.79 million since April 2001 provided to Business Link Tees Valley (BLTV), has laid the foundation on which they have sourced additional funding projected at £20.5 million for the benefit of businesses in Tees Valley, up to 31 March 2005. Such funding and the creation of partnership working allowed the following to be delivered within Tees Valley:

355 businesses have been helped to start.

957 established businesses have been helped to increase their productivity through BLTV's impartial brokerage service. These interventions have introduced a range of DTI funded as well as other public and private sector services such as subsidised consultancy (ERDF), training services (TEC/LSC), research and business information etc.

Since April 2003, 768 individuals have been actively helped to develop their business ideas, with interest in enterprise being encouraged in all areas of Hartlepool's community from college students, women entrepreneurs and members of ethnic minority communities, through to disadvantaged wards.

DTI Enterprise Grant Scheme

Figures for the enterprise grant scheme before 1 April 2002 are not available, and this scheme transferred to RDA's on 1 April 2004. Between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2004, six firms in Hartlepool were granted a total of £112,515.

DTI Small Merit Awards for Research and Technology (SMART)

Figures for the SMART Scheme before 1 April 2002 are not available., Between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2004, two firms in Hartlepool were granted a total of £73,488 under this scheme.

Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme

The following table lists the number of loans and the value of guarantees issued to small businesses in the Hartlepool post code area since 1997.

	Value (£)
1997–98	55,000
1998–99	27,500
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	0
2003–04	253,000
Total	335,500

International trade

DTI has also provided funding through its Passport Companies Programme since 2000. This programme, delivered through UKTI provides individual companies with up to £3,000 to assist them to access export markets. We are unable to provide specific figures for Hartlepool at this time.

Businesses (Edinburgh)

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Edinburgh, North and Leith since 1997. [222911]

Mrs. McGuire: I have been asked to reply.

Since 1997 the Government have built a platform of economic stability which allows all businesses, small and large, to thrive. Businesses in Edinburgh North and Leith, and throughout the UK generally, are benefiting from low inflation, low interest rates and sound public finances. Furthermore, the UK now has the lowest ever corporation tax rates for small businesses and the lowest starting rate among major industrialised countries. Other initiatives introduced since 1997 have included the introduction and improvement of R and D tax credits, the reform of capital gains tax and steps to reduce the regulatory burden for business. Further support is delivered through the Scottish Executive and its various agencies.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have been established in Edinburgh, North and Leith since 1997. [222912]

Mrs. McGuire: I have been asked to reply.

The precise information requested is not available. However, data from the Committee of Scottish Clearing Bankers (CSCB) show that there have been 1,767 new business accounts opened in Edinburgh North and Leith since 2002.

Clothing Exports (Tariffs)

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the total revenue from tariffs imposed on clothing exports from developing countries in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by country. [209531]

Mr. Alexander: None.

The data required to make an accurate estimate of tariff revenues collected by the European Community are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Constitutional Treaty

John Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with ministerial colleagues regarding provision of freepost by the Royal Mail during the proposed referendum on the Constitutional Treaty for the European Union. [208554]

Mr. Alexander: None.

Defender Sale

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department gave written permission allowing the sale of the Fast Patrol Vessel Defender to go ahead. [213459]

Mr. Alexander: The Department did not give written permission allowing the sale of the Fast Patrol Vessel Defender to go ahead.

DTI/EU Co-operation

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions her Department has had with the European Commission on the supporting, co-ordinating and complementary action which may be taken by the EU with regard to industry under article I-17 of the proposed EU constitution. [209587]

Mr. Alexander: None. The Treaty has not yet been ratified by the United Kingdom and several other member states and is therefore not yet in force.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee for co-ordination in the internal market field met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [214294]

Mr. Alexander: The Internal Market Advisory Committee has had three meetings of member states' internal market directors general and the Commission over the period of the Italian, Irish and Dutch presidencies of the EU. The UK was represented at these meetings by Ms Jo Durning, Director of Europe, Europe and World Trade Directorate in DTI. The following table outlines when and where the Internal Market Advisory Committee meetings took place.

	Location
18 November 2003	Brussels
7 May 2004	Brussels
19 November 2004	Brussels

Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad Scheme

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what role the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad scheme plays in providing *(a)* practical and *(b)* financial assistance for developing global sales. [223561]

Mr. Alexander: The Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad scheme (SESA) provides grants to SMEs seeking to participate in overseas trade fairs or sectoral missions. The key purpose of SESA support is to help less experienced businesses to identify opportunities and deal with low-level commercial risk in investigating export markets. The scheme also supports seminars which promote UK sectoral capabilities to overseas business people and opinion formers.

Gas Appliances

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to protect consumers from the fitting of faulty gas appliances. [223531]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

Gas safety legislation places duties on those installing gas appliances, whether new or used, to ensure that they can be used without risk. Anyone installing a gas appliance must be competent to do so and all gas installation businesses must be registered with the Council for Registered Gas Installers (CORGI).

Additionally, most landlords have duties to ensure that gas appliances they provide are installed by a CORGI registered business, that they are maintained in a safe condition and receive annual gas safety checks.

HSE has published multi-lingual leaflets for landlords, tenants and consumers that provide advice about the safe installation and use of gas appliances.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what guidance she has issued to the gas supply industry on steps to reduce the level of deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning in the home. [223532]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

HSE has issued guidance to gas suppliers on their duties under gas safety legislation. HSE also regularly meets with gas suppliers in their capacity as key stakeholders in securing continuing consumer safety through publicity and advice about the risks from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223259]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The Government, via the local Business Link and Advantage West Midlands have provided significant support to small businesses in both Newcastle-under-Lyme and the whole of Staffordshire.

Wide-ranging support has been delivered via the local Business Link operator and the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands (AWM). Core funding from the Small Business Service (SBS) to Business Link Staffordshire has totalled approximately £2.8 million per annum for each operational year since April 2001. Additional funding at least equal to that amount has been sourced from local and regional partners and ERDF as a direct result of that core funding. Whilst that funding covers the whole of the

county of Staffordshire, Business Link has been pro-active in its work with companies based in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

There are a total of 3,170 businesses based in the Newcastle-under-Lyme district. These businesses are able to access a wide range of business support services. These range from basic business information through to long-term, in-depth support project that assist companies to diversify into new product areas or to capitalise on new market opportunities.

Businesses are able to benefit from a range of Workforce Development services to help them achieve the Investor's in People (IIP) standard and develop their workforce. Subsidised workshops are available to assist businesses to become IIP accredited, and to maintain that accreditation once they have secured it. In total, companies are able to access up to £1,000 financial support to assist them along their journey to Investors in People recognition.

The new Director Development Programme is also able to assist businesses that are seeking to grow and develop by enhancing and developing the skills of the directors within the business. Individual training plans are agreed with directors to encourage them to develop their business skills in order to enhance the profitability and long-term success of the businesses they are responsible for.

Business Link Staffordshire has worked with over 1,650 businesses in Newcastle-under-Lyme since April 2001, a total of 52 per cent. of the overall business population. Some of those companies have been assisted to diversify into new products and markets to secure their ongoing viability. Other businesses in the area have been assisted with the implementation of e-commerce to ensure that in today's modern society they are able to respond to customer demand for online ordering.

4 per cent. of the total number of businesses the Business Link have worked with (140) have received intensive assistance to enable those SME's to implement improvements to specific business practices.

With support from the DTI and AWM the Rover Task Force has supported more than 160 Staffordshire companies in the automotive supply chain to diversify and to help start ups with high growth potential to establish themselves, 16 of which are based in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The regional Accelerate programme which helps manufacturing companies modernise themselves has also provided specific assistance to three companies in Newcastle-under-Lyme. The Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) a DTI and AWM funded initiative has supported 150 companies in the Newcastle-under-Lyme and immediately surrounding area. With 65 companies having received in depth support.

A key area of concern in Newcastle-under-Lyme is the rate of new business formation. Business Link Staffordshire has assisted over 150 entrepreneurs to establish new businesses within the constituency. Those businesses are assisted for a period of two years to ensure they are capable of surviving in the long term. Our business start up survival rate after 12 months is 92 per cent. which reflects the depth and quality of business advice those start up businesses receive. Each start up business must produce a comprehensive business plan that is then reviewed by an experienced business advisor. Having reviewed the plan, goals are established with the entrepreneur which are then reviewed at regular intervals. Any variation from those goals is then explored in detail with the entrepreneur and where appropriate, action plans are developed to help them get back on track.

The availability of suitable premises has also been an issue in Newcastle-under-Lyme and through working closely with partners, including the Business Innovation Centre, a range of specific support has been made available. First, a number of incubator and business starter units, managed by the Business Innovation Centre, have been developed by Staffordshire county council, bringing brownfield sites back into effective use. Those businesses have often qualified for grant assistance of up to £3,000 to develop innovative products.

Business Link Staffordshire has worked closely with the north Staffordshire regeneration zone and other relevant local bodies, including Keele and Staffordshire university to ensure that businesses have been able to benefit from other services, including STEP and knowledge transfer placements. The emerging science park at Keele university has benefited from a dedicated medical technologies adviser to assist businesses within that cluster to establish themselves on the park and become successful.

Since 1997 Advantage West Midlands and it's predecessors responsible for delivery have offered Regional Selective Assistance (RSA) and Selective Finance for Investment (SFI) grants to 10 companies in Newcastle-Under-Lyme totalling £7.8 million. Take up of the grants offered has been £560,000 to two companies. It is expected that over the coming months a further five companies will receive grant support totalling £850,000. The discrepancy between grant offered and take up is largely due to the £5 million project with S and A Food not proceeding.

The SBS via it's SMART and Grant for Research and Development product has provided offers of grant totalling £611,000 to support 14 companies in Staffordshire (one of which is based in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Faraday Technology £114,000 to develop new products and bring them to market.

The North Staffordshire Risk Capital Fund is available to businesses in the Newcastle-under-Lyme area, encouraging businesses to consider appropriate long-term finance rather than short term overdrafts. This is a relatively new initiative that will be on benefit to companies in the long-term.

Business Link Staffordshire has also provided funding for the Minority Business Association in north Staffordshire to ensure that businesses operated by people from ethnic minority backgrounds are not disadvantaged in any way. The MBA has been proactive in its work in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have benefited from regional selective assistance in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223260]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* I have asked the Chief Executive of Advantage West Midlands to write to my hon. Friend; a copy of that letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have *(a)* started up in and *(b)* relocated to Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223261]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* Figures for the number of firms that have relocated are not available for Newcastle-under-Lyme, or for any other area.

Barclays bank's survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 5,500 business start-ups in Staffordshire county (which contains the local authority of Newcastle-under-Lyme) in 2003 and a further 5,000 in the first nine months of 2004. This represents an increase of 16 per cent. on the first nine months of 2003.

Data are not available for Newcastle-under-Lyme local authority. Business start-up data for counties are not available for before 2003.

Barclays data show that there were 445,000 (revised) business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003, a 16 per cent. increase on the year before. A further 396,000 businesses started up in England and Wales in the first nine months of 2004. This represents an increase of 14 per cent. on the first nine months of 2003. Barclays do not publish data on the number of businesses that have relocated.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Newcastle-under-Lyme local authority are shown as follows for 1997 to 2003. Data for 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

Newcastle-under-Lyme

	VAT registrations
1997	325
1998	340
1999	355
2000	280
2001	315
2002	250
2003	275

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2003, Small Business Service, available from the Library of the House and also at: http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2003.

Plutonium

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultations her Department has had with outside organisations about the best way to dispose of plutonium waste. [223541]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department has had discussions with a range of organisations, including the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) which is responsible for advising the Government on the long-term management of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste, including any plutonium that comes to be regarded as waste. CoRWM is due to report its recommendations in 2006.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has for dealing with the plutonium stockpile; and if she will make a statement. [223542]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Future options for the management of the plutonium stockpile are kept under constant review and I welcome the work recently undertaken by the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and the BNFL stakeholder dialogue working group on plutonium management.

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) will become the owner of UK's plutonium stockpile as of 1 April 2005. In the meantime the storage of plutonium in the UK continues to be managed in strict accordance with international requirements and has been updated post 9/11. UK plutonium will remain in protective storage pending decisions on whether to immobilise it as a waste or to use it as fuel.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department has allocated to security measures to protect *(a)* nuclear power stations and *(b)* plutonium stores in each of the last five years; what budget has been allocated for each of the next five years; and if she will make a statement. [223543]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is the operators of the licensed civil nuclear sites that pay for the security measures to protect these sites, not the Department of Trade and Industry. The security arrangements are regulated by the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS). OCNS approves the security measures in place and monitors compliance with these security plans.

Private Finance Initiative

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts with her Department have been won by subsidiaries of Halliburton in each year from 1997; what the terms were of each contract; and if she will make a statement. [205076]

Nigel Griffiths: DTI officials are not aware of any PFI/PPP contracts between the Department and subsidiaries of Halliburton.

Road Safety

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings her Department has recently held to discuss road safety issues in respect of vehicle use and construction regulations, with particular reference to the recall by Volkswagen of vehicles because of problems with outer drive shafts; and if she will make a statement. [223024]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) is responsible for supervising and monitoring vehicle recalls. VOSA's vehicle safety branch holds regular discussions with all vehicle and automotive part manufacturers, including Volkswagen, on issues of vehicle and component safety. Neither VOSA nor Volkswagen are aware of a drive shaft recall.

Sheffield Europe Week

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much her Department spent sponsoring Sheffield Europe Week; from which budget within her Department this cost was met; and what unit was responsible for this project. [221233]

Mr. Alexander: United Kingdom Trade and Investment (UKTI), whose parent Departments are the Department of Trade and Industry and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, did not provide direct financial support to the Sheffield in Europe Week programme of events, which ran from 25 February to 6 March 2005. The UKTI regional team for Yorkshire and Humberside did endorse some of the events by agreeing to the use of the UKTI brand. UKTI endorsement was considered worthwhile in order to promote language training in the region through the Regional Language Network and to help foster an understanding of how different cultures and the European Union impact on businesses and international trade.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many small and medium-sized enterprises were established *(a)* between 1997 and 2001 and *(b)* since 2001. [222684]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 453,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2004, the highest since the survey began in 1998.

Barclays data show that there were 1,554,000 business start-ups in total in England and Wales in the years 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 combined. There were 1,606,000 business start-ups in total in England and Wales in the years 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 combined.

DTI figures show there were 728,755 VAT registrations in total in the UK in the years 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 combined. There were 534,035 VAT registrations in total the UK in the years 2001, 2002 and 2003 combined. Data for 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

Data on VAT registrations are available in the publication "Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2003", available from the Library of the House and also at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2003.

Both Barclays and VAT registration data include enterprises of all sizes. However, 99.8 per cent. of enterprises are small or medium-sized.

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the contribution made by small and medium-sized enterprises to the UK economy, with particular reference to the level of exports; and what steps her Department takes to assist small and medium-sized enterprises which rely on exports. [223338]

Nigel Griffiths: The business success of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) underpins our national prosperity. At the start of 2003, the 4 million SMEs in the UK represented 99.8 per cent. of all businesses and contributed some 52.4 per cent. of all private sector turnover (excluding finance sector). Some 16 per cent. of UK SMEs are exporters. Through their international trade activity, these SMEs help to strengthen the existing drivers of UK productivity—innovation and competition; thus contributing to the UK's overall competitiveness.

Through UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), the Government deliver a range of support services to help SMEs win business overseas. Details of the assistance available is set out on UKTI's corporate website www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will announce the proposed changes to *(a)* the structure and staffing and *(b)* the focus of UK Trade and Investment; when these changes are to take effect; and if she will make a statement. [203895]

Mr. Alexander: The structure and staffing of the organisation has to be determined in the light of UKTI's future strategy and its focus, as set out in UKTI's Corporate Plan 2004–07, and the financial and manpower resources available following the SR2004 settlement.

UK Trade and Investment's future strategy is set out in its Corporate Plan 2004–07, available at www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk <http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk>. Details of the settlement are set out in the Efficiency Technical Note for UK Trade and Investment, also available at www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk <http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk>

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bermuda

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what steps he has taken to assist in tackling money laundering in Bermuda; [223776]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Bermudan Monetary Authority on money laundering. [223777]

Mr. Rammell: The UK discusses money-laundering with the Bermudan Monetary Authority (BMA) mainly through our joint participation in the Caribbean

Financial Action Task Force (CFATF—the regional body for anti-money laundering and anti-terrorist financing in the Caribbean and Central America).

The UK has provided training to Bermudan officials and law enforcement officers both directly through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office-funded Regional Financial Services Adviser and indirectly through the Caribbean Anti-Money Laundering Programme (which we support financially). A senior staff member of the BMA also recently worked on secondment for two years with the UK Financial Services Authority.

Bolivia

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of *(a)* the prospects for regional autonomy in Bolivia's provinces and *(b)* the impact of such autonomy on the country's long-term territorial integrity. [223326]

Mr. Alexander: We understand that a referendum on regional autonomy and the election of departmental prefects may take place later in the year. We hope this will strengthen national cohesion.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of recent political instability in Bolivia; and if he will make a statement. [223327]

Mr. Alexander: We are following closely political developments in Bolivia. We hope that all concerned in Bolivia will work constructively to find lasting solutions to the challenges facing the country within a democratic and constitutional framework.

Burma

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what political progress in Burma would be required to enable the UK Government to attend EU-ASEAN meetings chaired by Burma in 2006–07. [223423]

Mr. Alexander: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Redcar (Vera Baird) on 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 797–98W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations for the inclusion of the Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise within investment sanctions provisions under the EU common position on Burma. [223425]

Mr. Alexander: The UK led EU efforts in October 2004 to strengthen the measures in the common position in light of the political situation in Burma.

All aspects of the common position have to be agreed by all 25 member states. There is no consensus at present for the inclusion of Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from Burmese citizens in the UK about having to pay a percentage of their income to the Burmese embassy in London. [223427]

Mr. Alexander: None.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether German manufactured motor engines have been used in Ukrainian armoured personnel carriers supplied to Burma. [223471]

Mr. Alexander: We are not aware of this and have therefore not made any assesament. However, we and our EU partners have raised our concerns with the Ukrainian authorities about the provision of military items to Burma. Although Ukraine is not party to the arms embargo that forms part of the EU common position on Burma, we will continue to make them aware of our position and encourage them to align themselves with it.

China

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of China's anti-secession law; and if he will make a statement. [223324]

Mr. Alexander: Anti-secession legislation, passed by China's National People's Congress, on 14 March, is largely a codification of China's long-held position regarding Taiwan. The impact of the legislation will depend on the reaction of others and how China seeks to apply it.

Although China has stressed its desire for a peaceful resolution of the issue, we are concerned that the legislation makes reference to the possibility of the use of "non-peaceful means". We are strongly opposed to the use of force.

We and others in the international community remain concerned about regional stability. We continue to appeal to both sides to avoid unilateral measures which might heighten tensions.

Our view is still that the Taiwan question should be settled peacefully through negotiation between the people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. We believe that the continuation of dialogue over practical measures and the search for pragmatic solutions to differences will bring benefits to both sides and contribute towards a peaceful resolution of the issue.

Death Penalty

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government made to the recent round table conference on the death penalty held in Zagreb. [222988]

Mr. MacShane: The UK was not represented at this round table conference and did not make any representations to it.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223433]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not have a financial plan for 2011–12. Budgets from the most recent spending round cover the period up to financial year 2007–08.

Diplomatic Posts

Mr. Wilkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many British diplomatic posts were *(a)* gained and *(b)* lost during calendar year 2004 to the personnel establishments of UK Missions in (i) Council of Europe member states including international bodies of which the UK is a member located in Europe, (ii) Africa and (iii) Latin America including Belize and the Dominican Republic. [217755]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 24 February 2005]:* The introduction of a new IT system means that information is not available from the start of calendar year 2004. New data from this system are also not completely comparable with the previous arrangement.

Subject to this caveat, the changes in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's personnel establishments between October 2003 and December 2004 in the areas in question were as follows:

(i) Council of Europe member states including international bodies of which the UK is a member located in Europe. Plus 25.

(ii) Africa. Plus 67.

(iii) Latin America including Belize and the Dominican republic. Plus 8.

Eritrea

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what representations he has made to the Eritrean Government concerning the arrest of *(a)* Roman Catholics in Asmara on 9 January, *(b)* evangelical Christians on 9 January, *(c)* members of the Kale Hiwot church on 9 January, *(d)* evangelical Christians on 21 January and *(e)* Orthodox priests in November 2004; [222504]

(2) what assessment he has made of the extent of persecutions of officially allowed denominations in Eritrea; [222505]

(3) what representations he has made to the Eritrean Government concerning *(a)* reports of a task force appointed by the Eritrean Government to persecute Pentecostal and Evangelical Christians, *(b)* the arrest of Christian women on 12 February, *(c)* the arrest of Professor Senere Zaid on 3 February, *(d)* the arrest of members of the Kale Hiwot Church in di-Tekelzan on 4 February and *(e)* the reported intimidation and harassment of those renting their premises to Christians from forbidden denominations. [222506]

Mr. Mullin: We remain concerned at reports of the arrest and detention of members of all religious groups in Eritrea.

We raise these concerns with the Eritrean Government regularly and were able to raise these recent reports with the Eritrean ambassador in London on 16 March. Our ambassador in Asmara has also followed up these cases during his meetings with senior Eritrean officials last week. We will continue to make clear our concern.

Estonia

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what instructions have been given to the UK embassy in Tallinn in relation to *(a)* support for and *(b)* dealings with Scotland House. [220303]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1891–92W.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 701W, on the European Constitution, when a budget for informing the public about the EU, including about the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty, will be set for financial year 2005–06; if he will list the *(a)* individual budget lines and *(b)* sums allocated within the overall budget of £613,000 for informing the public about the EU; when the budget of £613,000 was allocated for this purpose; how much of the budget of £613,000 for informing the public about the EU and the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty has been spent to date; what payments have been allocated to non-government organisations for the purpose of informing the public about the EU and the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty; and if he will make a statement. [221369]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) budget for communications activities on the EU for financial year (FY) 2005–06 has not yet been allocated. FCO departmental budgets will be confirmed over the next month. The current Europe Directorate budget of £613,000 for EU communications activities for FY 2004–05 is allocated towards various communications activities, including media relations (£55,000), materials (£160,000), ministerial regional visits (£25,000), e-communications (£80,000), partnership marketing (£20,000) and development of a longer-term communications strategy (£55,000). Exact expenditure will be confirmed at the end of FY 2004–05.

The FCO's budget for EU communications activities in 2004–05 was initially set at £200,000. This was increased to £613,000 in the mid-year spending review in November 2004.

No payments have been allocated to non-governmental organisations for the purpose of informing the public about the EU and the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty.

European Union

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what proposals have been made, and by whom, for a change of name of European Union *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives; what the policy of the Government are on the proposals; what consultations the Government have undertaken on those proposals; and by what procedure such a change would be made. [223205]

Mr. MacShane: These proposals are to be found in the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe which the Government support and have put forward for

consideration by both Houses of Parliament. Specifically, Article I-33 of the Constitutional Treaty, which describes the legal acts of the Union, provides for (among other things) European laws and European framework laws. The definition of a "European law" in Article I-33 corresponds closely to the definition of a "regulation" in the existing Article 249 TEC and the definition of a "European framework law" in Article I-33 corresponds to the definition of a "directive" in Article 249. Further detail on these points is set out in Command Paper 6459, page 32—the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Commentary on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

General Affairs and External Relations Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the outcome was of the General Affairs and External Relations Council held on 16 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including their voting record; and if he will make a statement. [223195]

Mr. MacShane: The information is as follows:

Outcome of the 16 March 2005 General Affairs and External Relations Council

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and John Grant (UK Permanent Representative to the EU) represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Brussels on 16 March 2005.

Conclusions were agreed on the Middle East, Human Rights—Preparation for the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), Lebanon, Croatia, and Iran.

General Affairs Session

Preparations for the European Council—22–23 March, Brussels

The Council discussed the revised European Council Conclusions. Member states raised the importance of the Lisbon Strategy and the importance of growth and employment. UK and a number of other member states underlined the importance of further developing the EU's medium and long-term strategy to tackle climate change. Language was also agreed on better regulation and administrative burdens. Overall, member states thought that the text represented a good balance. The Government agree.

Enlargement—Croatia

The Council referred to the Conclusions reached by the European Council in June 2004 confirming Croatia as a candidate for membership as well as further Conclusions reached in December 2004. The Council reaffirmed the EU's commitment to the accession of Croatia and referred to the importance of full cooperation with the ICTY on the part of all Western Balkans countries as an essential requirement for closer relations with the EU. After deliberation by the Council it was agreed that the opening of accession negotiations should be postponed. Conclusions were accordingly agreed reiterating the importance of Croatia co-operating fully with ICTY, and confirming that negotiations would open as soon as the Council had established that Croatia was so doing. The Government underlined their desire to see Croatia as a full member of the EU as soon as possible but reiterated that this could only happen when there was full cooperation with the ICTY.

Future financing 2007–13

The presidency presented its so-called "negotiating box" for future financing—essentially a list of issues up for negotiation in the form of possible June European Council Conclusions. The presidency did not invite comments. The Government's position on future financing remains that the Commission's proposals for real term spending increases of 35 per cent. from 2007 to 2013 are unrealistic and unacceptable. We, along with France, Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Sweden, believe that the priorities of an enlarged Union can be met within a budget of 1 per cent. EU GNI. This is sufficient to meet the challenge of cohesion provided that resources are focused on priorities—namely the poorest member states.

External Relations Session

Middle East

Over lunch the Foreign Secretary briefed Partners on the outcome of the London Meeting and thanked them for their support. There was agreement on the need for continued EU engagement. Ministers then turned to the situation in Lebanon, reaffirming their strong support for a sovereign, independent and democratic Lebanon. They welcomed the commitment to these values shown by the people of Lebanon. They highlighted the importance for the EU that the forthcoming legislative elections in Lebanon be held in accordance with a free and fair electoral process based on the Lebanese constitution, free from foreign interference. The EU will closely monitor the electoral process and be ready to provide assistance. This may, if invited, include sending an election observation mission. Ministers agreed Council Conclusions calling for a full and immediate implementation of UNSCR 1559, the withdrawal of Syrian intelligence services, and the importance of free and fair elections.

Iran

High Representative Javier Solana updated the Council on the state of play of negotiations with Iran on its nuclear programme undertaken by France, Germany and the UK (the 'E3'), plus the Council Secretariat. Ministers exchanged views on the negotiations. They expressed their support for the E3's approach, welcoming the support from the international community and the announcement by the United States on 11 March that it would actively support these negotiations.

Russia

The presidency underlined its commitment to conclude agreement on the Four Common Spaces as a package at the EU-Russia Summit on 10 May and drew to Ministers' attention the remaining issues. A number of member states raised the OSCE Border Monitoring Operation on the Georgia/Russia border and the EU's response to the blocking of its mandate. The Government welcome the progress made on the Four Common Spaces and supports the presidency in their efforts to reach an agreement.

Generalised System of Preferences (GSP)

The presidency emphasised the importance of reaching agreement on the new GSP scheme to meet the commitment made by the Council and the Commission to countries affected by the Asian tsunami to bring it into force on 1 April. Ministers discussed the two outstanding problems, which were the graduation threshold for textiles and clothing and the granting of "GSP plus" to El Salvador. Member states reiterated their positions on the graduation threshold for textiles. The Government had pushed for the same threshold across all sectors, but were willing to compromise and supported the Commission proposal in order to reach agreement in time for the 1 April deadline. However, member states arguing for a lower threshold were unwilling to compromise. The Council was unable to approve the new GSP regime. The Government will continue to work to ensure that a new GSP is agreed at the earliest opportunity.

European Neighbourhood Policy

The European Commission presented European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Country Reports on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Egypt and Lebanon. There was no discussion. The Government welcome the timely preparation of the Country Reports and supports the inclusion of all of these countries in the ENP. The Government believe the ENP will provide a useful tool to encourage reform in all five countries, and progress on conflict resolution in the South Caucasus. We therefore support the recommendation in the Country Reports that Action Plans should be prepared for all five countries.

Sudan

The Council exchanged views on the situation in Sudan, especially on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the conflict in Darfur. The Council expressed the hope that the negotiations underway in the UN Security Council would lead to consensus in favour of the implementation of a UN mission to Sudan and of measures that would end the violence and impunity in Darfur through referral to the International Criminal Court. This was reflected in Council Conclusions.

AOB—Zimbabwe

Over lunch the Foreign Secretary raised the 31 March Zimbabwean elections and the need for a fair but firm EU assessment. He highlighted that the UK remained concerned about the prospects for free and fair elections. Constituency boundaries had been redrawn in favour of Zanu PF, the voters' roll was a mess, newspapers had been shut down and foreign journalists prevented from working, and intimidation against the opposition continued. The elections should not be seen in isolation, but in the context of the political climate that had prevailed since the 2002 presidential elections. The changes that the Government had made in the last 30 days could not make up for the brutality and lack of respect for human rights and the rule of law over the past three years. The Foreign Secretary offered to write to Partners setting out the issues further.

Holy See

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what occasions the future arrangements for UK diplomatic representation to the Holy See were discussed with *(a)* the Archbishop of Westminster, as Head of the Catholic Hierarchy in England and Wales, *(b)* the Archbishop of Edinburgh, as Head of the Catholic Hierarchy in Scotland and *(c)* Archbishop Sean Brady, as Head of the Catholic Hierarchy in Ireland; what their response was to these consultations; and if he will make a statement. [222243]

Mr. MacShane: We have kept the Catholic church in the UK informed of our deliberations on a regular and informal basis. They have not raised any concerns with us over our plans.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 21W, on the Holy See, what the response was of the Papal Nuncio to the Government's consultation concerning revised arrangements for the UK's future diplomatic representation to the Holy See; and if he will make a statement. [222292]

Mr. MacShane: The Papal Nuncio in the UK has been kept informed of our deliberations on an informal basis and has not raised any concerns with us over our plans.

International Driving Requirements

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he has taken to ensure that UK drivers are informed of the requirement in *(a)* Italy and *(b)* Spain to carry at least one reflective jacket in their cars. [222321]

Mr. MacShane: The requirement for drivers in Spain to carry at least one reflective jacket in their car has been displayed in our Travel Advice for Spain since the new regulation came into force during summer 2004.

We have recently up-dated our Travel Advice for Italy to include this requirement. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) travel advice is available on the FCO website: www.fco.gov.uk. I am writing to the AA, RAC and to motoring and travel edition in the press asking that publicity is given to this requirement for motorists in Spain and Italy.

Interpretation/Translation Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many companies were invited to tender for *(a)* interpretation and translation services and *(b)* provision of interpretation equipment at meetings of the G8 to be hosted by the UK. [223064]

Mr. Rammell *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* No companies have been invited to tender for interpretation and translation services for work associated with the G8 Presidency. Four companies have tendered for the provision of interpretation equipment for the G8 Summit in July.

Ministerial Visits

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the purpose was of his official visit to Lahore and Gujarat in February. [223941]

Mr. Straw: Whenever possible and appropriate, I try on trips abroad of any length to visit areas beyond the capital cities concerned, as well as the capitals themselves. Thus in early 2004 I visited Peshawar as well as Islamabad, Pakistan, and Bangalore as well as New Delhi, India.

In respect of my visit to Pakistan in February 2005, the proposal for a visit to Lahore came initially from the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Khurshid Kasuri. Lahore is his home. It is the second largest city in Pakistan, and a major centre for the media and commerce, as well as being the capital of Punjab province. Mr. Kasuri arranged for me to meet a wide cross-section of the business and political leaders of the province. In addition, I gave the keynote speech of my visit to Pakistan there, entitled: 'Pakistan and the United Kingdom: a modern partnership for engagement and understanding'.

I also expressed an interest in visiting one of the major centres to which many of the large UK population of people of Pakistani heritage trace their roots. My original idea was to visit Mirpur, in Pakistani-administered Kashmir. However, I decided not to do so for foreign policy reasons. I then sought suggestions from a number of people of Pakistani origin in the UK, in my Blackburn constituency and elsewhere. Two suggestions were made to me—Jhelum or Gujrat in Punjab province. I decided, following advice from officials, to visit the latter as it was easy to slot into my programme and because it is the home city of the Chief Minister of Punjab province, Pervaiz Ellahi. During my visit to Gujarat I was also able to pursue the Government's consular and immigration objectives.

To avoid confusion, I last visited the Indian state of Gujarat (Ahmedabad, the state capital) in September 2000.

Moldova

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions have taken place with Russia regarding Transnistria separatists in Moldova; and if he will make a statement. [223328]

Mr. MacShane: Regular discussions are held with Russia on Transnistria, principally through the framework of the EU troika. Transnistria was discussed most recently at the EU Foreign Ministers' troika meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on 28 February. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Rammell) represented the UK at this meeting. The UK and Russia also discussed Transnistria bilaterally at official level on 18 February during Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Chizhov's visit to London.

Mr. Peter Dun

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has received a copy of the Lacey Report on the conduct of officials in his Office in the case of Mr. Peter Dun, a former employee of the diplomatic service. [223592]

Mr. Alexander: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not comment on cases involving serving or former employees, nor would it be appropriate to do so in this case.

Nepal

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of Nepal's ability to combat Maoist insurgents following the suspension of non-lethal military aid by the UK and India. [223323]

Mr. Alexander: India's assistance is more immediately critical than the UK's as they provide lethal hardware. The UK's support has been non-lethal and focused on improving general professionalism and intelligence capabilities. However, given the topography of Nepal and the capabilities of the security forces and the Maoists, it does not appear that either side can win the conflict militarily. A negotiated political settlement involving all the constitutional forces offers the best way to resolve the conflict in Nepal and to create a stable democracy with good governance and respect for human rights. We assess that by taking power the King has undermined democracy, increased the risk of instability and that this is likely to lead to intensified conflict. The UK's military support has been predicated on multi-party democracy and the preservation of democratic freedoms. We are considering with international partners what our longer term policy should be in the new political context.

OSCE

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his Russian counterpart about the functioning of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. [223202]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not had recent discussions on the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) with his Russian counterpart. I discussed OSCE business with the Russian ambassador in January and with Deputy Foreign Minister Chizhov last month. The functioning of the organisation is also the subject of frequent discussion with Russia at senior official-level in London, Brussels and Vienna. In these discussions, we have made clear to Russia the importance the UK attaches to the central role played by the OSCE in European security architecture, not least through its human dimension work. We have also set out that, while the UK is content to see OSCE reform, this must not be at the expense of the organisation's democratic values and core commitments, including in the field of human rights.

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the budgetary process for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. [223203]

Mr. Rammell: Agreement of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) unified budget requires the consent of all 55 participating states. There is at present no consensus on the 2005 budget or on a revision to the scales of contribution. We are

concerned about the failure to reach an agreement. We are working with EU partners to find a solution, including through discussions with Russia and other participating states. In the absence of such agreement, we support the interim measures taken by the OSCE Secretary General to ensure the continuing functioning of the organisation.

Sudan

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recommendation by the UN Human Rights Commissioner that the international criminal court should be used to prosecute Sudanese war criminals; and what discussions have taken place between the Government and the US Administration on the issue. [223329]

Mr. Mullin: We have made clear our preference for the situation in Darfur to be referred to the international criminal court (ICC), as recommended by the UN Human Rights Commissioner and the International Commission of Inquiry into Darfur. Since Sudan is not a state party to the ICC Statute, and is unlikely to refer the situation to the court, a decision by the Security Council will be required.

We are currently holding discussions with the US and other partners, in capitals and New York, on the draft text of a Security Council resolution that will address the issue of judicial accountability.

Uganda

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to his Ugandan counterpart about the use of violence by the Ugandan police against the activities of the Forum for Democratic Change; and if he will make a statement. [223007]

Mr. Mullin: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr. Simmonds) on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1796W.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the activities of the People's Redemption Army in Uganda; when it was formed; in what areas of Uganda it is located; what installations and facilities it has attacked; and if he will make a statement. [223008]

Mr. Mullin: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1896W.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to his Ugandan counterpart concerning the use of violence by the Uganda Presidential Protection Brigade against the Forum for Democratic Change Women's Group's participation in International Women's Day celebrations; and if he will make a statement. [223009]

Mr. Mullin: We are not aware of violence being used against members of the Forum for Democratic Change trying to attend official Women's Day celebrations in Uganda. But we regularly make clear to the Ugandan authorities our views that opposition groups must be allowed to operate free of violence or intimidation.

Venezuela

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the Venezuelan Government's policies on *(a)* land reform and *(b)* foreign-owned land. [223325]

Mr. Alexander: We monitor political and economic developments in Venezuela closely, including on land reform. We have consistently underlined to the Venezuelan Government the importance of ensuring that land reform policies are transparent and consistent with Venezuela's domestic and international legal commitments. The Venezuelan Government have informed us that there is no distinction in their land reform policy between foreign-owned land and that owned by Venezuelans.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Business Fraud

23. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Solicitor-General when she next expects to meet representatives of small business organisations to discuss Government measures to tackle fraudulent schemes aimed at small and medium-sized enterprises. [223622]

The Solicitor-General: I met with representatives of the Federation of Small Businesses and representatives of the CPS and SFO in March 2004. If the Federation would find another meeting helpful, I would be willing to consider this.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Solicitor-General what recent representations she has received on publishing the Attorney-General's advice on the legality of the war in Iraq. [223620]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1 January 2005, my office has received 20 requests for disclosure of the Attorney-General's advice on the legality of military action against Iraq from MPs, journalists and members of the public.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Election Participation

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what recent representations have been received by the commission on increasing participation in elections among young women. [223712]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission informs me that it has not received any recent representations on increasing participation in elections among young women. It has, however, commissioned and published research in this area—"Gender and political participation"; conducted four educational workshops

specifically for young women; and its New Initiatives Fund has supported five projects specifically aimed at raising young women's participation in politics. The commission also has a programme of community outreach to increase electoral participation among young people in general, and runs two annual student campaigns in partnership with the National Union of Students.

Postal Votes

Bob Russell: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission, if, pursuant to his oral answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 597, to the hon. Member for Colchester, he will make a further statement about registration levels for postal votes in Newcastle, Cardiff and Stevenage. [224240]

Mr. Viggers: In my response to the hon. Member for Colchester on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 597, I stated that I had been advised that

> "in some areas, such as Newcastle, Cardiff and Stevenage, some 50 per cent. of voters have registered for postal votes".

That information had been given to me orally earlier that day at a briefing on this question by a representative of the Electoral Commission.

I am now informed by the commission that this information was incorrect as regards the position in Newcastle and Cardiff. Following contact with the relevant electoral registration officers, the commission has advised me that while the current percentage of voters registered for postal votes in Stevenage is indeed around 50 per cent., the correct figures for Newcastle and Cardiff are around 41 per cent. and 14 per cent. respectively. Although the general point that I was illustrating with these figures—that postal voting is now very widespread—remains valid, I regret that the incorrect information I had been given led me to give the House an inaccurate picture of the current position in Newcastle and Cardiff.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Diet (Educational Attainment)

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of the relationship between educational achievement and diet. [223608]

Margaret Hodge: The Department for Education and Skills has made no assessment of the relationship between educational achievement and diet. However, a healthy, balanced diet is a key factor in protecting health and promoting children's proper growth and development. It may help children and young people to improve their concentration, but the evidence at present is anecdotal.

Vocational Training

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she next expects to visit Essex to discuss vocational skills training. [223611]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: I have no immediate plans to visit Essex. However, as the hon. Member will be aware we have recently published a Skills White Paper, Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work, which will further enhance vocational skills development.

Further Education

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has for charging for 16 to 19 further education courses. [223613]

Dr. Howells: None. We have no such plans. Through the Learning and Skills Act 2000 we have created an entitlement to education or training for all young people under the age of 19. To ensure this entitlement is genuine and encourages access we have ensured young people pay no tuition fees or similar charges. We have further extended this entitlement to include part-time learners and to cover registration and examination fees.

Special Educational Needs

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on Government policy on children with special educational needs. [223616]

Margaret Hodge: The Government's policy on special educational needs is set out in its SEN Strategy,

"Removing Barriers to Achievement",

published in February 2004.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many accidents occurred at her departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of her Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222575]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills records are only maintained for a three year period in line with the guidance from the Health and Safety Executive. Our records do not differentiate between accidents to staff and other people. The following table provides the information requested.

	Total number of accidents reported	*RIDDOR reports*
2000	n/a	15
2001	n/a	12
2002	132	Yes
2003	141	Yes
2004	107	Yes
2005[1]	14	[2]

n/a = not available.
[1] Year to date.
[2] None to date.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of her Department are in place; and if she will make a statement. [222637]

Derek Twigg: All accidents in the Department for Education and Skills are investigated by trained health and safety officials. Reports on the nature and cause of

all accidents are completed and investigations undertaken to identify the appropriate remedial action to reduce or eliminate any risks.

Adult Education

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) whether her Department will fully fund courses for adults at Level 3 in Redbridge in 2005–06; [223074]

(2) whether she expects fees for courses above Level 2 for adults in Redbridge to rise in 2005–06. [223076]

Dr. Howells: It is our policy to ensure that those groups of people benefiting from fully funded further education provision will continue to do so. There will be no change in the fee concessions arrangements that help unemployed people, those on income based benefits, and retired people and working families on low incomes, to access further education. We will continue to make substantial levels of public funding available to all which covers the largest part of the cost of courses but we also expect adult learners, who can afford to do so, to make a contribution to the costs of their learning. Those people already qualified at Level 2, or not in one of our priority groups, will on average pay a higher fee contribution in 2005/06 unless they qualify for fee concessions.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will ensure fee concessions remain in place for those aged over 60-years who wish to study in a further education college in Redbridge. [223075]

Dr. Howells: Older people will continue to be eligible for concessions funded by my Department through the Learning and Skills Council if they are receiving an income based benefit such as housing benefit or council tax benefit, and they may be eligible for fee concessions if they are receiving the pension credit. learners of any age will also continue to have access to literacy, numeracy and English language courses free of charge. Colleges such as those in Redbridge will continue to have considerable discretion in setting fees, and although we want colleges to raise more of the income they voluntarily forgo, we have no plans to stop colleges offering additional concessions if appropriate.

Apprentices

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what information she has on the number of apprentices who continue on to university in England. [219019]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Details of entry qualifications of entrants to higher education are collected annually by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) but students with apprenticeships are not identified separately.

We are committed to strengthening the links between higher education and apprenticeship, and have commissioned work to explore the current evidential base on apprenticeship progression to higher education which will inform LSC and DfES workin this area.

Children's Commissioner for England

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* remit and *(b)* salary will be of the new Children's Commissioner for England. [222044]

Margaret Hodge: The Children's Commissioner's remit is set out in the Children Act 2004. He will promote awareness of the views and interests of children and young people; working as an independent champion, with a strategic role which gives him wide scope and influence in advancing their interests. He will be particularly concerned with the five outcomes that children and young people told us were critical to their well-being: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being. He must have regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in carrying out his work. The Commissioner will be able to focus on the widest possible interpretation of children's well-being and have the freedom to pursue whatever issues he judges most important to children and young people.

In addition, where the Children's Commissioner considers that the case of an individual child in England raises issues of public policy of relevance to other children, he may hold an inquiry into that case.

In line with the Devolution Settlements, the Children's Commissioner has the function of promoting awareness of the views and interests of children in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in so far as they relate to non-devolved matters.

The Children's Commissioner's salary is £130,000 per annum.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what special arrangements will be put in place when the Children's Commissioner for England deals with complaints about the conduct of paediatricians dealing with children. [222691]

Margaret Hodge: None.

As stated in the Children Act 2004, the Children's Commissioner has the function of promoting awareness of the views and interests of children. As part of this function, he may choose to consider or research any matter, relating to the interests of children, including the operation of complaints procedures. He also has an inquiry function which means that when he considers that the case of an individual child raises questions of relevance to children generally, he may hold an inquiry into that case. He is also independent of Government and if he chooses to deal with complaints about the conduct of paediatricians or any other professional group, it will be up to him how he exercises this duty and what arrangements he will make.

As in all his work, whether the Commissioner holds an inquiry or considers an issue, he will exercise impartiality at all times.

Stourbridge

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Stourbridge constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [223339]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Stourbridge constituency lies within Dudley local education authority. The most recent Key Stage 2 and GCSE and equivalents Achievement for pupils attending schools in Stourbridge are given in the following tables:

Key Stage 2 Achievements of 11-year-old pupils attending schools in the Stourbridge constituency— Percentage of pupils gaining level 4 and above

	1997	2004	Percentage point improvement 1997–2004
Stourbridge			
English[1]	65	83	18
Maths[1]	65	78	13
National average			
English[2]	63	78	15
Maths[2]	61	74	13

[1] Pupils attending schools in Stourbridge constituency
[2] The average for all schools in England (including independent schools)

GCSE and equivalents[1] Achievement of 15-year-old pupils[2] attending schools in the Stourbridge constituency

Percentage of 15-year-olds gaining	1997	2004	Percentage point improvement 1997–2004
Stourbridge—5 + A*-C	51.0	54.8	3.8
Stourbridge—5 + A*-G	90.0	92.0	2.0
National Average—5+ A*-C	45.1	53.7	8.6
National Average—5+ A*-G	87.0	88.8	1.8

[1] For 2004 only results incorporate GCSEs, GNVQs and a wide range of other qualifications approved pre-16. Prior to 2004 results are based on GCSEs and GNVQs only.
[2] As standard the results reported relate to pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

At national level, standards have improved across all key stages. The Primary and Key Stage 3 National Strategies, together with the measures we have taken to help schools in the toughest areas are continuing to deliver better results.

Further information by constituency, is provided within the Department's 'In Your Area' website available at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea. Where information is not available at the constituency level it has been provided at local education authority level.

This website allows users to access key facts and local information about education and skills based on postcodes. The data available within the site offers comparisons between 1997 and the latest available year and covers five geographies. These are parliamentary constituency, ward, local authority district, local education authority and Government office region. England figures are also provided.

The information available within the web site is grouped in a number of broad categories including Literacy and Numeracy at age 11, Literacy and Numeracy at age 14, GCSE/GNVQ results, Pupils with Special Educational Needs, School Initiatives, School Workforce, School Funding and Resources, Children's Social Services, Early Years, Class Sizes, Post 16, Higher Education and Adult Education.

Additional information could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, my Department is investigating ways in which we can disseminate more information about the effects of our policies at a local level. The 'In Your Area' website will be further developed over the coming months to include additional information about Adult Education, School Funding, School Initiatives, School Performance, School Workforce and Post 16.

Disabled Access

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000 by schools and colleges; and what plans she has to increase access for people with disabilities to schools and colleges. [222701]

Margaret Hodge: As I said to my hon. Friend on 8 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 462W on disabled student (access), schools and post 16 institutions now have a wide range of duties under Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995, to improve access to education for their disabled pupils and students and progress is being monitored.

Dyslexia

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure that teachers are trained to identify and respond to dyslexia. [218498]

Margaret Hodge: In order to be awarded Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), trainee teachers must demonstrate that they understand their responsibilities under the statutory SEN Code of Practice, know how to seek advice from specialists where necessary and can differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of pupils, including those with SEN.

The underpinning standards for the Induction Programme for those awarded QTS require teachers to demonstrate that they can plan effectively, meeting the needs of pupils in their classes with SEN, with or without a statement. In consultation with the SEN Co-ordinator they contribute to the preparation and implementation of individual pupils' education plans or the equivalent.

The Department is working with the Teacher Training Agency to take forward a range of specific proposals designed to improve the skills and confidence of trainee, newly qualified, and established teachers in supporting pupils with SEN. These proposals are currently being developed in discussions with various interested parties.

The Department also continues to work closely with both the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and the Dyslexia Institute (DI), and have supported a number of initiatives aimed at raising awareness of dyslexia to help teachers to identify pupils with dyslexia and to take appropriate action at an early stage. For example, we have grant-aided the production and dissemination of 'Achieving Dyslexia Friendly Schools' a school resource pack which promotes a whole-school approach to supporting pupils with dyslexia and provides examples of best practice.

The Department through its National Primary Strategy has produced an extensive range of specific guidance material for schools on evidence-based interventions for children with significant literacy and numeracy difficulties. We have also produced guidance material on classroom strategies to enable dyslexic pupils' to access learning. A new interactive CD-ROM based in-service training resource is currently being developed in collaboration with the BDA and DI. This is designed to help school staff increase their awareness and understanding of the barriers to learning presented by dyslexia, and the teaching strategies that can be used to overcome them. This resource is expected to be available to schools from May.

Early Intervention Programmes

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in the Early Intervention pilots; what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effectiveness of the pilots; and if she will make a statement on the future use of Early Intervention programmes in resolving family disputes relating to children. [221869]

Margaret Hodge: The Family Resolutions pilot began in Sunderland, Brighton and Inner London in autumn 2004. The pilot will test the effectiveness of a range of information and parent planning measures in helping separating or separated parents to reach agreement about contact and residence for their children, without needing full court proceedings.

The University of East Anglia has been commissioned to monitor the impact of Family Resolutions and it is expected to report in March 2006. Outcomes of this report will inform the Government's decision on whether or how the programme should be rolled out nationally.

Early Years Care

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to support private and voluntary early years care providers in the development of the skills of their care staff; and if she will make a statement. [223226]

Margaret Hodge: We are already doing much to support private and voluntary sector early years' providers in developing the skills of their work force. We are giving £129.9 million to local authorities (LAs) in England over the two years 2004–06 for developing the early years and child care work force. We are also working closely with the Learning and Skills Council who, with LAs, have shared local targets to train early years' workers.

Our 10 year strategy for child care, published in December 2004, identifies the work force as the single biggest factor determining the quality of child care. It recognises that developing world-class early years' services will require a step-change in the quality and stability of the work force. We are committed to this radical reform and we will work with leading bodies in the sector to achieve it.

We recognise that quality improvements may have cost implications for all early years' providers, which is why we have created a 'Transformation Fund' of £125 million a year. From April 2006, this fund will be used to support investment by local authorities in high quality, affordable, flexible and sustainable child care provision.

In addition, we have developed the Common Core of Skills and Knowledge to support and focus professional development in the children's work force, including those working for private and voluntary sector early years' providers. This sets out the areas of expertise that everyone working with children, young people and families (including those who work as volunteers) should be able to demonstrate. It sets out the skills and knowledge that, if accredited, could form the basis of a minimum competence for working with children, young people and their families.

Education Business Links

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advice she has given to *(a)* local learning and skills councils and *(b)* those in charge of single regeneration budgets on what funding should be made available for education business links; and if she will make a statement. [223667]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department does not advise local LSCs on spending priorities. This is a matter for the learning and skills council itself. Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, will write to my hon. Friend on this point, and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

The Single Regeneration Budget was subsumed into Regional Development Agency funding in April 2002. Remaining SRB funding is on a commitments-only basis. However, RDAs support education and skills objectives, including education business links. Guidance to RDAs about producing their Corporate Plans for 2005–08 asks them to consider how they can promote

"employers' engagement with schools and colleges in developing learners' vocational and employability skills, as well as their enterprise capability in line with the Enterprise Education strategy".

Education Funding (Leeds)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level of funding per pupil in Leeds was in each year since 1992. [223567]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is only available from 1997–98 onwards. Due to changes in the school funding system, it is not possible to provide

corresponding figures for previous years. The information requested can be found in the following table:

Average funding per pupil aged 3–19—Leeds

	£
1997–98	2,750
1998–99	2,800
1999–2000	2,940
2000–01	3,230
2001–02	3,410
2002–03	3,520
2003–04	3,650
2004–05	3,770

Notes:

1. Total funding includes funding via Education Formula Spending/Standard Spending Assessment and revenue grants allocated at an LEA level. It excludes the pensions transfer to EPS and the Learning and Skills Council.
2. Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004.
3. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education SSA/EFS settlements.
4. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
5. The pupil numbers used to convert m figures to per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
6. Figures are as reported by the LEA and rounded to the nearest 10.

Education Spending (Wirral)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what per capita spending on education was in Wirral, South in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* the last year for which figures are available. [222679]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is collected at local education authority level. Wirral, South is part of both Wirral and Cheshire LEAs and the following table contains the information requested:

Education expenditure[1, 2] per capita[3] in Wirral and Cheshire LEAs[4]

	Wirral	*£ per capita Cheshire*
1997–98[5]	1,940	1,940
2001–02	2,680	2,440
2002–03	3,110	2,800

[1] The total expenditure on education in schools and LEAs is drawn from the net current expenditure column of the total education spending line. This includes expenditure on schools, education out of schools, continuing education, youth and community and also central LEA management and support. However excluded from the total expenditure is any capital expenditure from revenue (CERA). HE expenditure is not allocated on an LEA basis and instead is largely funded by Government with the money allocated annually, to individual universities through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Similarly, the Department does not collect information on the level of funding per student in FE at a local or regional level and therefore we are unable to identify the per capita cost in respect of HE and FE provision for Wirral and Cheshire LEAs and as such it has been excluded.

[2] The expenditure data for 1997–98 are drawn from the annual 'RO1' spending returns which local authorities submitted to the ODPM. Figures for 2001–02 and 2003–04 are drawn from Section 52 outturn statements which LEAs submitted to the DfES.

[3] In order to provide a per capita figure for expenditure on education we have divided each LEA's net current education expenditure figure by the total population aged between three and 19 (inclusive) within that authority. The population figures are estimated resident mid year population figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and these have recently been revised following the 2001 Census. Thus for financial year 1997–98 we have used the population estimate from mid year 1997 and for 2001–02 we used the mid 2001 estimate (and so on).

[4] Local government reorganisation (LGR) took place on 1 April 1998 where pre-LGR Cheshire LEA was split into Cheshire LEA, Halton LEA and Warrington LEA. As a result, 1997–98 data is for pre-LGR Cheshire LEA and data for subsequent years is for the part of pre-LGR Cheshire now known as Cheshire LEA and is not therefore comparable with the 1997–98 figure. This break in the time series is shown by the blank row.

[5] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 as reported by the LEA.

Enterprise Education

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the delivery of enterprise education. [223668]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: From September 2005 funding of £60 million will support a new focus on enterprise education for all Key Stage 4 pupils. In preparation for this new requirement we have in the last two years spent over £30 million: on Pathfinder projects involving over 700 schools, from which we have prepared national guidance which is already available to schools; and on the Enterprise Adviser service, to help prepare schools in especially disadvantaged areas. Thus in only two years since the Davies Report, we had funded interventions on enterprise in 50 per cent. of secondary schools.

We are currently arranging regional conferences on enterprise education for all schools and for their local partners, to enable them to discuss the national guidance and consider local delivery in the next academic year. These will take place in April, May and June.

Expulsions (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 years in Leicester, South have been expelled for *(a)* drugs offences, *(b)* truancy and *(c)* bullying since 1997. [223648]

Derek Twigg: The information going back to 1997 is not held centrally. We started to collect reasons for exclusions on a termly basis from the summer term 2003.

However, due to concerns over the reliability of the first set of data, the full data on reasons for exclusion were not published in the Experimental First Release (ESR 01/2004), a copy of which is in the Library. The next Statistical First Release on exclusions, including reasons for exclusion, will be published in June 2005.

Families (Grants)

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what Government funding the National Family and Parenting Institute received in

each of the last five years; and what her policy is on the role preventative relationship education should have in the publicly-funded work of the institute. [222323]

Margaret Hodge: The National Family and Parenting Institute (NFPI) was set up in 1999 with start-up funding of £120,000 from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and a total of £2 million strategic funding from Government against a three year work programme. The funding was renewed in 2002 for a further three years at the same level.

NFPI was established to improve and develop family and parenting support through; network formation, research and the provision of information to the sector and the public. Whilst NFPI has a broad and far reaching remit which may include preventative relationship education it does not have a specific role in this area.

FE Funding

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to enable colleges to retain funding for students who have withdrawn from courses. [223785]

Dr. Howells: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding further education colleges and matters concerning the funding impact of students withdrawing from courses relate to the LSC's operational responsibilities. The LSC's agenda for change programme includes a review of its funding methodology. Mark Haysom the LSC's chief executive will write to the hon. Member about this work. A copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Granada Learning

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the terms of the contract with Granada Learning for the provision of learning materials for Latin at Key Stage 3 are; and whether the terms include provision for repayment for non-delivery of materials contracted for. [223834]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The terms of the contract with Granada Learning for the provision of learning materials for Latin at Key Stage 3 are that they provide a range of materials covering the Cambridge Latin Course Books 1 and 2.

As with all contracts there is the provision for either party to take appropriate steps should the materials contracted for not be delivered. Seeking repayment for the non-delivery of materials contracted for is one such option.

Mr. Fallon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her Department's support for the Granada Learning project for the teaching of Latin at Key Stage 3 referred to by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary in the adjournment debate on 12 July 2004, *Official Report*, column 1233. [223835]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department contracted with Granada Learning in November 2002 for the provision of learning materials for Latin at Key Stage 3. This includes audio visual materials, interactive exercises, collaborative items and a range of specially written courses and print support.

Independent Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of secondary age pupils attended independent schools in England in each of the last five years *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by local education authority area. [223113]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Nutrition Training

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advice and guidance is offered to public and private sector service providers on the inclusion of nutrition and malnutrition within the core training of healthcare employees in bands two and three of Agenda for Change. [223947]

Mr. Hutton: I have been asked to reply.

Training at work of healthcare employees within the national health service is the responsibility of individual trusts, based on central advice. However, within the new pay NHS pay system (Agenda for Change) training of staff in all paybands, including paybands two and three is supported by use of the NHS knowledge and skills framework. This will enable staff and managers to use joint personal development planning, individually and organisationally, to identify development requirements and career opportunities.

Parliamentary Questions

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will answer the Question from the hon. Member for Maidenhead, ref 221881. [223954]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 853W.

Physical Education (SEN Pupils)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school teachers in the West Midlands are trained to provide physical education for pupils with special educational needs. [223070]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The information is not collected centrally.

School Exclusions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the number of school exclusions is used to measure levels of indiscipline in schools. [223596]

Derek Twigg: Exclusions are one of a number of indicators we monitor closely as a measure of school behaviour. The other key indicators are Ofsted inspection evidence and the perceptions of people working in schools and of parents. Exclusion is used generally as a last resort after a range of other strategies to tackle poor behaviour have been tried. The number of

exclusions may therefore not be a valid measure for levels of low level disruption or minor offences in schools that do not result in exclusion. Also, many schools are now trying, by a variety of means such as learning support units and managed moves, to support disruptive pupils within a school setting, although not necessarily in a classroom, so as to prevent exclusion.

School Funding

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding was allocated per pupil to schools in *(a)* London, *(b)* the Vale of York and *(c)* North Yorkshire in 2004–05. [223829]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Total funding per pupil aged 3–19 for 2004–05 was £4,880 for London, £3,600 for York and £3,760 for North Yorkshire.

These figures include funding via the Education Formula Spending Share and grants allocated at LEA level. They include the pensions transfer to EFSS and the Learning and Skills Council, and are in cash terms.

The main reason for the difference in funding is that London authorities have more pupils living in deprived circumstances than York and North Yorkshire and receive extra funding to reflect that. London authorities also receive extra funding to reflect their high costs of recruiting and retaining staff: York and North Yorkshire do not.

Notes:

Price Base: Cash

Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education EFS settlements and include the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC.

Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.

The pupil numbers used to convert £ million figures to £ per pupil are those underlying the EFS settlement calculations.

Rounding: Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Status: 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria are used in allocating funding per pupil in comparable local education authorities. [223830]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The formula for distributing funding for schools to local authorities is the School Formula Spending Share (SFSS). It comprises a basic entitlement for each comparable pupil, which is the same across the country, plus top-ups for areas where it costs more to recruit and retain staff; areas with sparse populations; and a top-up for each pupil with additional educational needs. The factor for additional educational needs takes account of the percentage of families in receipt of income support and of those in receipt of the working families tax credit. It also takes account of primary pupils with English as a second language and secondary pupils from low achieving ethnic minority groups.

The funding that individual schools receive is a matter for local authorities through their locally agreed funding formulae.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the merits of a national common funding formula; and if she will make a statement. [223831]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government's policy, as stated in the consultation document on new school funding arrangements from 2006–07 issued on 17 February is that local authorities should continue to determine local formulae for the allocation of resources between schools in their areas, in consultation with their Schools Forum.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will take steps to incorporate core funding into standard funds. [223832]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government have no plans to incorporate core funding into the Standards Fund. Proposals for changes to specific grants, including the Standards Fund, were set out in the consultation on new school funding arrangements from 2006–07, published on 17 February, a copy of which has been placed in the Library. The main proposal is to bring separate Standards Fund grants for schools together into a single grant by 2008. This single grant would remain separate from schools core funding, which will continue to be routed through local authorities' school budget formulae.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much each *(a)* primary school and *(b)* secondary school in (i) North East Lincolnshire and (ii) North Lincolnshire has received from the Government in each year since the introduction of direct payments. [223464]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In 2000–01, the first year of the School Standards Grant, North East Lincolnshire received £1,046,000, and North Lincolnshire £1,027,000. Figures on the primary/secondary split for 2000–01 are not held centrally. The amount of School Standards Grant (SSG) that has been received by North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire since 2001–02 is as follows:

School Standards Grant

£

	Primary schools	*Secondary schools*
2001–02		
North East Lincolnshire	1,301,500	852,000
North Lincolnshire	1,253,500	932,000
2002–03		
North East Lincolnshire	1,299,500	876,100
North Lincolnshire	1,263,500	958,400
2003–04		
North East Lincolnshire	1,589,000	1,095,000
North Lincolnshire	1,545,000	1,200,000
2004–05		
North East Lincolnshire	1,664,047	1,170,603
North Lincolnshire	1,641,481	1,315,386

Grant was allocated to each school according to the following rates in each year:

2000–01

Number of pupils	*Rate of grant (£)*
Primary	
0–100	3,000
100.5–200.5	6,000
201 + [1]	9,000
Secondary	
0–600	30,000
600.5–1,200.5	40,000
1,201 +	50,000

[1] The same rate was given in respect of each middle deemed primary school which did not have a year 8 or 9.

2001–02

Number of pupils	*Rate of grant (£)*
Primary	
0–100	7,000
100.5–200	13,500
200.5–400	24,000
400.5–600	30,000
600.5 +	48,000
Secondary	
0–600	58,000
600.5–1,200	70,000
1,200.5 +	82,000

2002–03

Number of pupils	*Rate of grant (£)*
Primary	
0–100	7,200
100.5–200	13,900
200.5–400	24,700
400.5–600	30,900
600.5 +	49,400
Secondary	
0–600	59,600
600.5–1,200	72,000
1,200.5 +	84,300

2003–04

Number of pupils	*Rate of grant (£)*
Primary	
0–100	9,000
100.5–200	18,000
200.5–400	30,000
400.5–600	40,000
600.5 800	60,000
800.5 +	75,000
Secondary	
0–600	75,000
600.5–1,200	90,000
1,200.5–1,800	105,000
1,800.5–2,400	120,000
2,400.5 +	135,000

2004–05

Number of pupils	*Rate of grant (£)*
Primary	
0–100	10,000
100.5–200	20,000
200.5–400	30,000
400.5–600	45,000
600.5 800	60,000
800.5 +	75,000
Secondary	
0–600	80,000
600.5–1,200	96,000
1,200.5–1,800	112,000
1,800.5–2,400	128,000
2,400.5 +	144,000

For 2004–05 the grant was calculated on the basis that each school receives the greater of either *(a)* an increase of 4 per cent. per pupil on its 2003–04 grant or *(b)* the level of its 2004–05 SSG band.

Information on the amount of School Standards Grant received for each school in 2000–01 to 2002–03 is not held centrally, as the grant formed part of the schools Budget share in those years and was not reported separately by local authorities. A table showing the School Standards Grant paid to each primary and secondary school in North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire in 2003–04 and 2004–05 has been placed in the Library.

School Meals

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her estimate is of spending per person on school lunches in each year from 1990–91 to 2005–06; and if she will make a statement. [222148]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Department for Education and Skills does not collect information on the spending per person on school lunches.

The decentralised system of education funding means that local education authorities (LEAs) receive an amount based on need in their area. LEAs then agree with their schools how funding is to be delegated.

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what her Department's policy is on sourcing pork, bacon and ham bearing the British Pig Executive's Quality Standard Mark in schools; and if she will make a statement. [223242]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills does not have responsibility for central procurement of food for schools. It is for individual local education authorities or, where the budget for school meals is delegated to them, school governing bodies to agree with their catering suppliers the ingredients to be used. If schools wish, they can use organic or locally-sourced foods.

The Healthy Living Blueprint for Schools set out our commitment to provide additional support for headteachers and governors in assessing the best way to provide a meals service, specify and tender contracts and

monitor them. The Department is committed to promote the key objectives of the Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative (PSFPI) through this work.

The key objectives of the PSFPI are to:

(1) raise production and process standards;

(2) increase tenders from small and local producers;

(3) increase consumption of healthy and nutritious food;

(4) reduce adverse environmental impacts of production and supply; and

(5) increase capacity of small and local suppliers to meet demand.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the number of schools that provide school dinners consisting of *(a)* organic and *(b)* locally-sourced food. [223636]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect information on schools that use organic or locally-sourced foods. Following the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, responsibility for most local education authority spending is delegated to schools' governing bodies. Schools have the freedom to choose their own suppliers or providers for many services including school meals provision. If schools wish, they can use organic or locally-sourced foods.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to regulate the standards of meals served in schools; and if she will make a statement. [223637]

Derek Twigg: Regulations introduced in 2001 set nutritional standards for school lunches in all local education authority maintained schools in England. It is the responsibility of local education authorities or, where the budget for school meals is delegated to them, a school's governing body to ensure that these standards are met. We are currently working to strengthen the standards to reduce pupils' sugar, salt and fat intakes and increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

The Government's White Paper—"Choosing Health: Making healthier choices easier" set out the commitment that from September 2005 Ofsted will, through its separate programme of subject and thematic reviews, report on the contribution that every school makes to the five outcomes for children underpinning the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme. As part of their review, Ofsted will look at healthy eating in schools, including school meals and other food and drink available on school premises.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance her Department has produced regarding nutritional standards for school meals. [223638]

Derek Twigg: The Department published three guidance documents in 2001 to coincide with the introduction of statutory nutritional standards. These are

"Healthy School Lunches for Students in Secondary Schools", "Healthy School Lunches for Pupils in Primary Schools", and "Healthy School Lunches for Pupils in Nursery Schools/Units",

and are available at www.dfes.gov.uk/schoollunches. In addition to covering the statutory nutritional standards, the guidance covers healthy eating, good catering practice, ideas for improving service and monitoring nutritional standards.

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will rank education authorities by the percentage of children entitled to receive free school dinners; and if she will indicate in each case the change in the percentage receiving free school meals since 1996–97. [222388]

Derek Twigg: The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

As a result of Local Government Reorganisation, the geographical boundaries of some LEAs in 2004 are not directly comparable with those in 1997. In these cases, figures for 1997 have not been given.

School Sports (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 on the level of investment in school sports in Crosby. [223940]

Derek Twigg: I refer my hon. Friend to the response given by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools on 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 630W.

Schools (Data)

Mr. Forth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what choice of systems software schools had in production of the 2005 pupil level annual school census data. [223343]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* Each school has freedom of choice over which ICT systems it employs to meet its specific needs and circumstances. This applies to the school management information systems that produced the returns of 2005 pupil level annual school census data.

Schools' choices and decisions are informed by the extensive advice and guidance provided by their local education authority, and by Becta (the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency), the Department's strategic partner in these matters.

Secondary Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many secondary schools there are in *(a)* Bexley, *(b)* Bournemouth,

(c) Buckinghamshire, *(d)* Kent, *(e)* Kingston upon Thames, *(f)* Lincolnshire, *(g)* Medway, *(h)* Poole, *(i)* Reading, *(j)* Slough, *(k)* Southend, *(l)* Sutton, *(m)* Torbay, *(n)* Trafford and *(o)* Wirral local education authority areas; and how many in each area are designated in performance tables as (i) comprehensive, (ii) selective and (iii) secondary modern schools. [223077]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Secondary schools1: Number of schools by admissions policy—January 2004 and May 2004

Local education authorities in England	*Total number of secondary schools*[2]	*Of which*[3]: *Comprehensive*	*Selective*	*Modern*
Bexley	16	7	4	5
Bournemouth	10	2	2	6
Buckinghamshire	34	0	13	21
Kent	102	21	33	48
Kingston upon Thames	10	0	2	8
Lincolnshire	63	17	15	31
Medway	19	3	6	10
Poole	8	3	2	3
Reading	7	5	2	0
Slough	11	1	4	6
Southend-on-Sea	12	4	4	4
Sutton	14	9	5	0
Torbay	8	5	3	0
Trafford	18	0	7	11
Wirral	22	11	6	5

[1] Includes maintained secondary schools, City Technology Colleges and Academies. Excludes middle deemed secondary schools.
[2] Admissions policy as designated in the Secondary Achievement and Attainment Tables (formerly Performance Tables) as published in January 2005.
[3] As reported in the Annual Schools' Census as at January 2004.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census and Achievement and Attainment Tables

Selective Schools

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the costs of administering entry tests were in each local education authority retaining wholly selective secondary schools in each of the last five years. [223112]

Derek Twigg: We do not collect data on the costs of administering entry tests for selective schools. The setting and administration of these tests is a matter for the relevant admission authorities.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which local education authorities her Department defines as *(a)* wholly selective and *(b)* wholly comprehensive; and if she will list for each English local education authority retaining wholly selective schools the average percentage of pupils (i) with statements, (ii) eligible for free school meals and (iii) from ethnic minorities in (A) selective schools and (B) non-selective schools in the latest year for which figures are available. [223114]

Derek Twigg: The requested information has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total payments to Electoral Reform Services for costs incurred relating to grammar school ballots and petitions have been. [223115]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The total cost so far for payments to Electoral Reform Services for all work on petitions and ballots is £2,346,193.40. This includes work completed on setting petition thresholds during the current accounting period.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the value of sales of surplus assets from her Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220976]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills value of sales of surplus assets since 2000–01 is as follows:

£000

Financial year	*Net book value*
2000–01	321
2001–02	2,843
2002–03	111
2003–04	951
2004–05	[1]—

[1] Figures not available.

The net book values are taken from the Department for Education and Skills Resource Accounts.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of whether the public service agreement target for 60 per cent. of those aged 16 to achieve the equivalent of five GCSEs at grades A*-C by 2008 will be met. [219217]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department publishes progress against all its outstanding public service agreement targets (PSAs) in its annual departmental report and autumn performance report. Progress against PSAs was most recently reported in the 2004 autumn report, published in December 2004, together

with the Department's assessment towards achievement of the targets. A copy of the report is available from the House of Commons Library.

The spending review 2004 PSA target for 60 per cent, of those aged 16 to achieve the equivalent of five GCSEs at grades A*-C by 2008 was not assessed in the autumn performance report. A statistical first release published on 12 January 2005 shows the amended figure for the percentage of pupils achieving five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C in 2004 is 53.7 per cent.

Tomlinson Report

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the likely impact on *(a)* teaching standards and *(b)* the number of teachers of implementing the Tomlinson Report recommendations; and if she will make a statement. [223833]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We estimate that the total increases in staff numbers in schools and colleges needed to implement the reforms set out in our White Paper 14–19 Education and Skills will be of the order of: 1,000–1,250 college staff in teaching roles; and 1,250–1,450 support staff in schools and colleges.

We expect the standards of teaching and learning to rise as a result of our reforms. Teaching staff and school and college leaders will be fully supported by training and professional development to ensure that they are equipped with the skills to deliver the new 14–19 offer.

Top-up Fees

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will estimate the cost to public funds of the subsidy provided for top-up fees in each year from 2006–07 to 2009–10; and on what assumptions this estimate is based. [223817]

Dr. Howells: The exact cost of fee loans to support variable fees will depend on the precise pattern of fee charging by institutions, the way that students respond to that pattern, and the extent to which students take up the option of deferring their fees. The Department published some estimates of the costs on a steady state basis in the Regulatory Impact Assessment published alongside the Higher Education Act 2004. We have just published revised and updated estimates for the costs of the student finance policies in a ministerial written statement on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 71WS.

University Admissions

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of school leavers entered higher education in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2004, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [222857]

Dr. Howells: The latest available figures on participation by constituency were published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in January in "Young Participation in England", which is available from their website at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2005/05_03/. Participation rates for constituencies based on this work, showing figures for each year between 1997 and 2000, are given on the supporting POLAR website (www.hefce.ac.uk/polar).

Woodcraft Folk

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will publish the criteria by which the decision was taken to end grant aid to the Woodcraft Folk. [220767]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The criteria by which all decisions on the 160 applications for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) grant scheme were made were explicit in both the application forms and guidance notes, to assist organisations through the application process.

The guidance notes clearly stated that applications should make a strong contribution to the achievement of the outcomes for young people set out in "Every Child Matters".

The Department looked for bids that: (this was in paragraph 13.2 of the guidance).

- were clearly focused on the outcomes identified in the guidance
- were for activities in line with those identified in the grant criteria
- identified clear and robust outcome indicators that were relevant to the outcomes the bid proposed to deliver
- clearly explained the national significance of the activity being proposed
- were realistic and deliverable.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment she has made of the work of the Woodcraft Folk; what grants they have received from her Department in each year since 1997; what future funding is planned; and if she will make a statement. [221428]

Margaret Hodge: The organisation has received the following funding since 1997:

	Amount (£)
1997–98	39,100
1998–99	33,000
1999–2000	38,000
2000–01	38,000
2001–02	38,000
2002–03	52,281
2003–04	52,281
2004–05	52,281
Total	342,943

Source
NVYO Grant Scheme

As part of their participation on the National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant Scheme running from 2002 to 2005 the Woodcraft Folk have submitted progress reports, These were judged by officials to indicate that the organisation was meeting the objectives set.

The Woodcraft Folk submitted a bid for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant scheme due to run from 2005 to 2008. This scheme was run as an open competition. Participation on previous schemes was not one of the criteria used to determine funding. The bid was assessed in an open and transparent way against criteria made explicit in both the application and guidance notes for the scheme and unfortunately this time the organisation was not successful.

There are no current plans for funding the Woodcraft Folk.

DEFENCE

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222629]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has a number of arrangements for monitoring accidents at work. The requirements range from the accident book procedures required by the Social Security Act, to Boards of Inquiry required by Queen's Regulations. The arrangements are contained in the MOD health and safety handbook, Joint Service Publication 375. This publication can be found on the www at http: //www.mod.uk/dsef/ohs/jsp375.htm

Armed Forces Act

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the Armed Forces Act 2001 expires; and when he expects to bring forward the next Armed Forces Bill. [223351]

Mr. Caplin: The Armed Forces Act 2001 will not expire. Under this Act, however, the provisions of the Service Discipline Acts (the Army Act 1955, the Air Force Act 1955 and the Naval Discipline Act 1957) are subject to annual renewal by Order in Council, but cannot be continued in effect by this means beyond 31 December 2006. We aim to introduce an Armed Forces Bill towards the end of 2005.

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what means he intends to dispose of the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa; and whether conditions will apply to the sale to ensure that the site is used only for the purposes allocated to it in Wychavon district council's local plan. [223724]

Mr. Caplin: It is expected that the site will be passed to Defence Estates for disposal before 31 March 2006.

Consideration of future non-defence alternative uses for the site is at an early stage. However, discussions with the Local Planning Authority are in progress. As is our normal practice, the site will be marketed in a way that reflects the final planning decision following the discussions with the Local Planning Authority and sale is generally by open competition to achieve the best price reasonably obtainable.

Cancer/Leukaemia

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many deaths of *(a)* serving soldiers and *(b)* his Department's personnel have been attributable to (i) cancer and (ii) leukaemia in each of the last 20 years. [222019]

Mr. Caplin: Between 1 January 1985 and 31 December 2004, 696 regular service personnel have died of cancer while on service, 71 of which died from leukaemia.

Information on the causes of death of civilian personnel is not collected by the Department.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the rates of incidence of *(a)* cancer and *(b)* leukaemia in (i) serving soldiers and (ii) his Department's personnel in each of the last 20 years. [222021]

Mr. Caplin: The Department does not currently collate any information on the incidence of cancer in serving service personnel and civilian personnel.

Defence Employment (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people worked for the Disposal Services Agency *(a)* in 2003–04 and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available; how many were employed in Scotland in each case; and what the personnel costs of the agency (i) were in 2003–04 and (ii) are expected to be in 2004–05. [215944]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the Disposal Service Agency's (DSA) Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04 that was laid before the House on 15 July 2004; less than five DSA staff members were employed in Scotland during this year. For the current Financial Year, 2004–05, the personnel costs for the agency are forecast to be in the region of £3 million. The latest personnel figures, as at March 2005, are 120 employed by the agency, of which again less than five are employed in Scotland. The increase in staff numbers this year resulted from the pre-merger process of the DSA with part of the Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) following an "End-to-End Business Process Review of the disposal process within the MOD". The additional staff will not be funded by the agency until 1 April 2005, when it transfers ownership to the DLO.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department's entry into Table B18 of the pre-Budget report includes a contingent amount to cover expenditure connected with the purchase of all or part of Tranche 3 of the Eurofighter Typhoon. [222615]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* A decision on Tranche 3 of Eurofighter Typhoon is not required before 2007. Any expenditure associated with Tranche 3 would fall outside the period covered by the December 2004 pre-Budget report.

Freedom of Information Act

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what grounds he has concluded that there is no obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

to disclose correspondence on behalf of Lord Boyce of Pimlico, dated 12 March 2003, to the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, and the subsequent response. [217421]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 23 February 2005]:* I am writing today to my hon. Friend and I shall place a copy of that letter in the Library of the House.

Harrier

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the air availability of the Harrier jet; and if he will make a statement. [222184]

Mr. Ingram: During the current Financial Year, the availability of the Harrier fleet has matched or exceeded the numbers required for our commitments.

In-house Publications

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the titles of the in-house publications and newsletters which are produced for the staff of his Department, including non-departmental public bodies and agencies. [221981]

Mr. Caplin: A comprehensive list of the many in-house publications and newsletters produced for departmental staff, including those for non-departmental public bodies and agencies, is not available and could be produced only by incurring disproportionate cost.

The principal in-house publications are: FOCUS, Paper Clips, Navy News, Soldier Magazine and RAF News. In addition the following publications and newsletters are published on the Department's intranet site:

ACGS
Acqknowledge
Admin Matters
AFF Families Journal
AFPAA News
Agenda for Change
Catalyst
CHRL Newsletter
CinC STC
Claims Newsletter
Clyde-a-Scope
Cognitio
DARA Update
Defence Communications Services Agency
Defence Diplomacy Staff DIGEST
Defence Librarian
Devonport Link
Devonport News
DGMS(RAF)
DIALog
DII-GEST
DLO News
DMSD Digest
Driving Change
Drumbeat
The ECC Newsletter
EH! (Engineering Hygiene Guide)
Equipment Support Management Bulletin
ESTATEment
42!
The Gas Times
Gulf Update
Harmonisation News
Harrier IPT Newsletter
HM Newsletter
HMS NELSON BLC Newsletter
Homeport
Housing Matters
HRMS
Inform
JOB Opportunities
KIT! Magazine
Land Equipment Technical Bulletin
Landscape Magazine
Land Support Strategy
LOGS Newsletter
Major Accident Control Regulations
MBRNews
Medical Support Officer News
MOD Police Newsletter and Information Page
Modernising Defence Management
Money Matters
Mountain Rescue Service Newsletter
NewsPayPer
Number 3 Group HQ
Officerlife
Partnering News
PAYD Newsletter
People Matters
Policy Bulletin
PPA Updates
PPP Newsletter
Project Alexander
Project SLAM
RAF Dental branch
RAF Medical and Dental Accreditation Team
RAF Medical Services Trde Group 15
RAF Mountaineering Association (RAFMA)
RAF Uxbridge Personnel Bulletin
Risky Business
Root Issues
Safety and Environment
Sandy Times
Ships Telegraph
Smart Acquisition Update
Team Tornado
Threat Briefing

In addition, the following publication is produced by the Royal Marines museum, one of the Department's non-departmental public bodies:

Museum News

Merchant Navy

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures he has taken to ensure that a sufficient merchant navy fleet within the UK to be drawn upon at times of conflict is maintained. [222216]

Mr. Ingram: The availability of suitable merchant shipping is collated on a regular basis from updated information provided by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on the UK registered fleet. The MOD supports this work.

Nuclear Test Veterans

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a health study has been carried out by the Government since 1975 on veterans of the British Nuclear Test Programme. [223379]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB)—as part of their continuing studies concerning nuclear test veterans—has carried out a health study into cancer incidence. The latest of their Reports—NRPB Report W-27 entitled "Mortality and Cancer Incidence 1952–1998 in UK Participants in the UK Atmospheric Nuclear Weapons Tests and Experimental Programmes" (2003)—concluded that overall levels of mortality and cancer incidence in UK nuclear weapons test participants have continued to be similar to those in a matched control group, and overall mortality to be lower than expected from national rates.

Overseas Military Training

Mr. Wareing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list countries to which members of the British armed forces were deployed to give military training and advice during the period 2001 to 2004. [221191]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* During the period 2001 to 2004, members of the British armed forces were deployed to give military training and advice to 92 countries. A complete list of countries is set out as follows.

Countries where members of the British armed forces were deployed to give military training and advice: period 2001–04:

Afghanistan
Albania
Angola
Antarctica
Antigua
Argentina
Australia
Austria
Bahrain
Barbados
Belgium
Bermuda
Bosnia
Botswana
Brazil
Brunei
Bulgaria
Canada
Chile
China
Columbia
Congo (DR)
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Egypt
Ethiopia
Falkland Islands
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iraq
Ireland
Israel
Italy
Jamaica
Japan
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Korea
Kuwait
Latvia
Lebanon
Lithuania
Macedonia
Malaysia
Morocco
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Nigeria
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Philippines
Poland
Portugal

Qatar
Romania
Russia
Saudi Arabia
Serbia and Montenegro
Sierra Leone
Singapore
Slovakia
Slovenia
South Africa
Spain
Sri Lanka
Sweden
Switzerland
Syria
Thailand
Turkey
UAE
Uganda
Ukraine
USA
Uzbekistan
Venezuela
Zimbabwe

Parachutists

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many serving soldiers in the parachute regiments come from abroad. [222275]

Mr. Caplin: The number of soldiers serving in the Parachute Regiment with a non-British nationality is shown in the following table:

Battalions: The Parachute Regiment	*Strength*
1st	20
2nd	25
3rd	20
Total	70

Notes:
1. The figures quoted are as at 1 January 2005 and are for UK Regular Trained Army soldiers only and therefore exclude TA, Mobilised Reserves, Full-Time Reserve Service, Gurkhas and Home Service Battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment.
2. The strength figures do not include soldiers in the Parachute Regiment that are serving outside the battalion, or personnel from other cap badges that are attached to the battalion.
3. In addition to the figures there are 15 Parachute Regiment soldiers serving outside the battalions whose nationality is not British.
4. We cannot be precise about the strength in each battalion as the means by which these data are collected does not allow for separate attribution. The split is derived from an estimate based on the strength by Unit Identity Number.
5. All figures have been rounded to the nearest five. Totals are rounded separately and therefore may not equal the sum of their parts.

RAF Job Losses (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the effects of job cuts at *(a)* RAF Lossiemouth and *(b)* RAF Kinloss announced by his Department on 10 March; and if he will make a statement. [222873]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* My written ministerial statement on 10 March outlined the proposed reductions in the number of Service and civilian posts as a result of the end-to-end review of logistics processes for military aircraft support.

For RAF Lossiemouth, this will mean a reduction in the number of Service posts by 700 and, subject to Trades Union consultation, a reduction in the number of civilian posts by 35.

For RAF Kinloss, this will mean a reduction in the number of Service posts by 180 and, subject to Trades Union consultation, a reduction in the number of civilian posts by 20.

I recognise that this may be disappointing news for the local community, but the proposed changes in working practices and force structure will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of logistic support within the RAF.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans have been put in place to minimise the impact of job losses at *(a)* RAF Kinloss and *(b)* RAF Lossiemouth announced by his Department on 10 March; and if he will make a statement. [222939]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The impact on personnel of the reduction in the number of posts will be managed primarily through voluntary staff transfers, natural wastage and a voluntary release scheme. The Ministry of Defence will manage the reductions in the number of civilian posts in consultation with Trades Unions.

These reductions form part of the Service and civilian manpower reductions that were announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence on 21 July 2004.

RAF Recruits (Ethnic Monitoring)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of recruits to the Royal Air Force were *(a)* Asian, *(b)* black, *(c)* white and *(d)* from other ethnic groups in each year since 1997. [222200]

Mr. Caplin: The following table shows the proportional RAF airmen intake from civil life by ethnic origin for financial years 1998–99 to 2004–05. Reliable data are not available prior to this.

Ethnicity data have been collected on joining the armed forces using categories based on population census definitions. The definitions used in the population census were changed in 2001. Table 1 is based on 1991 census codes and table 2 is based on 2001 census codes.

It should be noted that no intake data are shown for 2001–02 as the only data available are based on a mixture of new and old codes.

Figures for 2002–03 onwards are not directly comparable with previous years' figures as the 2001 population census codes included a mixed category. This explains the increase in proportion of the 'other' category.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Table 1

Percentage Ethnic origin	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
White	96.6	97.5	98.0
Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi	0.3	0.3	0.4
Black Caribbean, African, other	0.4	0.5	0.8
Other	0.5	0.4	0.5
Not known	2.2	1.4	0.3

Table 2

Percentage Ethnic origin	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]
White	97.4	97.7	95.5
Asian Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, other	0.3	0.2	0.3
Black Caribbean, African, other	0.6	0.4	0.7
Other	1.3	1.0	1.3
Not known	0.4	0.7	2.2

[1] Figures for 2004–05 cover the year up to 31 December 2004.

Figures are for UK regular forces, both trained and untrained. They therefore exclude full time reserve service personnel and mobilised reservists.

Figures for RAF officers are not available due to low coverage of ethnic origin classification.

Removals Costs

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of UK to UK removals was in the financial year ended *(a)* 4 April 1994 and *(b)* 4 April 2004; and how many moves took place in each case. [218006]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 24 February 2005]:* There were some 12,527 UK Service removals during financial year 2003–04 at a cost of £18.850 million. These figures are subject to final audit. Records are no longer held regarding removals which took place during financial year 1993–94.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public; [222574]

(2) whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222584]

Jane Kennedy: Available data on accidents is provided in the following table. Data prior to the periods covered is not available.

Accidents involving:	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Members of the Department's staff	4,488	4,034	4,577
Members of the public	58	72	135
Total	4,546	4,106	4,712

Data for 2004 includes, for the first time, former Employment Service work places and therefore reflects additional estate, staffing and customer levels. This accounts for the increase in the number of accidents reported against the previous year.

We are currently in the process of developing a health and safety annual report for the business year 2005–06. This will be published after April 2006. The report will cover a range of health and safety performance data, including data on accidents to departmental staff and customers.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222636]

Jane Kennedy: Accidents are systematically monitored to identify their immediate and underlying causes and any trends. Lessons learnt are fed back into the operation of the Department's business. Monitoring takes place at a local level to identify ways to minimise recurrence. Monitoring is also regularly discussed at local, regional and national health and safety committee meetings involving managers and trades union representatives.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department has spent on each type of benefit paid to asylum seekers in each year since 1992 in *(a)* cash and *(b)* real terms; and if he will make a statement. [223490]

Mr. Pond: The available information is in the tables.

Asylum seeker spending by benefit since 1994— cash terms

£ million

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*	*Income support*	*Total*
1994–95	180.0	10.0	170.0	360.0
1995–96	205.0	10.0	195.0	410.0
1996–97	195.0	10.0	190.0	395.0
1997–98	145.0	10.0	150.0	305.0
1998–99	120.0	10.0	150.0	280.0
1999–2000	100.0	5.0	140.0	245.0
2000–01	75.0	5.0	100.0	180.0
2001–02	35.0	5.0	55.0	95.0
2002–03	35.0	5.0	30.0	70.0
2003–04	15.0	0.0	15.0	30.0
2004–05	5.0	0.0	5.0	10.0

Asylum seeker spending by benefit since 1994—real terms[1]

£ million

	Housing benefit	*Council tax benefit*	*Income support*	*Total*
1994–95	235.0	10.0	225.0	475.0
1995–96	265.0	15.0	250.0	530.0
1996–97	240.0	15.0	235.0	490.0
1997–98	180.0	10.0	180.0	370.0
1998–99	145.0	10.0	175.0	330.0
1999–2000	115.0	10.0	160.0	285.0
2000–01	85.0	5.0	110.0	205.0
2001–02	40.0	5.0	60.0	105.0
2002–03	35.0	5.0	35.0	75.0
2003–04	15.0	0.0	15.0	35.0
2004–05	5.0	0.0	5.0	10.0

[1] 2005–06 prices.

Notes:

1. From April 1999 DWP expenditure on payments to asylum seekers were reimbursed by the National Asylum Support Service (MASS).
2. From April 2000 responsibility for supporting asylum seekers passed to the NASS.
3. Numbers of asylum seekers entitled to DWP benefits are declining as the stock of asylum seekers with decisions outstanding at April 2000 reduces.
4. Information on benefit expenditure is estimated using administrative data supplied by local benefit offices (IS) and local authorities (HB and CTB).
5. Information on benefit payments to asylum seekers not available prior to 1994–95.
6. Expenditure is rounded to the nearest £5 million.
7. Real terms figures are provided in 2005–06 prices—using HMTs GDP deflator (updated by ONS 16 March 2005).

Benefit Sanctions

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which employment schemes and pilot schemes may impose benefit sanctions for non-compliance with their conditions; and how many participants on each scheme have received such sanctions during the previous 12 months. [223472]

Jane Kennedy: Jobseeker's allowance is paid to people between jobs to provide the safety net of a secure level of income. Payment of benefit can be withheld for a specific period when jobseekers unreasonably cause or prolong their unemployment, by, for example, refusing to participate in or take up offers of support available through a range of employment and training programmes. Decisions on benefit sanctions are taken by Jobcentre Plus Decisions Makers and there is a right of appeal against such decisions.

The employment and training programmes, including pilot programmes, for which customers can have benefit sanctions applied for non-compliance are: New Deal for Young People; New Deal 25 plus; the mandatory Gateway to Work pilots and mandatory Intensive Activity Period for 50 to 59-year-olds currently operating within New Deal 25 plus; Employment Zones; StepUP, and the mandatory Basic Skills Training pilots.

In the period April 2004 to January 2005, 872 people received a benefit sanction through the Basic Skills Training pilots. 56 people have appealed against the decision to apply a sanction and the result of the appeals are outstanding.

Information on benefit sanctions in relation to the other programmes is only available broken down by the total number of sanctions imposed on participants on New Deal for Young People and the total number of sanctions imposed on participants of the remaining programmes, rather than the number of individuals who have had a benefit sanction imposed.

In the 12-month period to the end of March 2004 (latest available figures) 12,816 jobseeker's allowance sanctions were imposed in relation to the New Deal for Young People programme, and 29,654 jobseeker's allowance sanctions were imposed for other programmes. Information broken down by programme other than New Deal for Young People is not available.

Benefits

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total value of *(a)* attendance allowance and *(b)* disability living allowance payments to people over retirement age living in the City of York local authority area was in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2004–05. [222225]

Maria Eagle: The total value of attendance allowance and disability living allowance payments to people over retirement age living in the City of York local authority area was £8.4 million in 1996–97 and is estimated to be £13.9 million in 2004–05.

Note:

Benefit expenditure forecast information is published on the Internet at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp

Source:

Expenditure has been taken from departmental accounting systems and has been apportioned using Quarterly Statistical Enquiry data for the relevant benefits, and which is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department paid in Wales in *(a)* incapacity benefit, *(b)* state pensions, *(c)* pension credit and *(d)* winter fuel payments in the last year for which figures are available. [222712]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following table.

2003–04: expenditure in Wales, £ millions, nominal terms

	(£)
Incapacity benefit	1,000
State pensions	2,520
Pension credit	277
Winter fuel payments	107

Notes:

1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest million pounds.
2. Incapacity benefit includes expenditure on working age claimants of incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance and income support (long-term sick/disabled and short-term sick). The figure includes a small number of people who are not claiming incapacity benefit (payment or credits) or severe disablement allowance.
3. State pensions expenditure includes basic state pension, additional state pension, non-contributory state pension and graduated retirement benefit.
4. Pension credit expenditure includes both the guarantee credit and the savings credit.
5. Winter fuel expenditure includes the basic winter fuel payment and the over 80s payment, which was introduced in 2003–04.
6. Figures are consistent with the pre-budget report 2004 and with expenditure information published on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp (tables 1, 3 and 7). These tables will shortly be updated with budget 2005 figures.

Source:

Expenditure has been taken from departmental accounting systems and has been apportioned using Quarterly Statistical Inquiry data, from 2003–04, for the relevant benefits. All of this data is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation, with the exception of winter fuel expenditure which has been calculated from 100 per cent. samples.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people were in receipt of each state benefit in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* England and *(d)* Wales in each of the last three years; and how much was paid out for each benefit in each case in each year. [222902]

Mr. Pond: The information will be published at the same time as Benefit Expenditure tables, consistent with Budget 2005, and uploaded onto the Department for Work and Pensions website. A publication date will be made available, and posted on the website address as soon as possible.

Note:

Benefit Expenditure tables are published on the Department for Work and Pensions website at: http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp.

Bognor Regis Office Closure

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the proposed closure of his Department's office in Bognor Regis. [223411]

Jane Kennedy: There are no plans to close the Jobcentre Plus office at Bognor Regis.

Carbon Monoxide

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether he plans to undertake national advertising television campaigns to alert people to the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. [223519]

Jane Kennedy: The Government are actively involved in raising awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning by means other than national television campaigns. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) arranged for the Council for Registered Gas Installers (CORGI) to run a publicity campaign in February 2005 to raise awareness about CO poisoning targeted at vulnerable groups of the young and the elderly. That campaign reached an estimated 11,000 GP surgeries and 4 million people through radio.

The Department of Health has additionally produced a new leaflet about domestic carbon monoxide poisoning that is endorsed by HSE, industry and the registered charity CO-Gas Safety.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps he is taking to reduce deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning in the home. [223565]

Jane Kennedy: The domestic gas safety regime, overseen by the Health and Safety Executive has been progressively tightened. This has included new gas safety legislation, new competence requirements for gas installers and substantial public investment in publicising carbon monoxide (CO) dangers.

The number of reported gas-related CO poisoning fatalities shows a welcome downward trend. In 2003–04 the number of such fatalities was the lowest on record. We have agreed an innovative programme with HSC/E aimed at sustaining this position by developing new ways for partnering with relevant stakeholders to secure continuing consumer gas safety through sensible approach to risk.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent discussions he has had with the Health and Safety Executive on the action it plans to take to reduce the number of deaths caused by carbon monoxide in the home. [223566]

Jane Kennedy: I have regular meetings with senior representatives of HSC/E to consider progress across the broad range of their business. I have not recently met them on the specific issue of gas-related carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. However, I am regularly briefed in writing on gas safety matters and take a close interest in how the downward trend in CO poisoning fatalities can be sustained.

CSA

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when Clare Jackson, the constituent of the hon. Member for Bassetlaw referred to in a letter sent on 11 January will receive *(a)* a maintenance calculation and *(b)* a maintenance payment. [222714]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Mann, dated 24 March 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when Clare Jackson the constituent of the honourable Member for Bassetlaw referred to in a letter sent on 11th January will receive *(a)* a maintenance calculation and *(b)* a maintenance payment.

As details about individual cases are confidential I will write to you separately about this case.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of Child Support Agency cases are within each of the three new colour code bands. [222715]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency, Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Mann, dated 24 March 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what percentage of Child Support Agency cases are within each of the three new colour code bands.

The clerical cases team at our office at Nottingham Chalfont Drive use a colour code system in order to prioritise their workloads. This is a local initiative, which is intended to streamline the progression of cases. The current figures are as follows:

	Percentage
216 red cases	22
297 amber cases	31
457 green cases	47

There are no plans to roll this process out nationally.

Departmental Phone Lines

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of callers to his Department's office in Hastings in the week beginning 14 March encountered the engaged tone. [224012]

Malcolm Wicks: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Nick Gibb:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what percentage of callers to his Department's office in Hastings in the last week encountered the engaged tone. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Customers calling Hastings Jobcentre Plus contact centre to make a claim for a working age benefit would not have received the engaged tone. If all operators are busy the calls are placed in a queue and an appropriate message is played.

If customers in the Hastings area wish to talk to someone about any other Jobcentre Plus matter they can telephone their local office, either at Bognor Regis or Littlehampton. We do not have any information on the number of callers who encountered the engaged tone when ringing these offices.

I hope this is helpful.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what telephone answering system is in place at his Department's Hastings office for people making benefit claims by telephone. [223744]

Malcolm Wicks: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Nick Gibb, dated 24 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question concerning what telephone answering system is in place at his Department's Hastings office for people making benefit claims by telephone. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

A single number is provided for customers of working age wishing to make a claim to benefit in the Hastings area. This number is for a contact centre where staff ask customers a series of questions to assess their potential eligibility to Jobcentre Plus benefits and then arrange to call the customer back at a mutually agreed time to assist in the completion of a claim form. There is no answer phone service. If all operators are busy, calls are placed in a queue and an appropriate message is placed on incoming calls.

The Hastings contact centre takes calls from customers in the Surrey and Sussex areas.

I hope this is helpful.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the cost of administering the financial assistance scheme (FAS) will be met from within the £20 million annual allocation to the FAS; and what estimate he has made of the annual cost of administering the FAS. [219654]

Malcolm Wicks: The cost of administering the financial assistance scheme (FAS) will not be met from the £20 million annual allocation for FAS payments. Instead it will be funded from DWP's existing administration resources. There is still some detailed planning to be done, particularly on the detailed process design and its effect on both IT requirements and individual job design, which will affect the estimates of administration costs and exact costs will depend on the number of applications for assistance that are made.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his oral statement of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 628, on the Financial Assistance Scheme, how many of the pension schemes to be covered by the Financial Assistance Scheme provided some indexation of post-retirement benefits to scheme members. [220359]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* The recent data collection exercise for the Financial Assistance Scheme did not request details of indexation within schemes therefore the specific information requested is not available.

There was no statutory requirement for schemes to index pensions before April 1997 (except in respect of some rights in contracted out schemes), although some schemes did so.

As most schemes eligible for the Financial Assistance Scheme (FAS) will have started to wind up after April 1997 they are likely to have some members with a small proportion of rights subject to statutory indexation. On the other hand, as I made clear in my statement of 22 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 18WS, the FAS will initially apply to older workers within three years of scheme pension age. For those older workers it is likely that the majority of their rights will have accrued before April 1997, when the statutory indexation requirement referred to came in.

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will include the expanded metal pension scheme in the indicative list of schemes potentially eligible for the financial assistance scheme; and if he will make a statement. [223862]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 425W.

Jobcentre Plus (Dorset)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what plans he has to change training programmes on offer through Jobcentre Plus in Dorset; [223065]

(2) whether he expects that clients due to start in the week beginning 14 March programmes for self-employment training in Dorset funded by Jobcentre Plus will be able to complete their training; and if he will make a statement; [223265]

(3) whether it is his policy that programmes of self-employment training supported by Jobcentre Plus are promoted equally in all counties in the south-west region; and if he will make a statement. [223266]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mrs. Annette Brooke, dated 24 March 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions concerning the plans he has to change training programmes on offer through Jobcentre Plus in Dorset; whether clients due to start in the week beginning 14 March on programmes for self-employment training in Dorset funded by Jobcentre Plus will be able to complete their training, and whether it is his policy that programmes of self employment training supported by Jobcentre Plus are promoted equally in all counties in the South West Region. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

In answer to your first question, Jobcentre Plus is currently considering its future strategy around contracting for programmes including training and self-employment support. We need to take account of the Department for Work and Pensions' recently published 5 year strategy and an increased priority on helping those who are out of work because of sickness or disability and lone parents.

We are currently in the process of extending current contracts where appropriate, with a view to inviting tenders to compete for new contracts from Autumn 2005. We are clear that with fewer people unemployed and a greater emphasis on providing support to disabled people through the New Deal for Disabled People and the Pathways to Work pilots, we need to review our contracts and focus support on those who need the most help.

Dorset and Somerset District will communicate any emerging strategy to their local stakeholders and partners as soon as possible.

In answer to your second question, we have offered to temporarily extend the Self Employment contract in Dorset in order to ensure that clients currently engaged in training, and those who were due to start this month, can complete their current stage of training. If providers chose not to extend their contracts then this will affect clients and we will try to find alternative solutions to enable these clients to complete their training.

Finally moving to your third question, decisions to extend contracts are made at local level, taking into account local labour market needs and provider performance against agreed outcome targets, to ensure that sufficient capacity is maintained to deliver both policy intent and meet local needs.

A more detailed future strategy for Self Employment training will become clearer once the national contracting strategy is available.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* south Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK have been helped by the new deal in each year since its inception. [223047]

Jane Kennedy: The available information is in the tables.

New deal in Jarrow and south Tyneside

Number

	Jarrow		South Tyneside	
	Individuals starting new deal	*Individuals gaining a job*	*Individuals starting new deal*	*Individuals gaining a job*
1998	760	180	3,610	860
1999	820	440	3,540	1,680
2000	700	530	2,700	2,070
2001	710	540	3,410	2,300
2002	680	520	4,170	2,670
2003	810	530	4,330	3,020
2004	850	500	4,590	2,970

New deal in the North East and Great Britain

Number

	North East		Great Britain	
	Individuals starting new deal	*Individuals gaining a job*	*Individuals starting new deal*	*Individuals gaining a job*
1998	22,770	4,390	298,650	63,660
1999	24,800	11,800	350,760	165,130
2000	16,970	13,790	250,390	194,970
2001	19,070	14,850	263,450	194,900
2002	21,980	16,070	310,610	214,270
2003	23,170	16,690	331,720	212,190
2004	25,980	16,620	384,000	224,950

Notes:

1. New deal for young people started in January 1998; New deal 25 plus started in July 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998; new deal 50 plus started in April 2000; new deal for disabled people started in July 2001; new deal for partners started in April 1999 but information broken down by geography and year is only available from April 2002.

2. Figures for Jarrow do not include new deal for disabled people and new deal for partners as they are not available at constituency level.

3. South Tyneside data is for the Jobcentre Plus district of Gateshead and south Tyneside.

4. All data is based on calendar years and is to the end of December 2004 apart from new deal for partners which is to March 2004.

5. Information is for Great Britain rather than the UK as the Departments new deals do not operate in Northern Ireland.

6. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:

DWP Information Directorate

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* young people, *(b)* lone parents and *(c)* older people have participated in the new deal in Cleethorpes constituency. [223462]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the following table.

New deal in Cleethorpes

	People starting new deal	*People into jobs through new deal*
Young people[1]	1,900	1,290
Lone parents[2]	1,200	690
Older people—new deal 25 plus and new deal for lone parents[3]	230	70
Older people—new deal 50 plus employment credit starts up to March 2003[4]	290	290
Older people—new deal 50 plus from April 2003[5]	—	90

[1] Information relates to the number of people aged 18–24 who have started new deal for young people and new deal for lone parents and those gaining a job through these programmes.

[2] Information relates to the number of lone parents who have started new deal for lone parents and those gaining a job through the programme.
[3] Information relates to people aged 50 and over who have started new deal 25 plus and new deal for lone parents and those gaining a job through these programmes.
[4] Information relates to people aged 50 who claimed the new deal 50 plus employment credit up to the end of March 2003.
[5] Information relates to people aged 50 and over who have gained a job through new deal 50 plus since April 2003. Starts information is not available from April 2003 to date.
Notes:
1. Information for new deal for disabled people and new deal for partners is not available at constituency level.
2. New deal for young people started in January 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998; new deal 50 plus started in April 2000.
3. Some individuals may be counted more than once in these figures.
4. All data is to December 2004.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
DWP Information Directorate

Pensions

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on *(a)* male and *(b)* female recipients of the (i) basic state pension, (ii) SERPS and (iii) pension credit in 2003–04; and how many recipients there were of each. [223461]

Malcolm Wicks: The requested information is in the table.

Great Britain 2003–04

	Expenditure, £ millions, cash terms		
	(i) Basic state pension	*(ii) SERPS*	*(iii) Pension credit*
(a) Male	16,801	4,727	1,953
(b) Female	22,978	1,951	2,840

Recipients, £000

	(i) Basic state pension	*(ii) SERPS*	*(iii) Pension credit*
(a) Male	4,241	3,597	761
(b) Female	7,011	3,572	1,405

Notes:
1. All expenditure figures have been rounded to the nearest million pounds. Expenditure recorded on the department's accounting systems has been apportioned between males and females using a 5 per cent. sample of administrative records.
2. All caseload figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand, and are based on a 5 per cent. sample of administrative records.
3. A basic state tension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a category A or category B basic state pension.
4. Category D retirement pensions are not included in the figures.
5. The SERFS (state earnings-related pension scheme) figure also includes amounts for state second pension and graduated retirement benefit.
6. Basic state pension and SERPS expenditure includes pensions paid to people living overseas.
7. Pension credit expenditure includes both the guarantee credit and the savings credit. As pension credit was only introduced on 6 October 2003, the 2003–04 expenditure quoted relates only to half a year.
8. Figures are consistent with the Pre-Budget Report 2004 and with expenditure information published on the Internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp (table 3). These tables will shortly be updated with Budget 2005 figures.
Source:
Departmental accounts data and 5 per cent. samples of departmental administrative records.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average state pension for a pensioner living in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK has been in each year since 1997. [223657]

Malcolm Wicks: The available information is in the table.

£ weekly average

	Jarrow parliamentary constituency	*South Tyneside local authority*	*North East GOR*	*Great Britain*
September 1997	—	—	—	62.90
March 1998	—	—	—	63.23
September 1999	68.60	67.82	68.41	68.95
September 2000	70.01	69.36	69.99	70.53
September 2001	75.59	75.06	75.51	76.07
September 2002	79.57	79.13	79.12	79.71
September 2003	82.52	82.26	81.83	82.43
September 2004	86.36	85.71	84.93	85.55

Notes:
1. Figures are taken from a five per cent. sample and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures prior to 1999 are only available for Great Britain. There are no figures for September 1998 so March 1998 figures have been provided.
3. State pension means Category A, B, C or D state pension or graduated retirement benefit.
4. Parliamentary constituencies and local authority areas are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant Office for National Statistics postcode directory.
5. North East GOR is the North East Government Office Region which includes: the unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton on Tees; authorities in Durham—Chester-le-Street, Derwentside, Durham, Easington, Sedgefield, Teesdale and Wear Valley; authorities in Northumberland—Alnwick, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Blyth Valley, Castle Morpeth, Tynedale and Wansbeck; and authorities in the Metropolitan county of Tyne and Wear—Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland).
Source:
IAD Information Centre, five per cent. sample for 30 September or 31 March for the years shown.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total value of basic state pension payments paid to pensioners in the city of York local authority area was in 1996–97; what the total value of such payments would have been in 2004–05 if the basic state pension had been increased in line with *(a)* prices and *(b)* wages between 1996–97 and 2004–05; and what he estimates the total value of (i) basic state pension

payments, (ii) pension credit payments, (iii) winter fuel payments, (iv) council tax £100 payments and (v) free television licences to the over 75s in that area will be in 2004–05. [222224]

Malcolm Wicks: Basic state pension expenditure information is not available at constituency or local authority level before 1999–2000, so it is not possible to state the total value of basic state pension payments to pensioners in the city of York local authority area in 1996–97.

However, it has been possible to calculate that if the basic state pension had been increased in line with *(a)* prices and *(b)* wages between 1996–97 and 2004–05, the total value of such payments in 2004–05 would have been *(a)* £127.6 million and *(b)* £145.9 million respectively.

The other available information is in the following table.

2004–05 city Of York local authority area expenditure, £ million, cash terms

	(£)
Basic state pension payments	136.9
Pension credit payments	11.0
Winter fuel payments	6.5
Council tax £100 payments	1.7
Free television licences to over 75s payments	1.4

Notes:

1. All figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred thousand pounds.
2. Expenditure for basic state pension and pension credit has been apportioned using 2004–05 Quarterly Statistical Inquiry data.
3. Figures for expenditure on basic state pension exclude people receiving Category C or Category D pension only, additional state pension only or graduated retirement benefit only.
4. Pension credit expenditure includes both the guarantee credit and the savings credit.
5. 2004–05 Quarterly Statistical Inquiry data is not yet available for winter fuel, council tax £100 payments or free television licence expenditure. Therefore, 2003–04 data has been used. It has been assumed that the City of York's proportion of the Great Britain total (United Kingdom in the case of free television licence expenditure) would be very similar in 2003–04 and 2004–05.
6. Winter fuel expenditure includes the basic winter fuel payment and the Over 80s payment, which was introduced in 2003–04.
7. Council tax £100 payments has been interpreted to mean the over 70s payment introduced in 2004–05.
8. Free television licence expenditure data is not available at a local level within the Department. The expenditure has been estimated using the number of households where there is one or more people aged 75 or over, according to the Department's winter fuel payments database, and the estimated cost of free television licences in 2004–05.
9. Figures are consistent with the pre-budget report 2004 and with expenditure information published on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp (table3). These tables will shortly be updated with budget 2005 figures.

Source:

Expenditure is based on departmental forecasts underpinning the pre-budget report and has been apportioned using Quarterly Statistical Inquiry data, from 2003–04 or 2004–05, for the relevant benefits. The data is based on a 5 per cent. sample, and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation, with the exception of winter fuel, council tax £100 payments and free television licence expenditure which have been calculated from 100 per cent. samples.

Stourbridge

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Stourbridge constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [223340]

Jane Kennedy: We have undertaken a fundamental overhaul of the welfare system, transforming it to an active system that fights poverty, creates opportunity and helps people become self-sufficient and independent.

Since 2001, the Government have significantly extended and improved civil rights for disabled people in areas such as employment, education, access to goods and services and transport. Disabled people in Stourbridge will have benefited from these improvements in disability rights. Similarly, families with severely disabled three and four-year-old children who are unable, or virtually unable to walk will have benefited from the Government's decision to lower the minimum age entitlement to the higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance from April 2001, while older and less well off carers have gained extra help through the provisions within the National Carers Strategy.

In 2002–03 we estimate there were around 10 million adults (22 per cent.) and 0.7 million children (5 per cent.) in Great Britain likely to be covered by the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA).

The figures can be broken down to regional level which shows that 21 per cent. of adults and 6 per cent. of children in West Midlands region are likely to be covered by the provisions of the DDA.

Information on the numbers of customers in Stourbridge who are in receipt of disability living allowance (DLA) and attendance allowance (AA) is in the table.

Stourbridge

Operational year	*DLA/AA recipients*
2001	5,200
2002	5,400
2003	5,700
2004	6,100

Source:

DWP Information Centre. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and are from a 5 per cent. sample at 30 November each year.

Through Jobcentre Plus, we are promoting work as the best form of welfare for people of working age. The number of people in work is at historically high levels of over 28.5 million; in Stourbridge, the proportion in employment has risen to 76.7 per cent.

Our new deals have helped lone parents, the young unemployed, the long-term unemployed, disabled people, the over 50s and partners of unemployed people to move from benefit into work. Nationally over 1.25 million people have been helped into work by the new deals, with over 1,680 in Stourbridge alone.

Significant progress has been made in eradicating child poverty and the latest figures (for 2002–03) show that, in the UK, there were over half a million fewer

children in relative low income than there were in 1996–97. Since 2001–02 incomes for lone parents in receipt of benefit have risen by more than prices or the cost of living. In April 2005 the child allowance rate in income support for a child up to 18 years old will have been increased by 40 per cent. since 2001–02. Child rates in income support and jobseeker's allowance are also being increased above inflation in April 2005 in line with child tax credit uprating. All of this has benefited 1,400 families in Stourbridge.

We want all pensioners to have a decent and secure income in retirement and to share fairly in the rising prosperity of the country and our first priority has been to help the poorest pensioners. The Government will be spending nearly £10 billon more in 2004–05 (in 2004–05 prices) on pensioners as a result of measures introduced since 1997, with around half going to the poorest third.

Our reforms include the state second pension, which helps more future pensioners build up better pensions, especially carers. Pension credit, introduced from October 2003, provides a contribution to a guaranteed minimum income for those aged 60 and over and, for the first time, those over aged 65 and over may be rewarded for savings and income. As of December 2004, around 4,290 pensioners in Stourbridge are receiving pension credit, with an average award of £39.26 per week.

We know that older people are disproportionately affected by fuel poverty. This winter (2004–05) we have again made available a winter fuel payment of £200 for each eligible household with someone aged 60 or over and £300 to those with someone aged 80 or over to help with their fuel bills. Additionally, for this year, eligible households with someone aged 70 or over will receive the one-off 70 plus payment of £100 to help with living expenses including council tax bills. It is paid with the winter fuel payment.

The constituency data on winter fuel payments and the additional 80 plus annual payment is available in the Library.

Since 1997 single pensioners and pensioner couples have seen a real terms increase in their basic state pension of 7 per cent. and 8 per cent., respectively. Some 16,300 pensioners in Stourbridge have benefited from this increase.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220947]

Jane Kennedy: No.

Tamworth

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Tamworth receive attendance allowance. [221933]

Maria Eagle: The administration of attendance allowance is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Terry Moran to Mr. Brian Jenkins, dated 24 March 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Disability and Carers Service, the Minister for Disabled People, Maria Eagle MP, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many pensioners in Tamworth receive attendance allowance.

As at November 2004, there were 2.0 thousand attendance allowance recipients in Tamworth Parliamentary Constituency.

Notes:

1. Figure taken from a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to sampling error.

2. Number has been rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.

3. Only AA cases in payment have been included.

4. Parliamentary Constituencies have been allocated using the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample.

I hope this is helpful.

Vaccine Damage

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many payments were made by the predecessors of his Department to victims of vaccine damage between 1975 and the introduction of the Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979. [223012]

Maria Eagle: 75 payments were made to victims of vaccine damage under the extra statutory scheme that preceded the 1979 Vaccine Damage Payment Act. These 75 payments were made following announcement of the extra statutory scheme on 9 May 1978. No payments were made prior to this date.

Winter Fuel Payments

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people have benefited from winter fuel payments in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the north-east and *(d)* the UK since their inception. [223656]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of people in the Jarrow constituency, South Tyneside, the north-east and Great Britain who have benefited from winter fuel payments in each year for which figures are available is in the Library. Information on payments made in Northern Ireland is a matter for my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

HEALTH

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is his policy that payments under the accident and emergency capital incentive scheme should benefit the accident and emergency department itself; and whether he has issued guidance on the issue. [222808]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The incentive scheme was designed to recognise and reward the efforts of national health service trusts in improving accident and emergency performance. The transformation in

accident and emergency services that they have brought about reflects not just the work of accident and emergency departments themselves, but a range of other departments working across the hospital and beyond. We therefore deliberately gave trusts flexibility to decide how best to spend incentive scheme monies.

The only guidance issued in relation to the payment was that the money be spent in consultation with their lead primary care trust.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many ward beds are available for accident and emergency admissions for the Weston area health trust. [223369]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of ward beds that are available for accident and emergency admissions at the Weston area health trust is shown in the following table.

	Number available
Total	370
Acute	324
Geriatric	28
Mental illness	—
Learning disability	—
Maternity	18

Abortion

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many babies have *(a)* survived and *(b)* been born alive following abortion since 1991; [221741]

(2) what methods are used to record incidences where babies *(a)* survive abortion and *(b)* are born alive following abortion. [221961]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Under the Abortion Act 1967, as amended, any registered medical practitioner who terminates a pregnancy is required to notify the Chief Medical Officer. The abortion notification form does not collect information on whether the foetus survived the abortion.

When a foetus is born which shows signs of life and subsequently dies, the birth and death must be registered in the district where the birth and death happened.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients he estimates would be affected by the implementation of the recommendation by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence that Reminyl, Aricept and Exelon should not be prescribed to NHS patients with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. [223572]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The draft appraisal of drugs for Alzheimer's disease published recently National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is a consultation document and does not constitute the institute's final advice to the national health service. NICE will issue a final version of the revised guidance later in the year, after considering responses to its consultation. Until then, NICE's original 2001 appraisal continues to apply.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with primary care trusts which do not make available the full range of drugs for treatment of Alzheimer's disease approved by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence. [221023]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has recently issued for consultation a revised version of its technology appraisal on drugs for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. I have had no specific discussions with primary care trusts about compliance with the existing NICE guidance. Until NICE issues a final version of this new guidance, its original 2001 appraisal continues to apply.

The Government have now submitted their response to the current consultation and a copy has been placed in the Library.

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the measures of cost-effectiveness applied by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence in evaluating whether acetylcholinesterase inhibitors should continue to be available to treat sufferers from Alzheimer's disease; [223627]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of acetylcholinesterase inhibitors in improving cognitive and global outcomes for sufferers from Alzheimer's disease. [223628]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) published its draft technology appraisal guidance on drugs for Alzheimer's disease for consultation on 1 March 2005. NICE is an independent body with an internationally recognised reputation for the robustness of its technology appraisal development process. The Department responded to NICE'S consultation on the guidance on the 22 March and a copy of the response is available in the Library. NICE will be issuing a final version of this new guidance later in the year, after considering responses to its consultation. Until then, the recommendations in NICE's original 2001 appraisal continue to apply.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department defines dementia as a long-term neurological condition; and whether the principles of the National Service Framework for Long-Term Conditions apply to the care and treatment of people with dementia. [223801]

Dr. Ladyman: Although the National Service Framework (NSF) for Long-term Conditions focuses on people with neurological conditions, much of the guidance it offers can apply to anyone living with a long-term, progressive condition such as dementia. Commissioners are, therefore, encouraged to use this NSF in planning service developments for people with other long-term conditions.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what criteria the National Institute for Clinical Excellence used to determine the appropriateness of drugs for use in the treatment of dementia; and what assessment has been made of the impact of the withdrawal of these drugs on people suffering with dementia; [223815]

(2) what assessment he makes of *(a)* cost and *(b)* clinical need in the determination of the allocation of drugs. [223816]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the process by which the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) conducts its technology appraisals, and the factors it takes into account, are available on the Institute's website at www.nice.nhs.uk. NICE is an independent body with an internationally recognised reputation for the robustness of its technology appraisal development process. NICE published its draft technology appraisal guidance on drugs for Alzheimer's disease for consultation on 1 March 2005 and the Institute will be issuing a final version of this new guidance later in the year, after considering responses to its consultation. Until then, the recommendations in NICE'S original 2001 appraisal continue to apply.

The Department does not allocate drugs. The Department allocates revenue resources to primary care trusts on the basis of the size of the population it serves, the need for health care of the population and unavoidable differences in the cost of providing health care.

Arthritis

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce an NHS National Service Framework for *(a)* inflammatory arthritis, *(b)* osteoarthritis and *(c)* psoriatic arthritis. [223184]

Dr. Ladyman: In recognition of the need for a greater focus on the needs of the 17 million people with long-term conditions, including arthritis, the Government has already published this year:

"Supporting People with Long Term Conditions" (LTCs)

"Self Care a Real Choice"

"Liberating the talents of nurses who care for people with LTCs"—describing the new clinical function of community matrons.

The national service framework for people with LTCs.

As part of this work on LTCs, it is intended to publish best practice guidance on musculoskeletal conditions, which include inflammatory arthritis, osteoarthritis and; psoriatic arthritis, later this year. The work is being developed with a wide range of stakeholders including the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital admissions there were for *(a)* inflammatory arthritis and *(b)* psoriatic arthritis in the last year for which figures are available. [223186]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is shown in the following table.

Counts of finished admission episodes for selected diagnoses on admission, national health service hospitals, England 2003–04

Condition	*Total*
Inflammatory arthritis	55,960
Psoriatic arthritis	2,488

Notes:
1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
3. Diagnosis codes used:
(a) Inflammatory arthritis M05—M14 Inflammatory Polyarthropathies.
(b) Psoriatic arthritis—Primary: L40.5 Arthropathic psoriasis.
4. As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (six prior to 2002–03) secondary diagnosis fields in HES that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care.
5. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
HES, Department of Health.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many children in England suffer from juvenile idiopathic arthritis; [223187]

(2) how many adults in England suffer from *(a)* inflammatory arthritis, *(b)* psoriatic arthritis and *(c)* moderate to severe osteoarthritis of hands, knees or hips. [223188]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not routinely and comprehensively collect the data requested.

Epidemiological data for arthritis is, in the main, collected in surveys or from registers, the main sources being Government, academic institutions and charitable organisations.

We are aware that the Arthritis Research Council, a respected major charity, commissioned a large scale study of epidemiological data on arthritis. The Department has not validated its findings. However, it showed that:

At least 4.4 million people in the United Kingdom have x-ray evidence of moderate to severe osteoarthritis of the hands; 0.55 million of the knees and 0.21 million of the hips[1].

Approximately 387,000 people are estimated to have rheumatoid arthritis (one of the inflammatory arthritides).

Around 12,000 children in the UK have juvenile idiopathic arthritis.

[1] Source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey [NHANES] survey, United States of America.

Asthma

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding he has made available for research into asthma and related conditions in each year since 1997. [223590]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Chesham and Amersham (Mrs. Gillan) on 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1308–10W.

Care (Statistics)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many episodes of care relating to *(a)* health visiting, *(b)* community nursing, *(c)* district nursing, *(d)* community psychiatric nursing, *(e)* community learning disability nursing, *(f)* specialist care nursing, *(g)* chiropody services, *(h)* clinical psychology, *(i)* occupational therapy, *(j)* physiotherapy, *(k)* speech and language therapy and *(l)* community dental services there were in each year since 1990–91. [218126]

Mr. Hutton: Information for 1990–91 to 1996–97 is available in fig. 7.2 of the Departmental Report 2001 and for 1997–98 to 2002–03 in fig. 7.2 of the Departmental Report 2004. Copies of these reports are available in the Library. Figures for 2003–04 are shown in the table. These figures do not include episodes of care given by certain specialist care nurses or those given by staff employed by social services.

Episodes of care relating to community nursing, dental and cross sector therapy services, England, 2003–04[1]

	Number (Thousand)
Health visiting	3,000
Of which:	
Community nursing services (total)	2,600
District nursing	2,000
Community mental health nursing	330
Community learning disability nursing	24
Specialist care nursing	330
Chiropody services	790
Clinical psychology[2]	n/a
Occupational therapy	1,270
Physiotherapy	4,300
Speech and language therapy	340
Community dental services[3]	n/a

n/a = Not available.

[1] Number of new episodes commenced in the year except health visiting (number of different persons seen at least once in a year) and community dental services (number of episodes of care commenced in year)

[2] Data collection discontinued from 2003–04.

[3] 2003–04 data not yet available.

Charities

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will conduct research into the effects of late payments from his Department on charities, with particular reference to their ability to fulfil the contract at the specified levels. [222655]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not consider that research into the effects of late payments is necessary.

The Department acknowledges that late payments may have an impact on charities and voluntary organisations. We support and have taken on board the good practice guidance on procurement of services from the voluntary and community sector published by the Home Office and the Compact Code of Practice on Funding, both of which emphasise the importance of prompt payment within payment procedures.

The Section 64 General Scheme of Grants represents the greatest single source of grant funding from the Department to the voluntary sector. The Department may also contract with voluntary organisations for a specific service outside the Section 64 scheme.

The majority of Section 64 grants are paid in quarterly instalments starting when the organisation has formally accepted the grant conditions and the project has started. Payments in subsequent years are made following receipt of financial and monitoring information as specified in the conditions. Payment schedules are notified to the organisations.

The Department's general payment policy is that, where there is no contractual provision or other understanding or accepted practice governing the time of payment, the Department should pay within 30 days of receipt of goods and services, or of the presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand for payment, whichever is the later. Our records show that over 90 per cent. of invoices in the current financial year have been paid in accordance with this policy.

Continuing Care

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his written evidence to the Health Select Committee of 24 January, whether all strategic health authorities in England have completed and cleared their pre-April 2004 backlog of cases where individuals were wrongly assessed to pay for continuing care. [220454]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* In total, the national health service has now completed over 10,744 investigations into retrospective funding for continuing care. Nationwide, there are only 15 outstanding cases that were logged before 1 April 2004. Their delay has been due to a number of reasons such as staff sickness, problems with locating notes from the independent sector and new information being made available. In addition, the review of some of these cases was delayed at the request of the patient or the patient's representative. The Department is working closely with strategic health authorities to ensure that these cases are completed as soon as possible.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people are receiving NHS continuing care in each strategic health authority in England. [223792]

Dr. Ladyman: The most recent available data are for March 2004. The reported number of people in each strategic health authority (SHA) in England receiving national health service continuing care at that time is shown in the table.

People receiving continuing care: March 2004

	Number
England (estimated)[1]	19,984
By SHA:	
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	435
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	830
Essex	698
North West London	1,468
North Central London	320
North East London	735
South East London	580
South West London	433
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	1,081
County Durham and Tees Valley	1,374
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	705
West Yorkshire	688
Cumbria and Lancashire	376
Greater Manchester	984
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,074
Thames Valley	632
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	530
Kent and Medway	770
Surrey and Sussex	719
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	741
South West Peninsula	516
Somerset and Dorset	241
South Yorkshire	192
Trent	928
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	215
Shropshire and Staffordshire	663
Birmingham and the Black Country	1,107
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire	690

[1] The estimated England figure does not equal the sum of the 28 SHAs listed in the table. This is because the following organisations did not return data in 2003–04:

5LC Westminster Primary Care Trust (PCT)
5A2 Norwich PCT.
5KR North and East Cornwall PCT.

Notes:

The figures include people receiving NHS fully funded physical and mental health care over an extended period of time, as the result of disability, accident or illness. This can be in a NHS hospital, care home or peoples' own homes.

The figures exclude hospital admissions, people receiving intermediate care, NHS funded nursing care in a care home or any package of care jointly funded with social services.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what methodology was used to calculate the estimate of £180 million to compensate those who did not receive NHS Continuing Care. [223697]

Dr. Ladyman: Additional funding was provided for continuing care on the basis of information provided to the Department by strategic health authorities after an assessment by primary care trusts of the likely level of local claims.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223446]

Mr. Hutton: Budgets are set for Government Departments in the spending review held every two years. The most recent spending review in 2004 set budgets up to 2007–08. The Department's departmental expenditure limits for 2007–08 as set in the last spending review are £88.9 billion revenue and £6.3 billion capital.

Pudsey

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Pudsey constituency, the effects of changes to departmental policy since 1997 on Pudsey constituency. [223568]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Pudsey constituency.

For example:

At the end of January 2005, the number of people waiting more than nine months for inpatient treatment within Leeds North West Primary Care Trust (PCT) had fallen to 0, from 230 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2004 the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for out-patient treatment within Leeds North West PCT had fallen to 201, from 928 in June 2002.

Figures for December 2004 show that all patients within Leeds North West PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a primary care professional within two working days, an improvement from 85.7 per cent. in June 2002.

Leeds North West PCTs financial allocation increased to £158.3 million for 2004–05 a real terms increase of 6.4 per cent.

In June 2003, at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, 88.7 per cent. of patients spent less than four hours in accident and emergency from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. Figures for December 2004 show an improvement to 93 per cent.

Between September 2000 and September 2003 the number of consultants at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust has increased from 437 to 538. The number of nurses increased from 4,461 to 4,783.

In the Leeds local authority area death rates from cancer per 100,000 population have fallen to 196.3 in 2003, from 203.3 in 1997.

In the Leeds local authority area death rates from coronary heart disease per 100,000 population have fallen to 127.5 in 2003, from 156.6 in 1997.

In November 2003, an additional computed tomography (CT) scanner was delivered to Cookridge hospital.

In March 2002, a replacement CT scanner was delivered to Leeds General Infirmary.

In June 2002, an additional CT scanner was delivered to Cookridge hospital.

In April 2001, an additional magnetic resonance imaging scanner was delivered to Cookridge hospital.

In October 2001, two replacement linear accelerators were delivered to Cookridge hospital.

In February 2003, a replacement cardiac catheter laboratory was delivered to Cookridge hospital.

In November 2004, one additional and one replacement linear accelerator were delivered to the Yorkshire Regional Centre for Cancer. Two replacement linear accelerators will be delivered in September 2006.

The Joint Local Investment Finance Trust scheme, involving Leeds West PCT, Leeds North West PCT, Leeds North East PCT, East Leeds PCT and South Leeds PCT, with a capital value of £19.7 million. The scheme includes two GP practices plus addiction services, midwifery and school nursing for Woodhouse Primary Care Centre, two general practitioner (GP) practices, health visiting, speech therapy and addiction services for Armley Primary Care Centre and four GP practices, district nursing, health visiting and midwifery for Dewsbury Road Centre.

Source:

Department of Health, Office of National Statistics

Departmental Staff

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the staff complement for his Department was in each of the last nine years. [222867]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the staff complement for the Department for the last nine years is shown in the table. This information is available at www.civilservice.gov.uk/management information/ statistical information/statistics/archived data/archived data on staff in post/index.asp.

As at 1 April	*Number full-time equivalent permanent staff*
2004	2,750
2003	3,150
2002	3,440
2001	3,640
2000	3,570
1999	3,543
1998	3,491
1997	3,683
1996	3,732

Digital Hearing Aids

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many NHS trusts have the necessary *(a)* facilities and *(b)* staff to fit digital hearing aids; [222190]

(2) if he will make a statement on the process for assessing the quality of audiology services in hospitals; [222191]

(3) what measures were taken to prepare primary care trusts for the modernising hearing aid services programme; and if he will make a statement; [222192]

(4) what plans he has to collate centrally statistics on waiting times relating to the modernising hearing aid service project; and if he will make a statement. [222193]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has invested £125 million into the modernising hearing aid services (MHAS) project since it started in September 2000. This project is being managed on behalf of the Department by the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID).

All national health service audiology departments, which are part of the MHAS project, within England have a named lead primary care trust (PCT) which acts on behalf of all those PCTs which commission audiology services from each NHS trust.

In spring 2004, the RNID undertook a comprehensive series of 26 seminars across England to promote the benefits of the MHAS project. All PCTs and strategic health authorities were invited to attend these events.

95 per cent. of all NHS audiology departments in England are fitting digital hearing aids routinely to those people they have diagnosed as suitable and the few remaining departments will be offering the service by the end of March 2005.

The Healthcare Commission is responsible for regulating and inspecting NHS services, including audiology services.

There are no plans to centrally collate statistics on waiting times.

Drug Users

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of problematic drug users are in treatment; and how many were in treatment on average in each of the last five years. [209617]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The percentage of problematic drug users that are in treatment, in England in 2003–04, is estimated to be around 45 per cent.[1]

The number of people in treatment for drug misuse during the year in England is shown in the table.

[1] This estimate is based upon:

The estimated figure of around 281,000 problematic drug users in England and Wales (Godfrey C, Eaton G, McDougall C & Culyer A (2002). "The Economic and Social Costs of Class A Drug Use in England and Wales, 2000. Home Office Research Study 249.")

The assumption that problematic drug use levels in the population are the same in England and Wales Resident population estimates for England, 49.9 million, and Wales, 2.9 million, for 2003.

The 126,000 figure and methodology for numbers in treatment in England in 2003–04 "Key statistics on drug misusers in treatment, England 2003–04", available at http://www.nta.nhs.uk.

The assumption that all people in treatment are problematic drug users.

	Number of people in treatment
1999–2000	Not available
2000–01	118,500
2001–02	[1]128,200
2002–03	[1]140,900
2003–04	[2]154,000

[1] Provisional data.

[2] This figure is used to allow for a more accurate comparison with previous years. As explained in: "Bridging exercise comparing drug misuse treatment data 2002–03 and 2003–04", available at http://www.nta.nhs.uk, the method of measuring contact with drug treatment services has been changed and the definition tightened since data was collected in 2002–03. Based on the new methodology introduced in 2003–04, the total number of people actually recorded as being in contact with structured drug treatment in 2003–04 was 125,913. This figure is the total number of individuals whose treatment falls within the definition of structured drug treatment as defined by NTA's Models of Care as "treatment following assessment and delivered according to a care plan, with clear goals, which is regularly reviewed with the client." This figure is used to produce the percentage data.

Eye Tests

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost was of eye tests carried out on the NHS to *(a)* individuals and *(b)* the NHS in (i) 1979 and (ii) 1997. [222182]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Sight tests provided by the national health service were free in 1979. An optometrist who carried out a sight test under the general ophthalmic services between 1 January to 31 December 1979 would have received a fee of £4.25. An ophthalmic medical practitioner who carried out a sight test under the general ophthalmic services between 1 April 1979 to 31 March 1980 would have received a fee of £3.40.

In 1997 sight tests provided by the NHS were free to children under 16, those aged 16–18 in full-time education, people on low incomes, individuals

predisposed to eye disease, those registered blind or partially sighted and people who have a complex prescription. An optometrist who carried out a sight test under the general ophthalmic service between 1 April 1997 to 31 March 1998 received a fee of £14.10. An ophthalmic medical practitioner who carried out a sight test under the general ophthalmic services would have received a fee of £12.51 from 1 April 1997 and £14.10 from 1 December 1997.

Genito-Urinary Medicine

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of genito-urinary medicine clinics that offer an HIV test to clinic attendees on their first screening for sexually transmitted diseases. [223290]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on the number of genito-urinary medicine clinics that offer an HIV test to clinic attendees on their first screening for sexually transmitted diseases is not held centrally.

Gluten Intolerance

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list gluten-free products available on an NHS prescription for patients who are intolerant of gluten; [222840]

(2) what guidance on gluten-free diets is made available by his Department to general practitioners; [222841]

(3) what information is provided to patients by the NHS on *(a)* symptoms, *(b)* treatment and *(c)* dietary recommendations for people with gluten intolerance; [222842]

(4) how many people *(a)* were estimated to have and *(b)* had been diagnosed with a gluten intolerance on the latest date for which figures are available. [222843]

Dr. Ladyman: The data on numbers diagnosed with coeliac disease are not available. Coeliac UK estimates that the average incidence in the United Kingdom is one in a hundred.

Advice on food intolerance, including advice on how to avoid certain ingredients when shopping for food or eating out, is available on the Food Standards Agency's website at www.food.gov.uk and also at its consumer advice and information website at www.eatwell.gov.uk.

We have no specific plans to raise awareness of the condition among the medical profession. The Department is not responsible for setting curriculum's for general practitioners; that is rightly the responsibility of the statutory and professional bodies. However, we do share a commitment with those bodies that all general practitioners are trained so that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver a high quality health service to all groups of the population with whom they deal.

All the gluten free products available on national health service prescription on the recommendation of the advisory committee on borderline substances are listed in Part XV of the Drug Tariff, which is published monthly by The Stationery Office, a copy of which is available in the Library.

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been cancelled at the Great Ormond Street hospital in the 2004–05 financial year. [222010]

Dr. Ladyman: Published *data for cancelled* operations are available for 2004 to December 2004 (the latest available data). Great Ormond Street hospital has had 74 last-minute cancellations for non-clinical reasons.

Based on data from the previous year, we can estimate that 9,611 inpatient operations were performed without cancellation during the same period.

Health Services (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people received NHS treatment in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [223730]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available in the format requested.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentist surgeries there have been in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [223732]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Leicester, South is served by Leicester City West Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Eastern Leicester PCT.

The number of dental practices in these PCT areas, for the years 1997 to 2004 is shown in the table.

	Eastern Leicester	*Leicester City West*
1997	41	18
1998	40	18
1999	41	20
2000	40	20
2001	41	19
2002	38	19
2003	39	19
2004	39	19

Source:

Dental Practice Board

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nursing and *(b)* residential homes for the elderly there have been in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [223653]

Dr. Ladyman: Data are not available for the area requested. Information on the number of care homes for people aged 65 or over and for all adults aged 18 and over in Leicestershire at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001 is shown in the table.

I understand from the chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Number of residential and nursing homes in Leicestershire[1], 1997 to 2001

At 31 March	Residential[2] 65 and over	Residential[2] Total	Nursing[2,3] 65 and over	Nursing[2,3] Total	Total
1997	270	430	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	220	390	n/a	70	670
1999	190	340	n/a	70	610
2000	190	350	n/a	60	600
2001	190	370	n/a	60	620

n/a = data not available.
[1] Nursing care relates to Leicestershire health authority; residential care relates to Leicester unitary authority and Leicestershire council with social services responsibilities; data from 1998 onwards combine Leicestershire county council and Leicester unitary authority.
[2] Dual registered homes are excluded from residential care but are included under nursing care.
[3] Nursing home figures include places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes, private hospitals and clinics.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Health Services (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were waiting for elective in-patient admission to York Hospitals NHS Trust *(a)* in total, *(b)* for less than three months, *(c)* for three to five months, *(d)* for six to eight months and *(e)* for nine to 11 months; and what the median waiting time in months was (i) in May 1997 and (ii) at the latest date for which figures are available. [222294]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for admission by month waiting: York Hospitals National Health Service Trust

	March 1997	January 2005
0–2 months	3,708	3,183
3–5 months	1,821	1,620
6–8 months	876	700
9–11 months	441	0
Total patients waiting	6,846	5,503
Median wait (weeks)	12.0	11.0

Source:
KH07 quarterly return, monthly monitoring return.

Influenza Pandemic Plan

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence he has received on the effectiveness of stockpiling oseltamivir in reducing the impact of an influenza pandemic. [220996]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has reviewed published evidence based on the effectiveness of antiviral drugs, including that from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, together with estimates of their likely effect during an influenza pandemic.

Health Statistics (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nursing and *(b)* residential homes for the elderly there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223177]

Dr. Ladyman: Data are not available for the area requested. Information on the number of care homes for people aged 65 or over and for all adults aged 18 and over in Shropshire at 31 March for the years 1997 to 2001 is shown in the table.

I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that figures for later years were collected by the National Care Standards Commission, and now CSCI, but comparable details are not available.

Number of residential and nursing homes in Shropshire[1], 1997 to 2001

At 31 March	Residential[2] 65 and over	Residential[2] Total	Nursing[2,3] 65 and over	Nursing[2,3] Total	Total
1997	100	210	n/a	n/a	n/a
1998	130	240	n/a	60	420
1999	100	200	n/a	60	350
2000	100	200	n/a	60	360
2001	80	190	n/a	50	320

n/a = Data not available.
[1] Nursing care relates to Shropshire health authority. Residential care relates to Shropshire council with social services responsibilities. For 1999 onwards, residential data combines Shropshire county council and Telford and Wrekin unitary authority.
[2] Dual registered homes are excluded from residential care, but are included under nursing care.
[3] Nursing home figures include places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes, private hospitals and clinics.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Healthcare Commission

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 553W, on the Healthcare Commission, how the Healthcare Commission has increased its capacity to handle the increased level of referrals; and how many cases are outstanding. [222675]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* I understand from the Chairman of the Healthcare Commission that it has continued to receive a large number of requests from patients wanting their complaints independently reviewed, and is on track to receive about 9,000 complaints in the first year of this activity. This is up from 3,000 cases in 2003 under the previous system.

The Healthcare Commission has increased capacity by bringing in interim teams to help to deal with the complaints, and will have more than doubled the number of full-time permanent staff to 110 by the summer. Between 30 July 2004 and 28 February 2005, the Healthcare Commission received 5,338 requests for independent review, is reviewing 2,624 and has closed 877. A further 1,887 are outstanding.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the resourcing of the complaints handling function of the Healthcare Commission. [223042]

Mr. Hutton: I understand from the Chairman of the Healthcare Commission that it has continued to receive a large number of requests from patients wanting their complaint independently reviewed, and is on track to receive about 9,000 complaints in the first year of this activity. This is up from 3,000 cases in 2003 under the previous system. The Healthcare Commission has increased capacity by bringing in interim teams to help to deal with the complaints, and will have increased the number of staff devoted to this function to 110 by the summer.

IVF

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many IVF embryos were *(a)* created, *(b)* created for research purposes and *(c)* donated for research purposes between 1991 and 2004. [222647]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised me that between 1991 and 2004, 1,950,757 embryos were created, of which 78,505 were donated for research purposes. Data on embryos created for research is not routinely collected by the HFEA. However, information obtained by the HFEA from licensed centres suggests that approximately 370 embryos have been created for research purposes since 1991.

Data on the HFEA's register is currently being audited to improve the accuracy of the information available. It may, therefore, be subject to further amendment following completion of the modernisation programme in March 2006.

Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 162W, on Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust, whether the bed occupancy rate for 2003–04 includes patients occupying the beds of other patients on leave. [223214]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Bed availability and occupancy are measured at midnight so by definition there cannot be more than one patient occupying a bed. A bed allocated to a patient on home leave would be recorded as not available and therefore not occupied. If the bed is subsequently made available for another patient, it would be recorded as available and occupied. In this way, occupancy never exceeds 100 per cent.

Low Birth Weight Babies

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of the rate of low birth-weight babies in England compared with other countries in Western Europe. [222688]

Dr. Ladyman: The incidence of low birth-weight babies has increased across Europe, particularly in England, which has a high incidence. In part, this is the result of advances in maternal and neonatal care which save premature babies who would not have survived in the past. There are also a number of avoidable causal factors associated with low birth-weight, which we are addressing through a range of initiatives to promote access to wholesome nutrition, enhanced health care prior to and during pregnancy and the adoption of healthier lifestyle choices.

McKinsey and Company

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money has been paid to McKinsey and Company by NHS trusts seeking to secure foundation status in the past 12 months. [223631]

Mr. Hutton: The Department provides a programme of support, including direct financial support to applicants preparing for national health service foundation trust status. It does not, however, hold information on the level of resources or the way in which resources are used by applicants in preparing for foundation status, as it is for each trust to determine how resources are best spent. Costs vary from trust to trust depending on individual circumstances of the organisation and its state of readiness.

Mental Health

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mental health beds have been available in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [223649]

Dr. Ladyman: The average daily numbers of available beds by sector for the years 1997 to 2004 are shown in the table.

	National health service trust	Total	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity
1997–98	Leicestershire Mental Health Service NHS Trust	515	—	—	—	515	—	—
	Fosse Health, Leics. Community NHS Trust	570	408	171	237	48	114	—
1998–99	Leicestershire Mental Health Service NHS Trust	516	—	—	—	516	—	—
1999–2000	Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	1,087	407	171	237	565	114	—
2000–01	Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	1,421	401	240	161	765	255	—
2001–02	Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust[1]	921	—	—	—	662	259	—
2002–03	Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	871	—	—	—	612	259	—
2003–04	Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	887	—	—	—	628	258	—

[1] Leicestershire Mental Health Service NHS Trust and Fosse Health, Leics. Community NHS Trust were dissolved in 1999. Leicestershire and Rutland Healthcare NHS Trust became Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust in 2002.

Source:

Department of Health form KH03.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the change in the number of mental health patients presenting at accident and emergency departments over the last eight years; and if he will make a statement. [222041]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not made a formal assessment of changes in the number of patients attending accident and emergency departments with mental health problems. However, we have encouraged local services to make improvements in the support available for people in mental health crises and we published guidance for A and E staff that provides practical support to improve the care of patients with mental ill health who access emergency care services. The guidance is available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4081455&chk=PZrfPQ

In addition, the Department provided incentive money in the current financial year for trusts that made progress to integrate elements of their crisis services. 80 per cent. of trusts were awarded the one-off payment of £200,000 following an assessment of their progress and performance by strategic health authorities.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many staff were employed by the Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust and its successor trust in each year since 1992, broken down by staff group. [223522]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

A new system of occupation coding for national health service non-medical staff was introduced in 1995. Data prior to 1995 is not directly comparable with later years.

NHS hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) medical and non-medical staff, in the Leeds Community and Mental Health Service Teaching NHS Trust (RGD) by main staff group as at 30 September each year

Numbers (headcount)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
All Staff	3,823	4,058	3,849	3,727	3,885
Of which:					
All medical and dental staff	161	209	174	165	220
Total non-medical staff (HCHS only)	3,662	3,849	3,675	3,562	3,665
Professionally qualified clinical staff total	1,651	1,724	1,755	1,758	1,802
Qualified nursing	1,334	1,378	1,400	1,367	1,404
Qualified ST&T	317	346	355	391	398
Support to clinical staff total	1,301	1,369	1,137	1,070	1,150
Support to doctors and nurses	1,227	1,294	1,065	1,000	1,086
Support to ST&T staff	74	70	68	66	61
Support to ambulance staff	0	5	4	4	3
NHS infrastructure support	691	742	769	723	704
Central functions	405	458	450	428	423
Hotel, property and estates	208	201	238	227	210
Senior managers and managers	78	83	81	68	71
Other/unknown staff total	19	14	14	11	9

Numbers (headcount)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
All Staff	4,048	4,396	2,369	2,455	2,724
Of which:					
All medical and dental staff	218	219	209	156	181

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Numbers (headcount)

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Total non-medical staff (HCHS only)	3,830	4,177	2,160	2,299	2,543
Professionally qualified clinical staff total	1,820	1,996	903	992	1,021
Qualified nursing	1,412	1,516	718	813	820
Qualified ST&T	408	480	185	179	201
Support to clinical staff total	1,265	1,319	696	819	1,010
Support to doctors and nurses	1,197	1,238	677	804	996
Support to ST&T staff	63	75	19	15	14
Support to ambulance staff	5	6	0	0	0
NHS infrastructure support	736	857	561	488	512
Central functions	444	520	262	256	296
Hotel, property and estates	203	211	183	150	138
Senior managers and managers	89	126	116	82	78
Other/unknown staff total	9	5	0	0	0

Note:
The numbers of staff dropped from 2001 to 2002 due to services transferring out to various PCTs in the Leeds area.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health non-medical workforce census

Mental Health Tribunals

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent changes have been made to the location of mental health tribunals sittings for patients of the Humber mental health teaching NHS trust; and for what reasons the changes were made. [223538]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* All units in Humber mental health teaching national health service trust have their mental health review tribunals organised by one Mental Health Act Administrator, who works in a separate unit. The tribunals take place at the hospitals where the patient is detained in line with other trusts.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients of the Humber mental health teaching NHS trust subject to sectioning did not have their tribunal hearings within the designated time limit under the 1983 Mental Health Act in the last 12 months. [223573]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding 23 March 2005]:* All mental health review tribunals (MHRTs) are listed, in the first instance, within statutory time scales.

A small number of patients do not subsequently have their cases heard within time limits due to factors outside the Tribunal Secretariat's control. These include requests by the responsible authority or patient's representative for an alternative hearing date. Tribunals can also be adjourned by the MHRT panel members when they convene at the hearing. The MHRT is an independent judicial body and the Secretariat has no influence over these decisions to adjourn.

Midwives

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many midwives were employed by the NHS in the last year for which figures are available. [222946]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* As at September 2004, there were 24,844 midwives employed in the national health service, an increase of 2,459 since 1997.

Mobile Phones (Under-fives)

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the health effects of mobile phones on the under-fives. [223589]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Mobile Telecommunication and Health Research (MTHR) programme set up following the Stewart Report in 2000 is jointly funded by Government and industry under the aegis of an independent scientific management committee. One study in this programme is investigating the risk of early childhood cancer among the population residing near mobile phone base stations, although all the studies are relevant to populations of any age. A brief description of all the studies can be found on the MTHR website at www.mthr.org.

The National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB) continually monitors and evaluates research into potential health effects from mobile phone technologies on behalf of Government. The NRPB's independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation issued a comprehensive review entitled "Health Effects from Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields" (docs. of the NRPB, vol. 14, no. 2, 2003). This report noted that little had been published specifically on childhood exposures to radiofrequency. The World Health Organization has prioritised research recommendations for studies on children and electromagnetic fields including those from mobile phone technologies. Further information is available from the World Health Organisation website at: www.who.int/peh-emf/research/children/en/index4.html.

MRI Scans

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 693W, on MRI scans, if he will place the representations he received in the Library. [220512]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* No. The representations received fall in the category of commercially sensitive documents that the Department would not generally disclose. Some of the representations received also form part of advice

received from strategic health authorities and other national health service bodies. Information of this kind is also not generally disclosed, as it would be detrimental to the provision of free and frank advice.

MRSA

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment the Government have made of whether relationship exists between MRSA and the privatisation of cleaning activities in NHS hospitals. [209146]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Analysis carried out by the Department found that there was no statistically significant relationship between the contracting out of cleaning work and methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) rates in national health service trusts.

However, the impact of cost-cutting programmes during the 1980s and 1990s did lead to a reduction in the number of cleaning staff and expenditure on cleaning.

The problem of MRSA has developed over some time. Between 1993 and 1997, the percentage of *S aureus bacteraemias* that were MRSA increased from four per cent. to 30 per cent.. It is now settling at just over 40 per cent. The latest data for MRSA bloodstream infections (April-September 2004) show a 6 per cent. drop on the corresponding period in 2003.

Several initiatives are already improving hospital cleanliness and infection control. These are summarised in "Towards cleaner hospitals and lower rates of infections".

Neonatal Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average age is of neonatal nurses; and what assessment he has made of the effect on neonatal care of early retirements of such nurses over the next 10 years. [222025]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally. Neonatal nurses are included within the paediatric nursing area of work. As at September 2004, the average age of paediatric nurses employed in the national health service was 37.

In line with our policy of "Shifting the Balance of Power", it is for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to plan, develop and improve services for local people, including neonatal services.

NHS Dentists

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* children and *(b)* adults were registered with NHS dentists in Chesterfield on the latest date for which figures are available. [222625]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As at 30 September 2004, there were 16,489 children and 47,339 adults—63,828 patients in total—registered with national health service dentists in Chesterfield.

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

NHS Professionals

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether staff supplied by NHS Professionals to hospitals undergo the same *(a)* recruitment, *(b)* training and *(c)* occupational health checks that are required of private recruitment agencies; and if he will make a statement; [223574]

(2) when he expects NHS professionals to become self-financing; and if he will make a statement; [223575]

(3) if he will list the NHS trusts which ceased to use NHS professionals in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; and if he will make a statement. [223576]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* NHS professionals fully complies with the pre and post-employment checks for all those working in the national health service, the appropriate checks and minimum standards set out in the Department's code of practice for the supply of temporary staffing and NHS purchasing and supply agency delivery standards. A recent Department of Trade and Industry audit confirmed that NHS professionals fully met, and in some cases exceeded, the requirements of the Employments Agencies Act and the Conduct of Employment and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003.

I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to him on 23 March, regarding when NHS professionals is expected to become self-financing.

Information relating to the NHS professionals service prior to the establishment of the special health authority in April 2004 is not held centrally. The Pennine care NHS trust disengaged with the NHS professionals nursing service in 2004, but it continues to use the full range of doctors' services.

NHS Reconfiguration (Merton)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the representations from the London borough of Merton to call in the reconfiguration decisions made by the local NHS; and if he will make a statement. [223945]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State has received a referral from the London borough of Merton on the reconfiguration decisions made by the local national health service. We will now consider the issues raised before responding.

NHS Research

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a copy of the research carried out for his Department by Warwick university in connection with its calculations of the market forces factor adjustment as it affects hospitals in Lancashire and Greater Manchester. [223402]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The most recent research carried out on behalf of the Department by university of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research, on the market forces factor, was published in March 2002.

Copies of the report titled 'Spatial Variations in Labour Costs: 2001 Review of the Staff Market Forces Factor' are available in the Library.

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the differences were between the methodology of the market forces adjustment factor for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; what effect this has had on the allocation of funds to the hospital trusts in Blackpool and Preston; for what reasons Blackpool and Preston have different allocations; and when the trusts received details of their 2005–06 allocations using the revised market forces adjustment factor. [223403]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The Payment by results market forces factor (MFF) used in 2004–05 was updated for 2005–06 to take account of the most recently available data on earnings, expenditure, land values and building costs. Following advice to Ministers from the independent Advisory Committee on resource allocation, we also made a change to the methodology to make it more sensitive to cost pressures within individual primary care trust areas, rather than the larger areas previously used. Full details are available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/10/02/99/04100299.pdf.

In 2004–05, the MFF was a determinant of the prices paid by primary care trusts (PCTs) to national health service trusts for only 48 groups of procedures (known as healthcare resource groups). In 2005–06, the scope of payment by results will be increasing to cover the whole of elective in-patient care for NHS trusts. PCTs will pay the same national tariff to any trust with which they commission, and an allocation for the MFF for elective care will be made to providers directly from the centre. 2005–06 will be the first year in which such allocations will be made.

The Department provided details of the 2005–06 MFF allocations to the NHS on 21 February 2005. There are three reasons why Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre hospital NHS trust (Blackpool) would have a different MFF allocation to Lancashire teaching hospitals NHS trust (Preston): differences in their volume of elective activity (more activity requires more funding); differences in the case mix of that activity (more complex activity requires more funding), and differences in the MFF itself (trusts located in more expensive areas require more funding). The 2005–06 MFF for Lancashire teaching is 1.1 per cent., higher than for Blackpool largely because the MFF allows for higher general wage pressures in Preston.

NHS Spending

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 18 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 518W, on NHS spending, if he will provide the figures for each year since 1996–97, at *(a)* real and *(b)* nominal prices, broken down by (i) hospital expenditure, (ii) community services expenditure, (iii) ambulance services expenditure and (iv) administration expenditure. [223745]

Mr. Hutton: It is not possible to break down the figures given in the earlier answers into the categories requested as the accounts of primary care trusts and health authorities do not include this analysis.

NICE Guidance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on its draft guidance which does not recommend Aricept, Exelon and Reminyl for treatment of Alzheimer's disease. [222812]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has corrected press misrepresentation and informed the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) that it would be responding to NICE's draft consultation document. The position was restated in a recent debate in Westminster Hall, *Official Report*, columns 93–101WH, which outlined a number of points the Government later made in their response. A copy of the response is available in the Library and on the Department's website.

Nottinghamshire Drug Action Team

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what qualifications are required of members of the clinically-led Direct Access Management Team for drug treatment established by Nottinghamshire Drug Action Team for the management of general practitioners; and what criteria his Department uses in reaching decisions on funding the clinical management of primary care. [223072]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The qualifications required for any clinically-led service are specifically addressed in 'Models of Care', the national framework document for the treatment of adult drug misusers, which was published by the National Treatment Agency (NTA) in 2002. Models of Care (NTA, 2002) clearly states that

> "A professional should only assess a drug or alcohol misuser or a particular need if they have the required level of competence to do so. Where medical intervention is required for substitute prescribing, an appropriately trained doctor must assess the substance misuser".

All central funds have been placed into one budget, the drug pooled treatment budget (PTB). In addition to this, approximately £200 million of mainstream local expenditure is spent on drug treatment. Drug action teams (DATs) are responsible for assessing local need and then commissioning services accordingly, using the drug pooled treatment budget and other mainstream funds. There are no central funds or grants available for individual projects.

Allocations to local DATs from the PTB are made on a formula basis that recognises key deprivation factors, ensuring the money goes to the areas most in need. Year-on-year increases in PTB funding will see the budgets of every drug action team increase by approximately 55 per cent. by 2008.

Nurses

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses were employed in the NHS in each year since 1997. [223483]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services (HCHS): Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff employed in the national health service as at 30 September each year

	Headcount	Number Whole-time equivalents
1997	318,856	256,093
1998	323,457	257,597
1999	329,637	261,340
2000	335,952	266,987
2001	350,381	277,334
2002	367,520	291,285
2003	386,359	304,892

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to continue the funding of the bursaries for nurses returning to work in the NHS. [221196]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* From 1 April 2004, responsibility for funding the bursaries for nurses returning to work in the national health service has been devolved to primary care trusts. (PCTs). This gives PCTs the flexibility to determine the appropriate investment for return to practice, working in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders. Furthermore, we are allocating historic levels of funding to PCTs to ensure the NHS secures the workforce necessary to deliver improved services. For the three-year revenue allocations to cover 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06, PCTs received an average cash increase of 9.22 per cent., 9.55 per cent. and 9.32 per cent. This is an average over the three years of 30.83 per cent. For the recent round of allocations to cover 2006–07 and 2007–08, PCTs received average cash increases of 9.2 per cent. and 9.4 per cent. This is an average over the two years of 19.5 per cent.

Occupational Code Definitions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the reclassification of NHS occupational code definitions for managers at Watford general hospital; and if he will list other *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* NHS hospital trusts where the same reclassification has taken place. [223043]

Dr. Ladyman: The non-medical workforce census is an annual census, which collects all non-medical staff directly employed by the national health service as at 30 September each year. Data are collected at NHS trust and primary care trust level in England.

The census includes the number of administrative managers and senior managers employed in the NHS. These and other staff are classified using a three-digit occupation code, using guidance contained in the occupation code manual.

In order to provide accurate information, organisations periodically review the codes assigned to their staff. West Hertfordshire NHS Trust, which includes Watford general hospital, conducted reviews in 2001 and 2002. While the census can identify where year-on-year changes have been made, we cannot accurately identify all the changes that are due to reclassification rather than staff movements.

Organ Donation

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is his Department's policy to permit live donors to donate their organs to recipients who are not known to them. [222814]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Human Tissue Act, passed in November 2004, prevents the live donation of organs other than in accordance with regulations to be made by the Secretary of State. It is intended that regulations allow donation to persons unknown to the donor, subject to the scrutiny and approval by the Human Tissue Authority (HTA). It will be a matter for the HTA to prepare guidance on the necessary procedures to be followed. These regulations and guidance will be subject to consultation and parliamentary scrutiny.

Osteopathy

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether osteopathy is available on the national health service; and whether a charge is made. [223230]

Mr. Hutton: It is for primary care trusts (PCTs) to commission services in order to meet the needs of their local population, taking into account evidence for the safety and effectiveness of the treatment, and the availability of properly qualified and regulated practitioners. The profession of osteopathy is regulated by the General Osteopathic Council. Information on the detail of services commissioned by PCTs is not centrally collected.

Patient Throughput

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how he measures patient throughput in hospitals; and what the level of patient throughput has been in each year since 1991, broken down as in Table 3.9.2 of the Department's response to the Health Select Committee's 2004 public expenditure questionnaire. [222811]

Mr. Hutton: The data requested are shown in the table. Throughput is calculated as the number of finished consultant episodes divided by the number of available beds.

Patient throughput: 1990–91 to 2003–04

	All specialties (excluding day only)	General and acute	Acute	Geriatric
1990–91	28	36	46	10
1991–92	30	39	49	12
1992–93	32	41	50	13
1993–94	34	43	53	15
1994–95	36	44	53	15
1995–96	38	47	56	17
1996–97	40	48	57	18
1997–98	42	51	60	18
1998–99	43	52	61	19
1999–2000	44	53	61	19
2000–01	45	53	62	19
2001–02	45	53	62	19
2002–03	47	55	64	20
2003–04	50	58	67	21

	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1990–91	4	2	60	n/a
1991–92	4	3	64	n/a
1992–93	5	3	67	n/a

	Mental illness	Learning disability	Maternity	Day only
1993–94	5	3	72	n/a
1994–95	6	4	79	n/a
1995–96	6	4	81	n/a
1996–97	6	6	82	n/a
1997–98	6	7	72	n/a
1998–99	6	7	79	n/a
1999–2000	7	6	82	n/a
2000–01	6	6	88	n/a
2001–02	6	7	85	n/a
2002–03	6	7	92	n/a
2003–04	6	6	100	n/a

Personal Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the total number of people means-tested for their personal care in January 2004 *(a)* who are now receiving free NHS continuing care and *(b)* who will receive free NHS continuing care in each of the next five years. [223253]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not collect the necessary data on which to base an estimate.

PFI Projects

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total projected cost is of private finance initiative projects which have reached Strategic Outline Case or beyond. [223569]

Mr. Hutton: Detailed information on the projected cost of private finance initiative health contracts signed to date has been placed in the Library. This information is only held centrally for projects with a capital value of £10 million or greater.

It is not possible to include details of the unitary payments for schemes yet to reach financial close as they are not finalised and are commercially sensitive.

Pharmaceutical Products

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of existing arrangements for product recall following the discovery of counterfeit pharmaceutical products in the supply chain. [223804]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Counterfeit medicines are classified as defective medicines and as such subjected to the existing arrangements for conducting and notifying product recalls.

The existing arrangements for product recalls are used on a regular basis for recalls and product safety notifications. In 2004, two suspected counterfeit products in the supply chain were recalled using the existing arrangements which operated effectively.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with representatives of parallel importers of pharmaceutical products on how repackaging carried out by them may impact on the ability to recall products. [223805]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Site inspections of parallel importers are regularly conducted by good manufacturing practice inspectors to ensure they have adequate systems for repacking medicines. Site inspections examine batch records, traceability and recall systems.

If a site has not recently been involved in a recall, the inspector may ask the site to carry out a dummy recall to ensure suitable systems are available, in accordance with the European Commission's guide to good manufacturing practice.

Pharmacies (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pharmacies there have been in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [223650]

Dr. Ladyman: Information about the number of community pharmacies by constituency is not collected centrally. However, data are available and published by primary care trust (PCT). Leicester, South is served by Leicester City West PCT and Eastern Leicester PCT.

Information prior to 2002 is available by health authority (HA). Leicester, South sat within Leicestershire HA. Table 1 shows the number of community pharmacies by HA, table 2 by PCT.

Table 1: Number of community pharmacies by HA: 1997–98 to 2001–02

	Leicestershire HA
1997–98	193
1998–99	193
1999–2000	190
2000–01	190
2001–02	190

Table 2: Number of community pharmacies by PCT: 2002–03 to 2003–04

	Leicester City West PCT	Eastern Leicester PCT
2002–03	23	52
2003–04	23	52

Source:
Information is collected for PCTs via the annual PHS1 data collection. The latest published data available on general pharmaceutical services in England and Wales (1993–94 to 2003–04) were published in January 2005.
See: www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/so0505htm.

Procurement

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his assessment is of the progress to date of the Procure 21 procurement process. [223131]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service "ProCure21" programme was set up by the Department to drive forward Government policy as set out in "Achieving Excellence in Construction (1999)". Through "ProCure21", the NHS is delivering facilities:

Through constructive partnering relationships between the public and private sectors.

Within budget.

Which are delivered on time.

Which incorporate best design.

Which achieve value for money.

The programme was rolled out nationally in September 2003. Progress to date is shown in the table.

"ProCure21" schemes

	Number	*Value*
Schemes registered	238	£2.4 billion
Schemes on site	49	£475 million
Schemes completed	26	£90 million

The National Audit Office report, "Improving Public Services through better construction", was published on 15 March 2005. Sir John Bourn concluded that there has been considerable improvement in completing projects to time and cost and that real savings were being delivered by those Departments which had adopted partnering and collaborative approaches to construction. NHS "ProCure21" was highlighted as a model of best practice.

Renal Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many paediatric patients have received renal replacement therapy for kidney failure in each year since 1997. [222800]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Latest figures are from the UK Renal Survey for 2002, which shows there were 710 patients receiving renal replacement therapy for kidney failure from paediatric services in England. Comparable historical data are not available. However, the British Association for Paediatric Nephrology report that in the United Kingdom there were 508 patients under 15 years old in 1999, 516 in 2001 and 534 in 2002.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people aged *(a)* under 26 years, *(b)* 26–50 years, *(c)* 51–60 years, *(d)* 61–70 years and *(e)* 71 years and over have received kidney dialysis in each year since 1997. [222801]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data from the last two national surveys of renal services commissioned by the Department show that in 2002 there were 16,394 adults receiving kidney dialysis in England compared with 13,405 in 1998. Detailed and specific information on people receiving kidney dialysis broken down into age groups is not yet available. However, the 2002 survey showed that 27 per cent. of adult patients on renal replacement therapy (dialysis and transplantation) were aged 18–44, 39 per cent. were aged 45–64 and 34 per cent. were aged 65 or older. The survey also shows that half of all new patients are over 65 years when they start renal replacement therapy.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what central capital funding is being made available to support the expansion of kidney dialysis services; [222802]

(2) how many *(a)* main renal units and *(b)* satellite renal units for dialysis there are in England; how many of these have been established since 1997; and what steps he is taking to improve patient access to renal services. [222817]

Ms Rosie Winterton: £60 million has been made available in the period 2000–01 to 2005–06 for capital investment to support the expansion of renal dialysis services. Data from the last two national surveys of renal services commissioned by the Department show that in 1998 there were 52 main renal units in England and 73 satellite units. In 2002, there were 52 main renal units, and the number of satellite units had risen to 101. This does not reflect the full increase in capacity, as additional facilities were also put into existing units; the total number of haemodialysis stations in England rose from 1,890 in 1998 to 2,582 in 2002. Satellite units can be sited to make services available closer to where people live.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the Healthcare Commission on how it intends to audit the implementation of the quality requirements contained within the National Service Framework for Renal Services. [222803]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is the role of the independent Healthcare Commission to review the provision of health care, including renal services, using criteria that they develop and that the Secretary of State approves. The commission has recently completed a public consultation on their approach to the assessment of health care, and will publish their new approach shortly. In addition, the commission has responsibility for development of the national clinical audit programme, and the development of national clinical audit around renal services fits within that programme of work.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many kidney transplant surgeons there have been in the NHS in each year since 1997. [222815]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of kidney transplant surgeons is not collected centrally.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are waiting for a kidney transplant; and what estimate he has made of the number of patients who have died while waiting for a kidney transplant in each of the last five years. [222816]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the tables.

1: Patients currently[1] registered for a kidney transplant, United Kingdom

Status	*Kidney*	*Kidney/pancreas*	*Total*
Active	5,356	96	5,452
Suspended	1,448	30	1,478
Total	6,804	126	6,930

[1] As at 13 March 2005

2: Patients dying while registered (active or suspended) for a kidney transplant in the UK, 2000 to 2004

	Total
2000	295
2001	230
2002	270
2003	269
2004	259

Note:

These figures may change slightly (especially 2004) as new data is reported

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many kidney transplants have been carried out by the NHS in each year since 1997. [222818]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of kidney transplants carried out by the national health service in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Kidney transplants in the UK, 1997–2004

Transplant type	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*Number 2004*
Deceased donor kidney	1,481	1,326	1,297	1,309	1,333	1,286	1,246	1,358
Kidney with other organs[1]	33	39	43	38	52	64	51	84
Living donor kidney	179	252	270	348	358	372	451	463
Total	1,693	1,617	1,610	1,695	1,743	1,722	1,748	1,905

[1] Primarily with pancreas.

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list items of equipment at the Royal Shrewsbury hospital which have *(a)* broken down and *(b)* required repair since 2001. [223334]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Social Care Work Force

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance is offered to *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector service providers on the inclusion of knowledge and skills in relation to nutrition and malnutrition in the core training of the social care work force at bands two and three of agenda for change. [223963]

Mr. Hutton: It is the responsibility of social care service providers to ensure that they employ suitably qualified, competent and experienced staff. National occupational standards set out the skills, knowledge and values required and are used as benchmarks for national vocational qualifications. Joint health and social care national occupational standards contain specific standards on meeting nutritional needs.

Rheumatology

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets he has set for waiting times between referral by general practitioner and appointment with consultant rheumatologist for *(a)* adults and *(b)* children. [223629]

Mr. Hutton: By the end of 2005, no patient should have to wait more than 13 weeks from general practitioner (GP) referral for a first out-patient appointment with any consultant. This includes consultant rheumatologists. By the end of 2008, the maximum wait will be just 18 weeks from GP referral to the start of treatment. These targets apply regardless of age.

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the number of general practitioner consultations for *(a)* inflammatory arthritis, *(b)* osteoarthritis and *(c)* psoriatic arthritis in the last year for which figures are available. [223630]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not available centrally.

Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor drugs are approved by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence for use by children; [222038]

(2) what advice has been issued by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency about the use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors by children. [222039]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has not made any recommendations on the use of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) in children.

Based on the work of its expert working group on the safety of SSRIs, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) issued advice on the use of SSRIs in the paediatric population in June, September and December 2003. That advice was that the balance of risks and benefits for the treatment of depressive illness in under 18s is judged to be unfavourable for paroxetine (Seroxat), venlafaxine (Efexor), sertraline (Lustral), citalopram (Cipramil), escitalopram (Cipralex) and mirtazapine (Zispin). It is not possible to assess the balance of risks and benefits for fluvoxamine (Faverin,) due to the absence of paediatric clinical trial data. Only fluoxetine (Prozac) has been shown in clinical trials to be effective in treating depressive illness in children and adolescents, although it is possible that, in common with the other SSRIs, it is associated with a small increased risk of self-harm and suicidal thoughts. Overall, the balance of risks and benefits for fluoxetine in the treatment of depressive illness in under 18s is judged to be favourable.

South West London and St. George's NHS Trust

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding he allocated to the South West London and St. George's NHS Trust for *(a)* Agenda for Change and *(b)* the new consultant contract; and what the trust's estimate is of the actual cost. [223552]

Dr. Ladyman: A total of £7.077 million of central funding was allocated to South West London and St. George's Mental Health National Health Service Trust in relation to the period up to 1 October 2004 when they were an Agenda for Change early implementer site.

Across England we have allocated £426 million in 2004–05 and £937 million in 2005–06 to primary care trusts (PCTs) as part of main allocations to meet the costs of implementing Agenda for Change. This is in

addition to the costs of the general pay uplift of around 10 per cent. over three years agreed as part of the Agenda for Change package.

Funding for the consultant contract, agreed with the British Medical Association during negotiations, was allocated to PCTs in December 2002 as part of main allocations. The amount that went in main allocations was 0.3 per cent. (£129 million) in 2003–04, 0.4 per cent. (£178 million) in 2004–05 and 0.5 per cent. (£224 million) in 2005–06.

We do not hold complete cost estimates by individual trusts of implementing Agenda for Change or the new consultants' contract.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what specialist services provided by the South West London and St. George's NHS Trust are due to be ended. [223553]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand that South West London and St. George's Mental Health National Health Service Trust is currently reviewing its specialist services.

The principles behind this work are to match local and national provision to levels of income from commissioners, to provide locally accessible services in the least restrictive environment for clients, and to investigate possible partnerships with other providers such as from the voluntary sector. The changes under consideration are aimed at further improving mental health services in South West London.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the managerial posts advertised for the South West London and St. George's NHS Trust in the last 12 months, broken down by salary range offered. [223554]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect data for manager vacancies only.

Strategic Health Authorities

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which strategic health authority in England has the largest deficit; and what that deficit is. [222868]

Mr. Hutton: In 2003–04, the latest year for which figures are available, no strategic health authority reported a deficit in its final accounts.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future of strategic health authorities. [224039]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to "Creating a Patient-led NHS, Delivering the NHS Improvement Plan", a copy of which is available from the Library. Chapters three and five of this document include information on the future role of strategic health authorities.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce inequalities in health outcomes by 10 per cent., as measured by infant mortality and life expectancy at birth will be met by 2010. [219242]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Our most recent assessment shows that despite overall improvements in the health of the population, there is a continuing, if slight, widening of health gap on infant mortality and life expectancy. This assessment is based on data up to 2003, the date the national health inequalities strategy, the "Programme for Action", was published. The first challenge set out in the strategy was to stop the health gap from widening further.

We will be publishing by the summer a first report of progress against the national strategy and 2010 public service agreement target, in line with the commitment in the "Programme for Action". This report summarises developments against the target and the main headline indicators and provides a baseline against which to measure future action.

Telephone Numbers

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer by the Minister of State for Health, 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1090W, on telephone numbers, if he will make a further statement on the use of national or premium rate numbers by national health service organisations. [220791]

Mr. Hutton: Regulations have been made which will ban the use of national and premium rate telephone numbers for general practitioner practices. Directions will also be made which cover primary care trusts and national health service trusts.

Traditional Herb Medicines Products Directive

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the impact of the proposed traditional herb medicines products directive on the registration of treatments for head lice. [223864]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 25 products licensed under medicines legislation for the treatment of head lice in the United Kingdom. All of these are either restricted to pharmacy sale or supply by a prescription from a doctor. These products will remain unaffected by the implementation of the directive on traditional herbal medicinal products (2004/24/EC).

There may be other products used in the treatment of head lice, which currently reach the market as unlicensed herbal remedies. These will potentially qualify to be registered under Directive 2004/24/EC when it is implemented on 30 October this year. To qualify for registration, products will have to demonstrate that they comply with the required evidence of traditional usage and that they meet the required standards of safety and quality.

Products registered under Directive 2004/24/EC will have indications exclusively appropriate to traditional herbal medicinal products, which due to their

composition and purpose are intended and designed for use without the supervision of a medical practitioner for diagnostic purposes or for the prescription or monitoring of treatment. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) anticipates that the majority of products registered under this directive will be suitable for general sale list status.

Uniforms

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he has given *(a)* hospitals and *(b)* other health facilities on (i) the wearing of staff uniforms outside those facilities, (ii) staff access to spare uniforms and (iii) the provision of laundry facilities. [224040]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has not issued guidance on the wearing or availability of uniforms in the healthcare environment.

It is for individual national health service trusts to determine their own policies on the wearing of uniforms away from the workplace. It is for the trust chief executive to ensure that nurses have enough suitable clothing and equipment to carry out their duties effectively.

Health Service Guidance 95(18), published in 1995, provides advice and guidance to NHS organisations on laundry practices. The prevention and control of infection is part of the overall risk management within the healthcare environment and NHS trusts are required to have risk management protocols in place.

Waiting Times

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting time to see *(a)* an audiologist and *(b)* an ear, nose and throat specialist is in the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust area. [222702]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows the average waiting time to see an ear nose and throat specialist in the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT) area. Information is not collected centrally on waiting times for audiology.

Average waiting time to see an ear, nose and throat specialist (specialty: 120—ENT) relating to Fareham and Gosport PCT area

	2004–05		
	Quarter 1	*Quarter 2*	*Quarter 3*
Seen 0 to <4	140	143	219
Seen 4 to <13	336	344	334
Seen 13 to <17	23	20	17
Seen 17 to <21	1	1	1
Seen 21 plus	—	0	0
Average (weeks)	6.96	6.92	5.81

Note:
Figures shown are the median wait.

Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the accumulated deficit is of the Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust; what measures are being taken to reduce the deficit; and by when the Trust is required *(a)* to bring its budget into balance and *(b)* to eliminate the deficit. [223725]

Dr. Ladyman: The accumulated financial deficit for Worcestershire Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust at 31 March 2004 was £25.1 million. West Midlands South strategic health authority (SHA) has provided planned financial support in the current year (2004–05) of £5 million.

A comprehensive financial recovery plan has been developed involving all of the organisations within the Worcestershire health economy. Work on this recovery plan is continuing, with expenditure, efficiency and service effectiveness under review. The financial year 2005–06 is the final year of this plan. The SHA continues to work with the Trust to ensure that it achieves financial balance on a year-by-year basis.

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Tuesday 29 March and Friday 1 April 2005

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Engineering Apprenticeships (West Midlands)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people *(a)* entered into and *(b)* completed engineering apprenticeships in the West Midlands region in each year since 1997. [218985]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, has written to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and a copy of his reply has been placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom to Mr. Peter Luff, dated 18 March 2005:

I am writing in response to your parliamentary question, relating to engineering apprenticeships in the West Midlands region.

I enclose a table setting out the number of starts and achievements on engineering apprenticeships in the region from 1997–98 to 2003/04. Note that information for the period before the creation of the LSC has been provided by DfES, and may not be completely consistent with more recent figures.

If you have any queries, please contact Stephen Lilley, Regional Skills Director for the West Midlands, on 0121 345 4644.

Engineering apprenticeship starts in the West Midlands region 1997–98 to 2003–04. Pre-LSC figures measured in terms of financial years (April to March)

	Starts	
	Advanced apprenticeships	*Apprenticeships at level 2*
1997–98	1,000	n/a
1998–99	900	500
1999–2000	800	600
2000–01	700	500

LSC—figures measured in terms of academic years (August to July)

	Starts		Framework achievements	
	Advanced apprenticeships	*Apprenticeships at level 2*	*Advanced apprenticeships*	*Apprenticeships at level 2*
April to July 2001	28	271	13	26
2001/02	249	1,224	169	197
2002/03	250	1,228	121	116
2003/04	244	1,247	106	279

	NVQ only achievements		Total leavers	
	Advanced apprenticeships	*Apprenticeships at level 2*	*Advanced apprenticeships*	*Apprenticeships at level 2*
April to July 2001	25	12	134	193
2001/02	84	120	532	888
2002/03	61	164	320	722
2003/04	71	109	276	968

Notes on methodology:

1. Learner numbers pre-2001 are taken by DfES from TEC management information. TEC MI is aggregagated data and does not contain information on sector. Individual learner data held on the trainee database contains information on sector, but we know the database did not accurately record the total number of learners. For each year, the percentage of learners studying engineering apprenticeships in the West Midlands from the trainee database has been applied to the total number of learners in the West Midlands from the TEC MI to estimate the volume of learners studying engineering apprenticeships in the West Midlands. The number of achievements was not collected prior to 2001.
2. Learner numbers and achievements from 2001 onwards are taken from the individualised learned record (ILR) collected by the LSC. Figures include all apprenticeships in the engineering area of learning.
3. Definitions of 'engineering' pre- and post-2001 may not be directly comparable.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Service Pensions

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will meet representatives of the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance. [223165]

Mr. Miliband: Should the Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance write to me requesting a meeting, I would consider their request.

Civil Service Training

Llew Smith: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what changes in civil servant training *(a)* at the Civil Service Training College and *(b)* in service are planned to be implemented to ensure delivery of the commitment contained in the Sustainability Strategy to strengthen civil service leadership capacity with better training in sustainable development. [224011]

Mr. Miliband: Centre for Management and Policy Studies (CMPS), the Government's centre for learning and development, has run short programmes on sustainable development for civil servants for some years with a largely estates management and procurement focus.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

In autumn 2004, as part of a broader partnership in the sustainability area, CMPS and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) co-designed two one day pilot workshops for senior civil servants which took a strategic and practical view of sustainable development. Parts of the workshop were delivered by Jonathon Porritt, chair of the Sustainable Development Commission, senior Defra officials and Forum for the Future. Jonathon Porritt also spoke recently on the Top Management Programme and sustainable development will be given dedicated coverage on all future runs of the Top Management Programme. Two further workshops for senior civil servants are planned for June and November 2005, and more will be offered if there is demand.

CMPS is currently developing an internal project to integrate sustainable development thinking and practice into a wide range of programmes and will be giving much greater emphasis to sustainable development in professional and policy skills and leadership development programmes. More programmes will be developed which directly address sustainability issues and links are being made to emerging areas of work such as the Egan Skills for Sustainable Communities Review.

Information on sustainability training in individual civil service departments is not held centrally.

Parliamentary Questions

Llew Smith: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether his Department has issued guidance to Government Departments on responding to parliamentary questions recommending that in cases where an answer would incur a disproportionate cost, efforts should be made when appropriate to provide an answer to part or parts of the question. [223933]

Mr. Miliband: The Cabinet Office's "Guidance to Officials on Drafting Answers to Parliamentary Questions", copies of which are available in the Library, advises officials that

> "where information is being refused on the grounds of disproportionate cost, there should be a presumption that any of the requested information which is readily available should be provided".

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many accidents occurred at her departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of her Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222564]

Alun Michael: The following figures reflect accidents, incidents, and work-related ill health occurring on Defra premises since Defra was formed in 2001. *(a)* shows the figures for core-departmental staff and *(b)* shows the figures for members of the public.

The figures given are in calendar years, and are for the core Department only.

	(a) core-departmental staff	*(b) members of the public*
2001	261	0
2002	213	0
2003	283	0
2004	208	1

Avian Flu

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the evidential basis was for the distances chosen for protective and surveillance zones under the strategy to fight avian influenza. [222980]

Mr. Bradshaw: The sizes for both the protection zone (a minimum of 3 km radius from an infected premises) and the surveillance zone (from the edge of the protection zone to a minimum of 10 km radius from an infected premises) have been set in European legislation for avian influenza since 1992. These minima are common for other non-vector borne exotic notifiable diseases and will be extended if the epidemiological investigation into a disease outbreak suggests that a larger area needs to be subject to disease control measures.

Circuses

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the local authorities in England which ban circuses with performing animals. [223458]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department does not hold information on which local authorities have refused to allow circuses to perform with animals. Such a decision is up to individual local authorities and is in relation to council owned, not private, sites.

Environmentally Friendly Farms

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her Department's strategy is for encouraging farmers to make their farms more environmentally friendly. [222616]

Alun Michael: The Government are acutely aware of the link between agriculture and the environment and agreed the role of farmers as custodians of the countryside to be basic. The strategy for sustainable farming and food was launched in England in 2002 and sets out the basis for a new relationship between Government and the farming industry in England. At its heart is a drive to enable farmers to focus on their market, rather than on subsidies, while managing their businesses in more environmentally and socially responsible ways.

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform deal of 2003 is central to the strategy. Farmers are now encouraged to meet the demands of the market, and there is no incentive to over-produce, because the link between subsidies and production has been broken. This will benefit society as a whole by reducing the negative environmental and animal welfare impacts of intensive farming.

The cross compliance element of the CAP single payment scheme provides a new basis for agricultural subsidies, by linking them to delivery of important environmental and animal health and welfare standards. This will contribute to a number of strategy objectives by protecting soils, wildlife habitats and the landscape.

Further to this is the launch of environmental stewardship this spring which builds on cross compliance and replaces existing agri-environment schemes (environmentally sensitive areas, countryside stewardship and organic farming schemes). The aim of environmental stewardship will be to tackle countrywide environmental problems such as diffuse pollution, loss of biodiversity and landscape character, and damage to the historic environment. For the first time every farmer in England will be eligible to earn payments for undertaking environmental management on the land.

Environmental stewardship has three elements:

(i) Entry Level

A whole farm scheme open to all farmers and land managers who agree to carry out basic environmental management. Farmers will be able to earn up to 30 per hectare annually for delivering straightforward, yet effective, work.

(ii) Organic Entry Level

A similar whole farm scheme, which offers organic management options to farmers with land registered as fully organic or in conversion to organic farming, with an organic inspection body approved by Defra. It provides payments of up to 60 per hectare annually for land entered into the scheme.

(iii) Higher Level

Rewards more ambitious environmental management.

Together with the new CAP single payment scheme and cross-compliance, the new scheme will mark a watershed in the way England is farmed, and will continue to improve and build on the successes achieved through almost two decades of experience with the countryside stewardship, environmentally sensitive areas and organic farming schemes. There are a number of wide-ranging objectives, which go beyond those of the earlier schemes and include the protection of water and soil and flood management.

The Department is also committed to encouraging greater production of organic food, and has set out its strategy for achieving this in the action plan to develop organic food and farming in England, published in July 2002, and the Two Years On report, published in August last year.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to public funds of subsidising the collection of one *(a)* beef carcass, *(b)* sheep carcass and *(c)* horse carcass in each county of England in the 2004–05 financial year. [223836]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The information is not available in the form requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However, the latest total figures for the Government contribution to collection costs under the National Fallen Stock Scheme for the UK as a whole from 22 November 2004 to date is as follows: *(a)* bovine carcases £162,094; *(b)* sheep carcases £198,929; *(c)* horse carcases £0 (horses are not eligible for support under the scheme).

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the lowest charge quoted to the National Fallen Stock Company is for the collection of a *(a)* beef, *(b)* sheep and *(c)* horse carcase in each county of England. [223837]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The information is not available in the form requested and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Information on prices charged by fallen stock collectors in particular areas are provided on an individual postcode basis to farmers and horse owners who join the National Fallen Stock Scheme. This is not only on the basis of the species but different categories within species (e.g. bovines 6–12 months, 12–24 months etc.).

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evidence she has collated of the pollution of *(a)* watercourses and *(b)* groundwater by on-farm burials of fallen stock in each year since 1999. [223838]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* None. However, the Environment Agency is often involved with carcases found in or near to watercourses and it has no direct evidence to show that on-farm burial in the past has caused reportable pollution problems.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what records she has kept of trends in the costs of *(a)* incineration and *(b)* rendering of fallen stock in each year since 1999; and if she will make a statement on the cost of disposal of (i) beef, (ii) sheep and (iii) horse carcasses. [223839]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The Department does not keep records of trends in costs of incineration and rendering of fallen stock. This is a commercial matter for the fallen stock disposal industry. The Government contribution to the National Fallen Stock Scheme has assisted farmers, but not horse owners, who have joined the Scheme with the costs of collection and disposal of fallen stock since November 2004.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the effect of changes in the over-30-month scheme on *(a)* demand for incineration capacity between March 2005 and March 2007 and *(b)* the cost of incineration of (i) beef, (ii) sheep and (iii) horse carcases. [223840]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* My officials met with representatives of the disposal industry in January 2005 to discuss the likely effects of the forthcoming OTM rule change. Views on the impact of the rule change on all sectors are also being sought as part of the process of the respective Defra and FSA consultations on changes to the domestic TSE Regulations.

Farm Gate Prices

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to meet farmers and supermarkets to discuss farm gate prices. [222285]

Alun Michael: While we recognise the problems that low farm gate prices have caused, the prices at which farmers sell their produce is a commercial matter in which the Government should not get involved. However, Ministers frequently meet representatives from all parts of the supply chain and are aware of the issues.

Farm Subsidies

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average compensation payments paid in each region of England and Wales were in each month from February to October 2001 for *(a)* sheep and *(b)* cattle. [221328]

Alun Michael: The question does not specify which scheme of compensation payments is referred to, but I assume that this request refers to foot and mouth compensation payments.

I have placed in the Library a table that shows the average amount of compensation for both sheep and cattle for each region within both England and Wales. The table only includes those months where compensation was paid, and the amounts shown are rounded to the nearest pound.

I am providing the information on a county basis since that is how figures have been recorded and it would be difficult to produce regional averages without considerable work to aggregate the base information.

Farmers (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farmers there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223152]

Alun Michael: The following figures show the number of farmers, partners, directors and spouses on holdings in the Shrewsbury and Atcham local authority area.

	Number of farmers, partners, directors and spouses (full and part time) working on the holding	*Number of holdings with farmers, partners, directors and spouses*
1997	1,275	702
1998	1,281	689
1999	1,267	691
2000	1,380	790
2001	1,466	818
2002	1,388	837
2003	1,343	785
2004	1,378	776

Notes:
1. Figures prior to 2000 show main holdings only. From 2000 minor holdings are included. A holding is defined as a minor if it meets all of the following conditions:
the total area is less than 6 hectares
the labour requirement is estimated to be less than 100 standard person-days
there is no regular full-time farmer or worker
the glasshouse area is less than 100 sq m
the occupier does not farm another holding.
2. Due to the introduction of new questions in 1998 figures prior to this year are not directly comparable with earlier years' results.
3. Due to a register improvement exercise in 2001 labour figures prior to this are not directly comparable with later results.
Source:
June Agricultural Census

Food Miles

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has commissioned on methods of reducing food miles. [222987]

Alun Michael: The Government are working with the industry on practical measures to reduce food miles in a way which is sustainable. The industry, particularly food retailers, has a crucial role to play in helping to reduce food miles. There are encouraging signs, notably in development of logistics planning and preparation of advice, but more could be done. Defra has commissioned research that is due to report this spring, analysing available data and making recommendations for indicators for measuring improvement.

Foot and Mouth

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many previously paid invoices for *(a)* direct compensation and *(b)* associated activities connected with the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth disease are being re-investigated. [221943]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to pages 6, 35, 36 and 37 of the National Audit Office Report "Foot and Mouth Disease: Applying the Lessons—Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General HC184 Session 2004–2005 2 February 2005".

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many ongoing claims and invoices for work connected with the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak have not been settled by her Department. [221944]

Mr. Bradshaw: I refer the hon. Member to pages 36 and 37 of the National Audit Office Report "Foot and Mouth Disease: Applying the Lessons—Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General HC184 Session 2004–2005 2 February 2005".

Home Energy Efficiency Schemes

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Leicester South constituency have benefited from the *(a)* home energy efficiency and *(b)* warm front schemes. [222901]

Mr. Morley: Between the start of the warm front scheme in June 2000 and the end of February 2005, approximately 2,950 households were assisted in Leicester South.

Under the previous home energy efficiency scheme information was collected by local authority rather than parliamentary constituency. Between April 1991 and

May 2000 the number of households assisted by the scheme in the Leicester city council area were:

	Number of households assisted
1991–92	1,280
1992–93	1,350
1993–94	1,850
1994–95	1,950
1995–96	5,100
1996–97	2,770
1997–98	3,200
1998–99	2,960
1999–2000	3,110

Multiple Retailers

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with multiple retailers regarding their commercial treatment of primary producers; and if she will make a statement. [223235]

Alun Michael: No meetings have been held with multiple retailers specifically to discuss their treatment of primary producers, though the subject will have arisen in the course of the Department's ongoing contacts with multiple retailers and other representatives of the food retail industry.

The Department considers that it is in the long term interests of all buyers within the food chain to deal with their suppliers in a fair and straightforward way.

Public Bodies

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* Departments, *(b)* agencies and *(c)* public bodies she expects will be affected by the proposed merger of English Nature, the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency. [223529]

Alun Michael: English Nature and the Countryside Agency are both statutory non-departmental public bodies. The Rural Development Service is part of core Defra. The new statutory non-departmental public body announced in the Rural Strategy 2004 will comprise all of English Nature, the landscape, access and recreation elements of the Countryside Agency and the environmental land management functions of the Rural Development Service. No other Departments, agencies or public bodies will be involved in the merger.

In the Rural Strategy my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, also announced that the advocacy and advice role of the Countryside Agency would be refocused on a small expert body providing advice to government and advocacy on behalf of rural people. The establishment of the Commission for Rural Communities, initially within the legal framework of the Countryside Agency, but in due course as a statutory NDPB in its own right, was announced on 9 March. The socio-economic funding currently disbursed by the Countryside Agency is being devolved to the regional development agencies, together with control of the EU social and economic schemes of the England Rural Development Programme currently administered by the Rural Development Service while funding for Rural Community Councils will be continued, along with help for the rural voluntary and community sector, via Government offices.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the number of jobs which will be lost in the Grantham and Stamford constituency following the proposed merger of English Nature, the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency. [223530]

Alun Michael: English Nature currently has an office in Grantham. Work is currently being undertaken on the structure, precise numbers of staff, and the potential future locations of offices of the new agency. As decisions have yet to be taken, it is not yet possible to know whether there will be an impact on jobs in the hon. Member's constituency.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the merger of English Nature, the Rural Development Service and the Countryside Agency on *(a)* the services they provide and *(b)* the general public. [223545]

Alun Michael: The rural strategy set out the benefits of creating a new agency to champion integrated natural resource management, nature conservation, biodiversity, landscape, access and recreation. These were:

a stronger, unified voice at regional and local level;

a stronger, more coherent evidence-base for informing policy and influencing land managers;

increased opportunities for everyone to understand, enjoy and benefit from the natural environment;

a more flexible integrated, sustainable approach to management of the natural environment.

coherent promotion of the wider social benefits of the environment across rural, urban, urban fringe and coastal areas;

better opportunities to promote and exploit the part that a high quality environment plays in delivering social and economic benefit;

a clearer framework for resolving potentially conflicting objectives between conservation and the use and enjoyment of our natural environment;

more effective and simpler relationships with land managers, through the development of a single 'shop window' for customers for environmental schemes and advice; and

efficiency savings through shared corporate services and operational synergies.

Further work is currently under way to ensure that the impact of these changes can be measured against an agreed baseline.

The new agency will be accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for the exercise of its functions. Its annual report and accounts will be laid before Parliament and its performance will be monitored by Ministers as part of the corporate planning and reporting cycles.

Wrecked Vehicles

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will investigate the restoration on private land of the vehicle to which Early Day Motion 953, tabled by the hon. Member

for Pendle, refers; and if she will bring forward proposals to amend the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill to bring within its scope wrecked vehicles deposited on private land by their owners. [223796]

Alun Michael: I am not able to comment on the particular case cited. However, I believe the existing law on abandoned vehicles, with the amendments contained in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill, is adequate. I do not think that these provisions should be used to remove vehicles from private land against the wishes of the occupier. The effect on the visual amenity of a neighbourhood of vehicles kept on private land is a matter for the planning authorities.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Counter-terrorism

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what input the Government will have to the European Council's contribution to *(a)* the G8 summit's discussions on counter-terrorism and *(b)* the G8's core principles on counter-terrorism; and if he will make a statement. [223791]

Mr. MacShane: The Chair of the European Council usually attends G8 Summits. As the UK assumes the presidency of the EU from 1 July, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister will also represent the European Council at the G8 Summit. We do not envisage formal co-ordination in the Council on the issue of counter-terrorism in the G8 ahead of the Summit. However, the UK, as G8 presidency, maintains a dialogue on G8 counter-terrorism work with EU partners.

European Funding

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list projects for which the Department has provided joint funding with the European Commission and other institutions of the European Union during the past five financial years; and what funding is planned for such projects in this financial year. [221375]

Mr. MacShane: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has worked together with various European institutions on a number of projects in the last five years.

In October 2003, the FCO and European Commission jointly organised the "Europe United" football tournament as part of the plans to celebrate EU enlargement. In early 2004 the FCO produced with Commission support booklets explaining the benefits of EU enlargement that were sent to the nine English regions and the devolved administrations. On 24 April 2004, there was 'Europe Day—Meet the Neighbours'—a jointly organised FCO-Commission project which celebrated EU enlargement.

The European Parliament funded jointly with the FCO a number of Wilton Park conferences: The European Union's Strategic Priorities (14–16 September 2000); Reforming the Governance of the European Union: Towards an ever closer EU? (22–24 October 2001); How Can Parliamentarians Best Re-Engage the Public? (9–12 June 2003); The Future of Europe: What kind of Institutional and Security arrangements do we want (September 2002). In addition, the European Parliament hired an Exhibition Space at the Europe Day.

The FCO and EU institutions also jointly fund a number of development projects aimed to assist accession states prior to their joining the European Union, under the 'Action Plans' scheme, which started in 1999 and the Global Opportunities Fund which started in 2003. The Global Opportunity Fund also has a broader focus beyond Europe. I will write to my hon. Friend with further details of joint funded projects under the Actions Plans the Global Opportunities Fund.

No jointly-funded projects are currently planned for this year, with the exception of the Action Plan and Global Opportunity Fund programmes.

Iran

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Iranian authorities to encourage them to co-operate with international human rights organisations. [223562]

Mr. Rammell: We have urged Iran on many occasions to co-operate with international human rights organisations. In December 2004, the UK and other EU countries co-sponsored a resolution at the United Nations General Assembly on human rights in Iran, which called on Iran to co-operate with UN mechanisms and respond fully to their subsequent recommendations. With our strong support, international NGOs take part in sessions of the EU-Iran human rights dialogue.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many times lawyers representing Saddam Hussein have met their client since 16 December 2004. [220818]

Mr. Rammell: Saddam Hussein is a criminal detainee and is liable to prosecution under the Iraqi criminal justice system. He was transferred into the Iraqi criminal justice system on 1 July 2004, and is currently awaiting trial. At the request of Prime Minster Allawi, the US will maintain physical custody of Saddam Hussein until such time as the Iraqi Correctional Service is able to provide for his safe and secure detention. The US authorities have told us that Saddam Hussein has seen his lawyer once since 16 December 2004. He has not requested to see his lawyer since that meeting.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many lawyers chosen by Saddam Hussein have been able to meet him in confidence, as required by international law, since his arrest. [220819]

Mr. Rammell: Saddam Hussein is a criminal detainee and is liable to prosecution under the Iraqi criminal justice system. He was transferred into the Iraqi criminal justice system on 1 July 2004, and is currently awaiting trial. At the request of Prime Minster Allawi, the US will maintain physical custody of Saddam Hussein until such time as the Iraqi Correctional Service is able to

provide for his safe and secure detention. The US authorities have told us that Saddam Hussein has seen his lawyer on each occasion that he has made a request. Thus far he has met one lawyer one time for several hours, in confidence. Neither he nor his lawyer of record have made any further requests to meet. Procedures are in place to allow him lawyer visits on request.

Lebanon

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the effects on the security situation in Lebanon of Syrian troops making a full withdrawal; and if he will make a statement. [223737]

Mr. Rammell: The withdrawal of Syrian troops to the Beka'a Valley and Syria is a first step in the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559. We welcome the steps that the Lebanese Government have taken to ensure a calm security situation, including at the large-scale peaceful rallies that have been taking place in Beirut. So far, the Lebanese security forces have shown themselves to be capable of filling the security role left by the departing Syrian troops.

We are concerned about the recent bomb explosions which killed three and injured five on 23 March, and injured eight on 19 March. We condemn all such attacks which seek to de-stabilise Lebanon.

Pakistan

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the request by the chairman of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission to the nuclear security conference in London that the nuclear suppliers group lift controls on the export of dual-use nuclear technology to Pakistan. [223748]

Mr. MacShane: Countering the proliferation of nuclear weapons technology is a key priority of the Government.

Given that Pakistan remains outside the Non Proliferation Treaty, and has placed very few nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, it is difficult for suppliers to be confident that transfers of dual-use nuclear technology will not contribute to a nuclear explosive activity. Any lifting of these controls would require amending the Nuclear Suppliers Group Guidelines, which would need the unanimous agreement of all 44 Participating Governments.

The UK's position on the export of Nuclear Dual Use items remains as set out by my hon. Friend the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Bradshaw) in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Edmonton (Mr. Love) on 15 March 2002, *Official Report*, columns 1298–1300W. It states, inter alia, that:

> "We will continue to deny all export licence applications (ELAs) for items listed on the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) Dual use list to nuclear and nuclear related end users in India and Pakistan".

Somalia

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment his Department has made of the political situation in Somalia; and if he will make a statement. [223644]

Mr. Rammell: We, together with international partners, support the progress Somalis are making to reintroduce effective government. We welcome the efforts that are being made to create the conditions necessary for the safe return of the Transitional Federal Institutions and to plan for bringing much needed stability to the country.

We were, however, concerned by the violent confrontation in the Transitional Federal Parliament at the end of the debate on deployment of foreign troops for a peace support mission in Somalia. We welcome efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union to find an acceptable formula for a peace support operation.

Telephone Numbers

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many non-geographic 0870 telephone numbers are in use by his Department; and what services can be accessed by calling each of them. [205829]

Mr. Rammell *[pursuant to the reply, 10 January 2005, Official Report, c.28W]:* My answer of 10 January to the hon. Member was incorrect. The correct answer should read as follows:

> The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has two 0870 telephone numbers which are designed to allow members of the public to call the FCO in London from anywhere in the United Kingdom at national rates. There is no revenue generated for the Government from use of these telephone numbers.

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much revenue his Department has received from the use of non-geographic 0870 telephone numbers for the period 1 October 2003 to 30 September 2004. [205841]

Mr. Rammell *[pursuant to the reply, 10 January 2005, Official Report, c. 28W]:* My answer of 10 January to the hon. Member was incorrect. The correct answer should read as follows:

> The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has two 0870 telephone numbers designed to allow members of the public to call the FCO in London from anywhere in the UK. Calls are charged at national rates, and there is no revenue generated for the Government.

United Nations (Reforms)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the UN Secretary-General about reforms of the UN. [223659]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary have had regular discussions with the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on his plans to reform the UN.

The Secretary-General, Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary and I were present at an event in February at Banqueting House launching a UK public debate on UN reform, at which the challenges facing the UN and the international community were addressed.

We have warmly welcomed the publication of the Secretary-General's report issued on 21 March "In Larger Freedom" and support the strong lead Kofi Annan is providing. The report is an important landmark on the way to the Millennium Review Summit in September, which will shape the UN's agenda for years to come. The UK intends to play an active role in the summit and its preparation, as a committed supporter of the UN and holder of the G8 and EU presidencies at the time.

Weapons (Non-proliferation)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to assist the G8 in its aims on non-proliferation of chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear weapons, with particular reference to source material for such weapons; and if he will make a statement. [223790]

Mr. MacShane: We are committed to using the UK's Presidency to take forward the Action Plan on Non-Proliferation agreed by G8 Leaders at the Sea Island Summit in June 2004. In particular, we are working to ensure that new measures are put in place to limit the spread of sensitive nuclear technology to states that may seek to use them for weapons purposes, or allow them to fall into terrorist hands. Another priority is to promote co-ordination between governments and international organisations to counter the threat of bioterrorism. At the same time, we are working to ensure that the commitment of both G8 partners and other countries to the Global Partnership against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction leads to the continued effective implementation of collaborative projects to address legacy proliferation risks in partner countries in the Former Soviet Union.

HEALTH

"Choosing Health"

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which elements of the extra funding made available to implement the public health White Paper, "Choosing Health", will be ring-fenced. [222804]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Over £1 billion of additional funding is available to meet the "Choosing Health" commitments over the next three years. Around half of this funding has been allocated to primary care trusts in their general allocations for 2006–07 and 2007–08. None of this funding is ring-fenced. The remainder is being held centrally to fund national action, such as public health campaigns, or will be allocated for specific local action at a future date.

Blind Diabetic Patients

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to make talking diabetic monitoring machines available for blind or partially sighted diabetic patients in England. [223473]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are currently no "talking" or audible blood glucose meters marketed in the United Kingdom. No blood testing meters of any kind are currently available on general practitioner prescription, although blood testing strips are.

In the past, "talking" blood glucose meters were marketed, but were withdrawn for commercial reasons outside the Department's control. The Department cannot influence which products are marketed in this country, or the price that manufacturers charge. We have received no application from any company to have audible blood glucose testing equipment made available.

Climate Change

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the likely change in incidence in UK citizens of *(a)* Dengue Fever, *(b)* malaria and *(c)* meningitis arising from climate change; and if he will make a statement. [223544]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Dengue Fever and malaria occurs in United Kingdom citizens as travel-related infections acquired abroad. The Chief Medical Officer's national expert panel on new and emerging infections recently considered the risks posed by vector-borne diseases and concluded that they do not pose any significant public health threat in the UK and that climate changes are unlikely to lead to any significant increase in such diseases.

Reported cases of laboratory confirmed meningitis for England and Wales has shown a slight decline in recent years. The impact of climate changes globally upon the incidence of meningitis in the UK population cannot be predicted.

Dentistry (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were registered for NHS dental services in Burnley in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [219495]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is not available in the format requested. However, the figures for registrations for national health service dental services in the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale primary care trust (PCT) area since September 1997 are shown in the table.

	Number of people registered
1997	142,493
1998	127,786
1999	126,366
2000	122,466
2001	96,813
2002	94,073
2003	96,361
2004	97,181

The drop in registrations between 1997 and 2004 is mostly attributable to the reduction in the re-registration period for patients from two years to 15 months. The figures also exclude patients treated in dental access centres (DACs) who are not registered. In 2004, there were some 375,000 episodes of treatment in the 48 DACs then in operation in England.

During 2004, there was a large switch to personal dental services (PDS) in the PCT area. For patient registrations (or for where registration does not apply, patients seen in the past 15 months), the PDS number rose from 1,900 at the end of December 2003 to 47,200 at the end of December 2004.

The Government remain determined to improve access to NHS dentistry and has introduced a number of initiatives which will help bring about improvements nationally and more locally. PCT funding for dentistry will increase by 19.3 per cent., from 2003–04 to 2005–06. Consequently, over £250 million of additional resources will be provided by 2005–06.

A NHS support team has been created to work with those PCTs which are experiencing most difficulty in terms of access. PCTs across East Lancashire, including Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale are benefiting from the efforts of the support team. The Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT has so far received £540,000 recurrently from the support team. £28,000 has also been provided to the PCT as part of the dental access moneys provided to the Cumbria and Lancashire strategic health authority (SHA).

The PCT has facilitated some dental access sessions as part of the work of the four PDS schemes in the area. The PCT also has robust plans in place, which will also help to improve access levels over the next three years resulting in an additional 32,000 places for patients on dental lists.

Although the PCT has so far not recruited any international dentists, it is participating in the SHA-wide scheme which is working towards boosting recruitment from this source.

Drugs

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people from *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Leeds, West have completed drug addiction rehabilitation courses in each of the last 10 years. [222247]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

Fluoridation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which strategic health authorities have expressed an interest in fluoridating their water supply. [220889]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is aware that Greater Manchester strategic health authority has expressed interest in the fluoridation of water supplies.

Food Supplements Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to ensure that the Food Supplements Directive does not place a disproportionate burden on small businesses. [223821]

Miss Melanie Johnson: An assessment of the economic impact of the Food Supplements Regulations was made in the regulatory impact assessment, which was published with the national regulations implementing this directive. This included an assessment of the impact on small businesses.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has offered to assist the industry, including small businesses, by providing technical advice on preparation of the safety dossiers that are needed for any unlisted ingredients to remain on the market. The agency has also published an up to date list of ingredients where dossiers have been submitted to the United Kingdom and other member states to ensure that dossiers are not produced unnecessarily. I have also encouraged companies to work together with respect to producing dossiers to reduce the burden on industry.

Friarage Hospital, Northallerton

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the future of the Friarage Hospital, Northallerton. [223823]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As part of the Tees Health Review, involving the independent advice of Professor Sir Ara Darzi, it was agreed that Professor Darzi would examine two additional areas to his original terms of reference. One of these areas was the work under way by the Hambleton and Richmondshire Primary Care Trust and South Tees Hospitals National Health Service Trust in relation to the Friarage Hospital.

Professor Darzi will submit his report later this year. No decision regarding the future of the Friarage Hospital has been made. Any proposals which concern changes to current services will be subject to a formal period of consultation.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on the Friarage hospital of the Working Time Directive. [223824]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Friarage hospital is part of the South Tees hospitals national health service trust. This trust has achieved compliance with the European Working Time Directive.

Health Food Supplements

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people in England and Wales using health food supplements. [221951]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department have not made a recent estimate of the number of people in England and Wales using health supplements.

Health Statistics (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of adults were registered with a NHS dentist in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223178]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not have population figures pre-2001 for Shropshire County Primary Care Trust (PCT).

The table shows the percentage of adults who were registered with a national health service dentist in the Shropshire county PCT area in each year since 1997.

	Adult registrations	*Adult population*	*Percentage registered*
1997	100,786	218,150	46.20
1998	82,470	219,500	37.57
1999	77,586	220,500	35.19
2000	75,689	221,600	34.16
2001	74,104	222,264	33.34
2002	75,403	224,259	33.62
2003	71,094	225,611	31.51
2004	71,785	226,100	31.75

The drop in registrations between September 1997 and September 1998 is mostly attributable to the reduction in the re-registration period from two years to 15 months. The figures exclude patients treated in dental access centres (DACs) who are not registered. In 2004, there were some 375,000 episodes of treatment in the 48 DACs then in operation in England.

Hepatitis C (Parliamentary Report)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department expects to respond to the All-Party Parliamentary Group report on Hepatitis C. [223975]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is considering the report.

Hospital-acquired Conditions

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the average cost of treating a patient with *(a)* MRSA and *(b)* pressure sores in the last year. [222960]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The reference costs data provides unit cost information for a variety of procedures, treatments and services undertaken by the national health service in England for a given financial year. However, the costs of treating methicillin resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" and pressure sores cannot be separately identified from the information collected centrally.

Influenza Pandemic

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to refresh stockpiles of antivirals. [223812]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Plans are in place to refresh stockpiles of antivirals in line with the expected shelf life of the drugs.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to *(a)* encourage major employers to purchase antivirals for their employees and *(b)* encourage training of professionals to deal with an influenza pandemic. [223814]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not currently have plans to encourage employers to purchase antivirals.

We are preparing documents to support the national health service with the impact of a 'flu pandemic. These will encourage the training of staff.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding is allocated to the communications strategy in the UK influenza pandemic community plan; and if he will make a statement on the role of the media in that strategy. [223813]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The strategy is being developed and will be funded as appropriate.

The media will be a crucial mechanism for ensuring our key messages reach the full range of audiences during a flu pandemic. A communications strategy was published as an annex to the United Kingdom influenza pandemic contingency plan, which is available in the Library and can be found on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/pandemicflu.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the documents known as sleeping scripts, for the purpose of advising patients in the event of an influenza pandemic, to which reference is made on page 46 of the UK Influenza Pandemic Plan, to be published by NHS 24 and NHS Direct; and how frequently these scripts will be reviewed. [220984]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The sleeping scripts have been developed by national health service clinicians with input from experts at the Health Protection Agency (HPA). They have been available within NHS Direct since November 2004 and were made available to NHS24 in early 2005. All sleeping scripts are automatically reviewed on an annual basis and changes can be made immediately should any new evidence/ information become apparent in the period between reviews. In the event of a pandemic, the joint HPA/NHS project group would review and amend the scripts as often as required by the Department, to ensure that updated information was incorporated.

Mental Health Services (Leeds)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure of the Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust, and its successor trust, was on mental health services in each year since 1992. [223520]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested.

The table shows the total operating expenses for the Leeds Community and Mental Health National Health Service Trust and its successor trust, the Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust.

£000

	Total operating expenses
Leeds Community and Mental Health NHS Trust	
1996–97	85,361
1997–98	91,283
1998–99	91,423
1999–2000	97,778
2000–01	113,014
2001–02	122,226
2002–03	92,972
Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust	
2003–04	90,635

Notes:
1. Data relating to the accounts of individual NHS bodies is not held prior to 1996–97.
2. Expenditure cannot be split between mental health services and other services.

Sources:
1. Audited summarisation schedules of the Leeds Community and Mental Health NHS Trust 1996–97 to 2002–03.
2. Audited summarisation schedules of the Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust 2003–04.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mental health patients have been treated as *(a)* inpatients and *(b)* outpatients by the Leeds Community and Mental Health Trust and its successor trust in each year since 1992. [223525]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the outpatient attendances under mental illness specialities by gender for the Leeds Mental Health Teaching National Health Service Trust and its predecessor trust.

Consultant outpatient attendances—Leeds Mental Health Teaching NHS Trust[1] (RGD), 1991–92 to 2003–04

	First attendances seen	Subsequent attendances seen	Total attendances seen
2003–04[2]	4,633	40,209	44,842
2002–03[2]	6,083	37,149	43,232
2001–02	7,299	38,578	45,877
2000–01	7,467	38,663	46,130
1999–2000	7,492	61,309	68,801
1998–99	5,729	59,363	65,092
1997–98	5,910	55,813	61,723
1996–97	4,977	48,240	53,217
1995–96	4,830	52,866	57,696
1994–95	4,288	50,886	55,174
1993–94	n/a	n/a	n/a
1992–93	n/a	n/a	n/a
1991–92	n/a	n/a	n/a

[1] Prior to 2002, the trust was known as Leeds Community and Mental Health trust.
[2] Data for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04 have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e., the data is ungrossed) and unknown/invalid clinical data.

Source:
QMOP/KH09, Department, of Health returns.

MRSA

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many recorded deaths in University of Leicester Hospital Trust have been directly caused by MRSA infections in each year since 1999. [222786]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to improve the tracking of sterile medical devices in hospitals, with particular reference to infection control. [223905]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow) by my hon. Friend, the Minister of State (Ms Winterton), on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 625–26W.

Obesity

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions the Government have had with producers of alcohol concerning the Health Select Committee report on obesity. [222489]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There have been no such discussions.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support he is providing to the Obesity Awareness and Solutions Trust's national obesity helpline. [222827]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We are aware of the work of The Obesity and Solutions Trust and have previously supported it for two years from 2001 to 2003 through the Section 64 grant scheme.

Salt

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many grammes a day of salt the Government regards as necessary for adult *(a)* males and *(b)* females; and what the latest advice from the Government's scientific advisers is on the minimum daily intake of salt required by humans to survive. [223844]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* In its 2003 report on salt and health, the scientific advisory committee on nutrition (SACN), which advises Government on nutrition and health, stated that the lowest population average intakes of sodium consistent with apparent good health in adults ranged between 1.75 grams and 2.3 grams of salt per day. In 1994, the committee on medical aspects of food and nutrition policy recommended that the population average salt intake should be reduced by a third to six grams per day as an achievable target. This was endorsed by the SACN in 2003 and the Government set a target to reduce the average population intake to six grams per day by 2010 in line with the recommendation.

Schizophrenia (Cannabis Use)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of the evidence of an increased risk of developing schizophrenia resulting from *(a)* early age and *(b)* chronic use of cannabis; [222978]

(2) whether his Department has established an inquiry into evidence linking early age and chronic use of cannabis to higher risk of developing schizophrenia. [222981]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is a widely recognised strengthening of the evidence in recent years of an association between early use of cannabis and the risk of later development of mental health problems, such as schizophrenia. The evidence of a causal link has also strengthened, although there is not a full consensus on the issue.

The Department monitors all the key research in this area and has a range of expert advisers to inform policy. The Department is currently commissioning an academic 'expert topic review' of research on cannabis and mental health, with the aim that its findings will inform mental health promotion regarding cannabis

and will also help us ensure our advice to mental health patients, their families and professionals continues to be comprehensive and up-to-date.

In addition, the independent advisory council on the misuse of drugs (ACMD), which advises my right hon. Friend, the Home Secretary, on the harms relating to controlled drugs, including cannabis, has been keeping the emerging evidence under review. Additionally, on 18 March 2005, my right hon. Friend formally asked ACM D to review the recent research studies in this area and to advise on this. The Department will support this process.

There is a range of current health promotion materials and drugs advice approved by the Department, which is aimed particularly at young people, that already draws attention to the important mental health risks of cannabis, including the risk that use can trigger serious mental, health problems. This will continue to be updated in the light of the emerging evidence.

South Tees Hospital Trust

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with South Tees hospital trust on its financial position; and what assessment he has made of its plans for *(a)* staff appointments, *(b)* shift patterns and overtime for permanent staff and *(c)* timing of operations. [223825]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The role of Health Ministers and the Department is to secure adequate resources for funding the national health service and to set out a strategic framework for it to work within. This allows decisions about local NHS services to be taken at a local level.

In line with "Shifting the Balance of Power", strategic health authorities (SHAs) performance manage the NHS organisations within their area. The SHAs will work in partnership with primary care trusts and local health providers to determine how best to use the funds allocated, to meet national and local priorities for improving health, to tackle health inequalities and modernise services.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of National Insurance contributions to the South Tees hospital trust in *(a)* 1997–98, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2003–04. [223826]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children aged under 11 by 2010 will be met. [219249]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The public service agreement (PSA) target is jointly owned by the Department of Health, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Department for Education and Skills in recognition that cross-Government action will be necessary to tackle this major public health issue.

The delivery plan for the White Paper, "Choosing Health", together with action plans focusing on nutrition and activity published recently, demonstrates how delivery of the White Paper commitments will contribute to the PSA target.

Weight Loss Guide

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he plans to publish the Weight Loss Guide announced in the Public Health White Paper; how he intends to consult stakeholders; if he will ensure that controlled carbohydrate dietary approaches are considered in this process; and if he will make a statement. [223721]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Public Health White Paper, "Choosing Health", makes a commitment to issue a weight loss guide by July 2005. The content and process of developing the guide are still under discussion.

DEFENCE

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222572]

Mr. Caplin: Accidents at work are recorded onto the Central Health and Safety Project Database (CHASP), and are given in the following table by financial year.

Financial year	*Ministry of Defence employee on Ministry of Defence premises*	*Member of the public on Ministry of Defence premises*
1999–2000	8,414	1,724
2000–01	7,800	1,651
2001–02	6,370	1,684
2002–03	5,565	2,029
2003–04	5,091	2,243

The figures for 'Members of the Public' includes all persons visiting MOD premises including contractors who are not MOD employees.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222576]

Mr. Caplin: Since 1998, accidents in the Department have been recorded onto the Central Health and Safety Project Database (CHASP). Reports giving the numbers, types and rates of accidents in the Department are produced annually. I have instructed officials to place copies of these annual reports in the Library of the House.

Aegis Defence Services

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information his Department has *(a)* supplied to and *(b)* received from the United States

Administration regarding that Government's award of the Iraq Reconstruction Security Support Services contract to Aegis Defence Services. [220987]

Mr. Hoon: The contract with Aegis Defence Services Ltd. was placed by the United States Administration.

The United Kingdom Ministry of Defence/Pricing and Forecasting Group provided the US Administration with an audit report on the cost accounting system and the financial status of Aegis Defence Services Ltd. This was in response to a standard request from the US Administration placed under the US/UK Defense Co-Operation Memorandum of Understanding—Annex III Reciprocal Audits.

Pricing and Forecasting Group have not been asked to provide further advice beyond that. The ownership of the information contained within the audit report remains the sole property of the US Administration.

Air Cadets Organisation

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* role and *(b)* purpose of the Air Cadets organisation is. [223413]

Mr. Caplin: The Air Cadet Organisation (ACO) is a national youth organisation that comprises the Air Training Corps (ATC) and the Royal Air Force Sections of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF(RAF)). The ACO exists to promote a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force, training useful to service or civilian employment, good citizenship and leadership, as well as a sense of adventure amongst the young men and women who become Air Cadets. The ACO also encourages membership of schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which provides practical, cultural and adventurous activities, including an emphasis on helping others in the local community.

Armed Forces Discipline

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many armed forces personnel have been *(a)* disciplined, *(b)* court-martialled and *(c)* dismissed for alcohol misuse or behaviour related to alcohol misuse since 1997. [222899]

Mr. Caplin: The number of recorded disciplinary cases and subsequent dismissals for alcohol misuse in the armed forces since 1997 are:

	Number
Summary discipline[1]	3,421
Courts-martial	213
Dismissed	9

[1] Cases dealt with at summary level are not available for the Naval Service prior to 2001, the Army prior to October 2000 and for RAF officers prior to 2001.

These figures represent the number of those charged with drunkenness and vehicle alcohol related offences. They exclude those charged with other offences (eg criminal damage) where alcohol may have been a factor.

Army Training Regiment

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Army Training Regiment will remain based at the Whittington Barracks near Lichfield following his review of his Department's property; and if he will make a statement. [222858]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 1 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 110W. The study into the future of Army Training Regiment Lichfield and Whittington Barracks will not be concluded until June 2005.

Bowman System

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make a statement on the integration of Bowman into the *(a)* Royal Armoured Corps and *(b)* Infantry; and when he expects the system to be fully operational; [218130]

(2) if he will make a statement on the fitting of the Bowman radio system into warrior armoured fighting vehicles. [218135]

Mr. Ingram: We are progressively integrating the Bowman communications system into military vehicles, ships supporting amphibious operations, and support helicopters. Military vehicles are converted while units are in their training period. The first Royal Armoured Corps and Infantry units to be equipped with and trained to operate Bowman are within 12 Mechanised Brigade, which will deploy to Iraq in the spring with a core Bowman capability.

We are addressing the outstanding issues involved in integrating Bowman into Challenger main battle tanks and Warrior infantry fighting vehicles. This will inform decisions on when Bowman-fitted Challenger and Warrior vehicles are ready to deploy on operations.

We have always planned for Bowman, like other complex programmes, to be developed and delivered incrementally over a number of years. We currently expect the complete capability to be delivered next year, and for the conversion programme to continue up to 2008.

British Nuclear Deterrent

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate his Department has made of the death toll that would arise from the use of one of the UK's *(a)* tactical and *(b)* strategic nuclear warheads on a population centre of (i) 100,000, (ii) 1 million and (iii) 5 million inhabitants. [218492]

Mr. Hoon: The UK has no tactical nuclear weapons.

The casualties that might arise from the use of a nuclear weapon depend on a wide range of variable factors. These include the yield and design of the weapon; the accuracy of the delivery system; the nature and construction of the target; the geographical characteristics of the surrounding terrain; geological conditions in the target area; the height of weapon burst; and the weather conditions at the target.

Cancer/Leukaemia

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many deaths of *(a)* former soldiers and *(b)* his Department's personnel have been attributable to (i) cancer and (ii) leukaemia in each of the last 20 years. [222020]

Mr. Caplin: Apart from Ministry of Defence studies into specific groups, e.g. veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf Conflict, there is no mortality data routinely collected on former Service personnel. Information on the causes of death of civilian personnel is not collected by the Department.

Counter-terrorism

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received from the Scottish Executive regarding the formulation of the European Council's position on counter-terrorism. [224028]

Mr. Hoon: None.

Deaths in Action

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many UK army personnel have been killed in action overseas in each year since 1981, broken down by regiment. [223246]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Defence Estate

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list farmers and farm companies which rent land from his Department on Salisbury Plain; how much land, in hectares, each of these rent; and which of these farms have been used for military training purposes in the last five years. [222833]

Mr. Caplin: Forty three farmers or farm companies currently rent land from the MOD on Salisbury Plain. The information requested is shown below, although, in accordance with the Data Protection Act these have not been listed by name.

Land is categorised as either schedule I, or schedule III (there is no longer a schedule II). Military training takes place over all schedule III land. Schedule I land on Salisbury Plain is arable in nature, and located around the edges of the training and impact areas acting as a buffer zone between military activities and the civilian population. Land designated as schedule I attracts higher rents. Generally speaking, schedule I land is not used for training, but depending upon the terms of an individual agreement, and the rights reserved under it, some training may take place, with compensation payable in the event of damage being caused by military personnel.

It should be noted that the total number of hectares let out has altered since my last answer on 10 February, and will change again in the next month as work is concluded on grazing licences under the mid-term review.

The table details current information where the farm is depicted by a serial number, the relevant schedule and the number of hectares involved.

Farm no.	*Schedule I land in hectares*	*Schedule III in hectares*
1	180.36	409.33
2	285.13	824.33
3	24.01	542.13
4	147.3	202.58
5	97.05	0.00
6	129.83	2,165.64
7	0.00	2.50
8	0.00	706.13
9	43.3	298.24
10	256.1	119.10
11	214.1	283.54
12	42.02	160.95
13	313.95	394.73
14	88.0	1,588.72
15	39.46	607.71
16	93.38	283.13
17	99.16	442.39
18	45.21	1,305.6
20	36.02	225.59
21	16.0	538.77
22	218.09	1,099.96
23	184.08	473.48
24	21.82	14.36
25	139.74	263.19
26	209.09	407.55
27	175.08	551.85
28	104.05	1,631.66
29	172.07	24.80
30	0.00	149.86
31	146.06	609.27
32	87.04	0.00
33	59.02	740.82
34	142.06	33.38
35	103.76	956.33
36	0.00	21.91
37	50.47	155.07
38	0.00	179.38
39	390.22	909.12
40	107.98	0.00
41	453.39	870.28
42	325.15	201.78
43	27.69	170.07
Total	5,267.24	20,565.23
Grand total		25,832.47

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will estimate the income per hectare in 2005 which would be derived from the rental of land owned by his Department to farmers at full market value. [222835]

Mr. Caplin: Rents are negotiated on a case by case basis and reflect sometimes onerous conditions which this department has to impose on tenants. Rents thus reflect "what the market will bear" and this is effectively the full market rent for those sites. Bearing that in mind, the average income per hectare for 2005 is estimated at £34.62.

Defence Export Services Organisation

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 652W, on the Defence Export

Services Organisation, which Ministers attended the Defence Export Services Organisation Symposium on 9 March. [223513]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The Secretary of State for Defence, the Minister for Defence Procurement, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. Rammell, participated in the Defence Export Services Organisation Symposium on 9 March 2005.

Defence Service Agencies (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Naval Manning Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215433]

Mr. Caplin: Both Civilian and Service personnel data by Agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of the United Kingdom Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk

The number of Service personnel employed by Agency and location is not collated centrally. However, locally held records were available and have been included in the following table.

A table showing numbers of Civilian personnel by MOD Agency, for the Agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, has also been published on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House. However, no civilian staff were employed in Scotland by the Naval Manning Agency.

The information asked for is shown in the following table. The NMA ceased to be an agency on 31 March 2004.

Personnel employed in Scotland by the Naval Manning Agency from April 1997 to March 2004

	Monetary value (£ million)	*Number*	*Percentage of total spend on Naval Manning Agency personnel*
1997–98	0	0	0
1998–99	0	0	0
1999–2000	0	0	0
2000–01	0.067	less than 5	0.59
2001–02	0.085	less than 5	0.66
2002–03	0.097	less than 5	0.69
2003–04	0.105	less than 5	0.74

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215453]

Mr. Ingram: We are unable to answer the question fully, as personnel cost statistics by geographical area are not held.

Details held by AFPAA of MOD staff employed in Scotland are as follows:

Date	*AFPAA MOD civilians employed in Scotland*	*AFPAA MOD Service personnel employed in Scotland*
April 1997	Nil	Nil
April 1998	Nil	Nil
April 1999	Nil	Nil
April 2000	Nil	Nil
April 2001	Nil	Nil
April 2002	110	10
April 2003	20	10
April 2004	20	10
January 2005	30	10

Notes:

1. MOD figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. MOD civilians numbers employed by the agency in Scotland were published in the United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2004, but not in previous editions.

Both civilian and Service personnel data by agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the House of Commons Library. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk.

The number of Service personnel employed by agency and location is not collated centrally. However, locally held records were available and have been included.

A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MOD agency, for the agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, has also been published on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, www.dasa.mod.uk, and has been placed in the Library of the House.

The civilian workforce numbers have been collated from centrally held records and may be different to locally produced numbers. However, all numbers in the table are produced using the agreed standard definition of civilian workforce, in full-time equivalent terms (part-time staff are counted only in proportion to the number of hours worked compared to the normal full-time hours) and are rounded to the nearest 10 to preserve confidentiality.

Departmental Finances

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence from which public corporations his Department received a receipt from a dividend payment or equity withdrawal in financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04; what the value of each receipt was; and whether receipts were *(a)* appropriated in aid of his Department and *(b)* surrendered to the Consolidated Fund. [217991]

Mr. Ingram: Dividends and equity withdrawals for public corporations for the years commencing

1999–2000 are shown below. For the purposes of the response, Trading Funds are regarded as public corporations for budgeting purposes by HM Treasury and are therefore included.

The required information in respect of years 1997–98 and 1998–99 is included in the Appropriation Accounts for the respective years. These accounts have been placed in the Library of House.

£000

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Dividend					
Appropriations in Aid Trading Funds:					
Defence Research and Evaluation Agency (DERA)	—	25,000	5,000	—	—
The UK Hydrographic Office	—	2,144	2,431	2,587	2,902
Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL)	—	—	—	6,000	6,000
Surrendered to the Consolidated Fund Trading Funds:					
DERA	25,000	—	—	—	—
The UK Hydrographic Office	1,794	—	—	—	—
Equity withdrawal (including loan repayments)					
Appropriations-in-Aid Repayment of loans made to Trading Funds:					
DERA	7,586	7,586	—	—	—
The UK Hydrographic Office	219	237	258	279	303
Met Office	8,032	10,936	—	—	—
Defence Aviation Repair Agency (DARA)	—	—	7,115	2,115	7,240
DSTL	—	—	2,128	2,128	2,128
Army Base Repair Organisation (ABRO)	—	—	—	5,155	14,155
Surrendered to the Consolidated Fund Public Corporation:					
QinetiQ—loan repayment	—	—	50,000	49,900	4,214
QinetiQ—proceeds received on sale of equity	—	—	—	39,427	—

End-to-end Logistics

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the written statement of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 120WS, on end-to-end logistics, if he will give details of the redundancies listed in the other changes category. [223517]

Mr. Ingram: The written ministerial statement on 10 March listed the estimated reductions in the number of posts at a number of RAF Stations as a result of the application of end-to-end logistic principles. It did not offer any redundancy estimates, since the reduction in the number of posts will be managed primarily through voluntary staff transfers, natural wastage and a voluntary release scheme.

First World War Medals

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the estimated cost of keeping the first world war medal index cards is; and if he will make a statement. [223558]

Mr. Caplin: It is estimated that the cost to the Ministry of Defence of continuing to store these records is in the order of £1,000 per month.

Gibraltar Services Police

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the statutory basis is for the Gibraltar Services Police; and if he will make a statement. [223350]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 24 March 2005]*: The Gibraltar Services Police is a statutory police force established under the Police Ordinance (Laws of Gibraltar) Section 51(1)(2).

Gurkhas

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Gurkhas in the UK armed forces are aged *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 17 years old. [222169]

Mr. Caplin: As at 1 February 2005 there are no soldiers aged 16 or 17 years of age serving in the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Infantry Manning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will publish the recent reports of the Director of Infantry's study for the Army Board on Infantry Manning; [208324]

(2) if he will publish all recent papers for the Executive Committee of the Army Board. [208325]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 13 January 2005]:* I am withholding the documents in question since releasing the papers would prejudice the effective formulation of government policy, on the basis that it would discourage the consideration of the full range of options thereby interfering with the effective conduct of business.

In arriving at this judgment, I have weighed carefully the public interest in disclosure against the harm that I assess would result from doing so. I have also taken into account the full description of the Government's decisions which have already been provided to Parliament.

However, I am making an exception with the statistical information about manning levels which informed ECAB's consideration of how the reduction by four battalions should be effected. Copies of this will be placed in the Library of the House.

Multi-national Exercises

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans the Royal Navy has to participate in multi-national military exercises in the next five years. [223276]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy is planning to participate in 35 multi-national exercises in 2005–06 and a large number of lower level tactical engagements with coalition partners. In 2006–07 the number of planned exercises stands at nine though this is likely to increase as planning progresses. Tactical engagements will continue at around the same level.

National Defence Industries Council

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the members of the National Defence Industries Council; and who the employer is in each case. [223512]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* We are in the process of reviewing the Terms of Reference and membership of the National Defence Industries Council (NDIC) in consultation with the Defence Industries Council. John Wall (Amicus) accepted the Secretary of State's invitation to join the NDIC and represent the Trade Unions. The current membership of the NDIC is:

Industry

Sir John Rose, Chief Executive Officer, Rolls Royce and Chairman of the Defence Industries Council

Alex Dorrian, Chief Executive, Thales plc

Simon Frost, Chairman, Gardner Group Ltd.

Colin Green, President Defence Aerospace, Rolls Royce plc

Martin Jay, Chairman, VT Group plc and President of the Society of the Maritime Industries

Gordon Page, Chairman, Cobham plc

Tony Pryor, Vice President, Maritime, Government and Infrastructure, KBR

Clive Richardson, Deputy CEO, AMS and Vice President Defence, Intellect

Peter Smart, Managing Director, Aspire Defence, and Chairman of the Defence Manufacturers Association

Kevin Smith, Chief Executive, GKN plc and President of the Society of British Aerospace Companies

Mike Turner, Chief Executive Officer, BAE Systems plc

Dr. Sally Howes, Secretary of the Defence Industries Council, and DG Society of British Aerospace Companies

Government

Secretary of State for Defence

Minister of State for the Armed Forces

Minister for Defence Procurement

Minister of State for Industry and the Regions, DTI

MOD Permanent Under Secretary

Chief of Defence Procurement/Chief Executive Defence Procurement Agency

Chief Defence Logistics

MOD Chief Scientific Adviser

Head of Defence Export Services

Deputy Chief Executive/Defence Procurement Agency

Naval Sector Strategy Study

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 30W, on Naval Sector Strategy Study, whether any members of the Naval Sector Strategy Study are members of the armed forces. [223588]

Mr. Ingram: The Naval Sector Strategy Study (NSSS) is an industry-led initiative, and the study team does not include currently serving members of the armed forces. However, joint meetings between the NSSS and MOD led maritime study groups have taken place to co-ordinate the assumptions which underpin the studies.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what remit he has given to the armed forces members of the Naval Sector Strategy Study. [223892]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 30W.

Naval Shipbuilding Implementation Study

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1992, on the Naval Shipbuilding Implementation Study, if he will list the members of the Naval Shipbuilding Implementation Study. [223546]

Mr. Ingram: Formal terms of reference for the Naval Shipbuilding Implementation Study, including its membership, are currently under review in consultation with industry.

Northern Ireland (Deaths in Service)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 28 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 968W, on Northern Ireland, what investigations *(a)* have taken place and *(b)* are ongoing into these deaths. [223300]

Mr. Caplin: Investigations into the deaths of service personnel are a matter for the civil authorities, in particular the Police Service Northern Ireland and HM Coroner.

Pilot Training

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision he is making to train combat pilots to withstand forces up to 12G. [223515]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is currently reviewing the provision to train combat pilots to withstand forces up to 12G. The outcome of this review is expected in the summer.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the annual costs were of providing RAF fast jet pilots with G-Force training in each of the last five years. [223516]

Mr. Ingram: The following table details the annual cost of providing RAF fast jet pilots with G-Force training in each of the last five years.

Financial Year	Expenditure (£)
2000–01	4,053
2001–02	20,268
2002–03	16,215
2003–04	28,376
2004–05	34,780

These costs relate to NATO Flying Course, Centrifuge Training, NATO High G Training and Typhoon Training.

Private Finance Initiative

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts with his Department have been won by subsidiaries of Halliburton in each year since 1997; what the terms were of each contract; and if he will make a statement. [205078]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has let two private finance initiative (PFI) contracts and no public private partnership (PPP) contracts with subsidiaries of Halliburton since 1997.

In December 2001 a contract was signed with the FASTRAX consortium which is led by the United Kingdom element of the Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR).

The contract is for the provision of Heavy Equipment Transportation (HET) Services (i.e. primarily Challenger 2 Main Battle Tank), using Sponsored Reserves. The other consortium members are Oshkosh Truck Corporation, Deutsche Bank, King Trailers and Tru-hitch.

Details are as follows:

20 year PFI contract worth, in Whole Life Cost terms, approximately £290 million (excluding VAT).

Service under the contract commenced on 7 July 2003 and became fully operational in July 2004.

The project was awarded the "Best Operational PFI Project" at the Public Private Partnership Industry awards in May 2004.

In April 2003 a contract was signed with Brey Utilities a Yorkshire-based consortium comprising Yorkshire Water (45 per cent.), Earth Tech Engineering (45 per cent.) and the UK element of the Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR) (10 per cent.).

The contract is for the provision of water and wastewater services at over 3,000 MOD sites in the UK. Aquatrine Package A covers approximately 1,000 sites in the Midlands, Wales and South West England.

Details are as follows:

25 year PFI contract worth, in Whole Life Cost terms, approximately £1 billion (excluding VAT).

Service delivery under the contract commenced and became fully operational on 1 December 2003.

Provisions

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on sourcing pork, bacon and ham bearing the British Pig Executive's Quality Standard Mark for the armed forces; and if he will make a statement. [223244]

Mr. Ingram: Currently all pork consumed by British based armed forces is supplied from farms which comply to the new British Pig Executive's Quality Standard Mark or equivalent schemes, such as Assured British Pigs.

RAF St. Mawgan

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the decision was taken to place RAF St. Mawgan into care and maintenance; and when he expects to inform the House of the implications of this decision. [223412]

Mr. Ingram: No RAF aircraft will, under current plans, be based at RAF St. Mawgan after the Search and Rescue Operational Conversion Unit departs in 2006–07. The decision, subject to appropriate Trades Union consultation, to place the airfield there onto a care and maintenance basis was taken shortly in advance of my announcement on 10 March. The implications of this decision are that the Department will not be expending resources on facilities for which there will be no military requirement.

Regiments

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hon. Members made representations to him indicating their preference for the name Royal Lancashire Regiment as a name for the new regiment in the North West. [222277]

Mr. Ingram: No hon. Members have made representations to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence, apart from the hon. Member for Chorley.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many letters were received from civic leaders regarding the new name for the Queen's Lancashire Regiment; [222287]

(2) what discussions took place with civic officials on the new name for the Queen's Lancashire Regiment. [222286]

Mr. Ingram: Over a dozen letters have been received from local government officials on the matter of infantry restructuring affecting the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, including on the particular issue of preserving the link between regiment and county.

Neither the Secretary of State nor I had any discussions with civic officials on the name of the new West of Pennines regiment.

Royal Navy

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 414W, on the Royal Navy, what the acronym STOROB stands for. [223582]

Mr. Ingram: The removal of a ship's fitted equipment (or parts of it) for installation in another is known as STOROB, which stands for Stores Robbery. This is a formal process, but is used only as a last resort to meet high readiness operational commitments, and only where the demanded items are not available from other sources. Because of the impact on a given facet of the

donor ship's capability, this is considered only when the donor ship is either reducing in readiness towards upkeep or disposal, or is already in upkeep.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 414W, on the Royal Navy, how many Royal Navy ships are *(a)* in upkeep, *(b)* reducing in readiness towards upkeep and *(c)* reducing in readiness towards disposal. [223583]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently 18 Royal Navy ships in upkeep, four ships reducing in readiness towards upkeep and 18 ships reducing in readiness towards disposal. These figures include vessels of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Ships

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the merits of delaying the withdrawal from service of HMS *(a)* Superb and *(b)* Trafalgar; and if he will make a statement. [223528]

Mr. Ingram: Since the restructuring of the Astute contract in 2003 the build of the first of class is proceeding to plan. There is at present, therefore, no reason to reconsider the withdrawal of HMS Superb or HMS Trafalgar.

Sonar 2170

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what criteria will be used to determine which surface ships will be equipped with Sonar 2170; [223108]

(2) in what circumstances surface ships would be deployed without a Sonar 2170 set; and what assessment he has made of the likely implications; [223109]

(3) in what circumstances Sonar 2170 radio sets would be transferred from one Royal Navy ship to another; [223106]

(4) what assessment he has made of the length of time needed to remove Sonar 2170 from one surface ship and re-install it on another. [223107]

Mr. Ingram: Sonar 2170 is a sonar system designed to provide anti-ship torpedo defence. When deciding which ships will be fitted with Sonar 2170, the programme and military tasks of each ship, including an assessment of the underwater threat in the area in which it will operate, will be taken into account.

Surface ships whose military tasking is not assessed as exposing them to a high risk of torpedo attack will continue to be deployed without Sonar 2170. Those units assessed as facing lower levels of risk will continue to be protected by other measures.

Sonar 2170 is a system which is designed for transfer from ship to ship. The system will be removed from ships if they are alongside for any length of time, for example during refits.

Transfer of Sonar 2170 from ship to ship takes around four days. This extremely efficient process allows the equipment to be provided to those units that require it operationally and represents a cost-effective means of providing advanced capability when and where it is required.

Submarine Acquisition Study

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1995W, on the Submarine Acquisition Study, if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* designations of the members of the Submarine Acquisition Study. [223907]

Mr. Ingram: The purpose of the Submarine Acquisition Modernisation (SAM) project is, through a coherent, long-term approach to the management of the nuclear submarine programme, to implement a more efficient, more effective and sustainable submarine enterprise through life, leading to a significant reduction in whole life costs and greater submarine availability.

SAM is a joint MOD/industry study being driven by a Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO) team leader with membership drawn from specialists within the DLO, the Defence Procurement Agency (DPA) and the four main industrial partners (Devonport Management Limited (DML), Babcock Naval Services, BAE Systems (Barrow) and Rolls Royce). However, in order to comply with our obligations and protect the identity of individuals, we will not be releasing the names or designations.

Trident

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last undertook a risk assessment of command and control procedures for the Trident nuclear missile system. [218342]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 33W.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of possible acquisition costs for a replacement for the Trident nuclear warhead. [218349]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1148W, to the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan (Mr. Salmond) and the hon. Member for North Tayside (Mr. Wishart).

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will inform Parliament of any expenditure undertaken in relation to research and development for a replacement for the Trident nuclear missile system. [218351]

Mr. Hoon: Normal procedures for reporting to Parliament apply to such expenditure.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has received representations from the Scottish Executive regarding *(a)* Trident in Scotland, *(b)* the formulation of the UK position on non-proliferation of weapons and *(c)* the transportation of nuclear materials relating to the Trident weapon system. [224027]

Mr. Hoon: I have received no specific representations from the Scottish Executive on these matters. MOD officials do however have regular contact with the Executive in respect of nuclear matters which fall within the Executive's responsibility.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the annual operational costs for a replacement for the Trident nuclear submarine and missile system. [218491]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1148W.

Vaccine Damage

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many payments were made by his Department to children suffering from vaccine damage between 1975 and the introduction of the Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979. [223011]

Mr. Caplin: The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for administering vaccine damage payments under the Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979. The Ministry of Defence has no record of making common-law compensation payments to children suffering from vaccine damage.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Essex Police

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours police officers have spent attending incidents inside and outside nightclubs in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend. [222476]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public; [222566]

(2) whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement; [222581]

(3) what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222631]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information for each of the last five years is as follows:

Core Home Office—Financial years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000–01	33	1
2001–02	21	0
2002–03	30	0
2003–04	34	0
2004–05[1]	36	0

[1] 2004–05 figures are for 11 months only up to 28 February 2005.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND)—Financial years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000–01	125	2
2001–02	175	6
2002–03[1,2]	299	—
2003–04	637	—
2004–05[3]	803	—

[1] From 1 April 2002—figures include staff, visitors, detainees and contractors.
[2] From 1April 2002—records include instances of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour towards staff.
[3] 2004–05 figures are for 9 months only up to 31 December 2004.

Prison Service (PS)—Financial years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000–01	6,578	138
2001–02	5,361	74
2002–03[1]	9,994	261
2003–04	8,058	218
2004–05[2]	—	—

[1] From 1 April 2002—figures include both visitors and contractors.
[2] 2004–05 figures are not yet available.

United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS)—Financial years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000–01	54	1
2001–02	81	4
2002–03	71	4
2003–04	77	1
2004–05[1]	77	1

[1] 2004–05 figures are for 11 months only up to 28 February 2005.

Forensic Science Service (FSS)—Financial years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000–01	347	9
2001–02	483	1
2002–03	398	1
2003–04	338	5
2004–05[1]	259	5

[1] 2004–05 figures are for 10 monthly only up to 21 January 2005.

Central Police Training and Development Authority (CENTREX) formerly known as National Police Training (NPT)—Calendar years

	Staff	Members of the public/visitors
2000	45	0
2001	59	3
2002	74	0
2003	61	0
2004	64	0

Note:
Figures do not include student police officers.

Accidents at work are reported and monitored in a number of ways across the Department and its agencies. All accidents are reported on an internal accident reporting system. Where an accident is required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive, the reporting procedure laid down in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulation 1995 is followed.

Line managers are provided with guidance on reporting accidents. This includes the requirement to pass this information to others with an interest including health and safety professionals. Accident reports are then scrutinised to see what further action may be required to deal with the situation and prevent recurrence.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Asylum Seekers

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is the Government's policy to consider claims for asylum from member states of the Council of Europe; and if he will make a statement on the claims of *(a)* Natalia Chernyshera, *(b)* Dmitri Maruev and *(c)* Aleksandr Gorbachev from Russia. [221905]

Mr. Browne: As a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, we consider each claim for asylum on its individual merits to determine whether the claimant can demonstrate a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. An asylum claim made by a national of one of the member states of the Council of Europe would be given individual consideration.

Nationals of EU member states are subject to separate immigration arrangements. Very few EU nationals claim asylum, and claims that are received are likely to be certified as clearly unfounded with the result that there is no right of appeal against refusal.

We do not discuss or disclose the immigration status of any individual, other than matters already in the public domain, without the written consent of that person.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1830–31W, on asylum seekers, what the average cost to public funds of removing failed asylum applicants was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1998, *(c)* 2000, *(d)* 2001 and *(e)* 2002; and if he will make a statement. [222422]

Mr. Browne: The cost of the removal of failed asylum seekers is not disaggregated from the overall costs of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) and therefore not readily available. Any attempt to calculate the cost of removal of failed asylum seekers would need to take into account a large number of factors and this could be done only at disproportionate cost. However the total public spending for IND is set out in the published Home Office Report.

Information on the number of failed asylum seekers whom have been removed from the UK in each calendar year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Number of persons[1]

	Principal asylum applicants removed	*Dependants removed*[2]	*Total removed*[2]
1997	7,160	—	—
1998	6,990	—	—
1999[3]	7,665	—	—
2000[3]	8,980	—	—
2001[3]	9,285	1,495	10,780
2002	10,740	3,170	13,910
2003[4]	13,005	4,890	17,895
2004[4]	12,430	2,290	14,715

[1] Includes enforced removals, persons departing voluntarily following enforcement action being initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration.
[2] Figures may include a small number of dependants leaving under Assisted Voluntary Return Programmes.
[3] Data on dependants removed not available before April 2001.
[4] Provisional figures.
Note:
Figures rounded to the nearest 5, and may not sum due to rounding.

Statistics on the number of asylum applicants removed from the UK are available from the Home Office website at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his recent statement to the Bicester Advertiser, to what level asylum seeker applications would need to fall for him to consider the need for accommodation centres for asylum seekers to be unnecessary. [222561]

Mr. Browne: The statement to the Bicester Advertiser was made by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. Accommodation centres continue to have an important place in the Government's policy for accommodating destitute asylum seekers and are a means of improving contact management with applicants, speeding up decision making and ultimately helping to increase removals. The Government have not set a level of intake at which accommodation centres would cease to be necessary, nor are there plans to do so.

Burma

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Burmese citizens were deported from the United Kingdom in 2004; and how many of these were deported to Burma. [223688]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Management information indicates that no Burmese citizens were removed from the United Kingdom in 2004 as a result of deportation action.

This data is based on management information and is not National Statistics. The data for 2004 is provisional and subject to change.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Government's policy is on the deportation of Burmese asylum seekers. [223690]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 March 2005]*: Asylum and human rights claims by Burmese nationals are, like those of all claimants, from all countries, considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). If the claimant meets the definition of a refugee in the 1951 Refugee Convention, they are granted asylum. If they do not qualify for asylum, but there are other circumstances that make them particularly vulnerable and engage our obligations under the ECHR, they are granted humanitarian protection or discretionary leave. If an application is refused, and any appeal is unsuccessful, then we expect the individual concerned to leave the UK voluntarily. If they do not, we consider that it is reasonable for us to enforce the return of that individual.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reports the Government has received regarding the monitoring of Burmese dissidents and asylum seekers in the UK by the Burmese embassy and Burmese Government officials in the UK. [223691]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 24 March 2005]*: The Government are aware that in the 1990s, the Burmese authorities took photographs of demonstrators outside the Burmese embassy in London. We are also aware that there are security cameras on the building/embassy walls, which could be used to monitor any demonstration outside the embassy. The UK Government have not received any further specific reports regarding the monitoring of Burmese dissidents and asylum seekers in the UK by the Burmese authorities.

Child Poverty

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to achieve the Government's targets of ending child poverty by 2020, and halving it by 2010; and if he will make a statement. [220886]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 9 March 2005]*: The Home Office is supporting the Treasury in meeting the ambitious targets this Government have set on child poverty. Children born into poverty are more likely to be victims of crime and more likely to offend. The child poverty review highlighted the strong associations between youth crime, parental crime and child poverty.

In order to tackle the poor outcomes associated with child poverty, and to improve the life chances of poor children, the Home Office has invested in a number of prevention programmes for children at risk of involvement in crime or substance misuse.

To break the cycle of youth offending and deprivation, the Home Office strategic plan includes a commitment to increase youth crime prevention programmes. This includes multi-agency youth inclusion and support panels, targeting high risk children and their families, providing them with support and improving their access to mainstream services. It also includes the youth inclusion programme, which targets the 13 to 16-year-olds most at risk of crime in 72 of the most deprived neighbourhoods. The numbers of both will be increased by 50 per cent. by 2008. We have also increased the coverage of intensive supervision and surveillance programme (ISSPs).

Children living in poverty are a key risk group for substance misuse. We are targeting young people in the most deprived neighbourhoods at risk of substance misuse through 'Positive Futures', a national sports based social inclusion programme aimed at marginalised 10 to 19-year-olds. Positive Futures aims to

> "have a positive influence on participants' substance misuse, physical activity and offending behaviour".

The Positive Futures projects have proved successful in building relationships, engaging and providing developmental opportunities for young people living in deprived areas.

Correspondence

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will provide a substantive reply to the letter of 22 December 2004 from the hon. Member for Aylesbury about the case of Mr. A. K. (references K516836 and B179/5) which his Department acknowledged on 13 January. [221347]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 March 2005]*: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate replied to the hon. Member on 22 March 2005.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letters dated 24 and 25 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms Madeline Crolla and Ms Vanessa Lees, transferred from the Department of Constitutional Affairs. [221912]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 10 March and 18 March 2005 respectively.

Criminal Justice (Case Files)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the project to make case file information on a suspect electronically available to all the main criminal justice organisations was initiated; what stage the project has reached; whether it is on schedule; and what the latest estimate of the cost of this project is. [218856]

Caroline Flint: The contract for NSPIS case preparation was placed in 1997 and for NSPIS custody in 1998. "Thick" client case preparation, whereby the NSPIS case preparation application is held on the force's local IT server system, was initiated and deployed in March 2002 and custody followed in May 2002. Presently there are 11 forces with NSPIS case preparation in operational use and nine forces with custody. Version four of NSPIS custody and case preparation is scheduled to be rolled out in April 2005 with version five to follow in July 2005. NSPIS custody and case preparation will be available to all 43 forces in England and Wales by 31 March 2006. The forecast spend for the NSPIS programme at the end of 2005–06 is £228 million.

Criminal Justice Act

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the provisions of chapter 2 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 will be brought into force. [216108]

Paul Goggins: The provisions relating to hearsay evidence contained in chapter 2 of part 11 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 will be brought into force on 4 April 2005.

Departmental Policies (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government have taken to promote stronger and safer communities in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223233]

Ms Blears: Since 1997 Newcastle-under-Lyme has benefited from a number of crime reduction and community safety initiatives. The Government Office for the West Midlands provides partnership support for all Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) across the region, with identified partnership support officers to assist with making best use of Government funds. In addition, support is given to enable CDRPs to make better linkages with other funding programmes and achieve greater efficiency in programme management and evaluation.

The Newcastle-under-Lyme Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has received a total of £997,370 since 2001–02 to promote stronger and safer communities. This funding has been provided through a variety of funds, as set out in the following table. While Newcastle-under-Lyme will have received further funding for some elements of the Crime Reduction Programme prior to 2002, the exact details are not collected centrally.

Fund	*Amount (£)*
2001–02	
Communities Against Drugs (CAD)	112,700
2002–03	
Safer Communities Fund (SCI)	39,702
Communities Against Drugs (CAD)	112,700
Capital Modernisation Fund (Small Retailers in Deprived Areas)	34,946
Reducing Burglary Initiative	7,900
CCTV (under the Crime Reduction Programme)	48,690
Wardens	18,125
Total	262,063.00
2003–04	
Building Safer Communities Fund (BSC)	158,301
Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)	19,000
CMF (SRDA)	17,597
Business Crime	1,000
Wardens	19,725
BCU Fund[1]	100,000
Total	315,623.00
2004–05	
BSC	162,259
ASB	25,000
Wardens	19,725
BCU Fund[1]	100,000
Total	306,984.00

[1] BCU fund goes to North Staffs BCU which covers both Newcastle-U-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands CDRP and is £200,000. For ease of reckoning it is inferred that each CDRP would receive 50 per cent., hence £100,000.

Information on police strength is set out in Table 1. The Newcastle-under-Lyme parliamentary constituency is part of the North Staffordshire Basic Command Unit (BCU) of the Staffordshire Police. Information on strength at BCU level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002. BCU strength between March 2002 and March 2004 is set out in the Table 2. It is not possible to provide police numbers at constituency level.

Table 1: Staffordshire police strength 1997 to 2004

As at 31 March	*Police officer numbers*[1]	*Police (support) staff*[1]
1997	2,211	763
1998	2,292	866
1999	2,238	1,004
2000	2,170	858
2001	2,129	935
2002	2,133	1,030
2003	2,202	1,146
2004	2,266	1,255
2004 (31 August)	[2]2,274	Not available

[1] Data provided by Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS).
[2] August 2004 was collected separately outside of the normal data collection arrangements and has not been subject to the same validation as RDS data.

Table 2: North Staffordshire Basic Command Unit

As at 31 March	*Number of police officers*
2002	269
2003	Not available
2004	301

Note:
The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Mr. John Giffard QPM) and within the North Staffordshire BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Door Supervisor Licensing

Mr. Byers: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the licensing of door supervisors under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 to be completed in *(a)* the North East and *(b)* London; and if he will make a statement. [223494]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* Security Industry Authority licences have been required for door supervisors working in the North East area since 13 December 2004 whereas those in London have until 11 April 2005 to get licensed.

E-mails

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his Department's policy regarding the retention of e-mails in electronic form *(a)* after and *(b)* up to 1 January 2005; and what instructions have been given regarding the deletion of e-mails prior to 1 January 2005. [206963]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Department continues to implement well established policies and procedures for the review and disposal of files in accordance with its administrative needs and the Public Records Act.

E-mail messages that form part of the official record are saved for as long as business needs require and stored corporately in accordance with departmental record management procedures. Further e-mail guidance is available on the National Archives website at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/electronicrecords/advice/pdf/managing emails.pdf.

Departmental policies are kept under review and this is the case for all record management policies. There has been no change to policies over the last 12 months. They continue to treat e-mails as one of the many document types containing business information and so they are used as part of the business record accordingly.

Fixed Penalty Notices

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of each category of fixed penalty notices have been *(a)* issued and *(b)* paid in each month since their introduction in each police force area. [223586]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The information requested in relation to penalty notices for disorder will be published in May/June.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many times *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend community support officers have issued a fixed penalty notice to parents for truancy since 27 February 2004; [210150]

(2) how many times *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend community support officers have stopped cyclists in order to issue a fixed penalty notice for cycling on a footpath since 20 January 2004; [210151]

(3) how many times *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend community support officers have issued a fixed penalty notice for graffiti and fly posting since 31 March 2004; [210152]

(4) how many times *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend community support officers have used the power to disperse groups since 20 January 2004; [210153]

(5) how many times *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend community support officers have used the power (i) to detain a person for up to 30 minutes pending the arrival of a constable, or to accompany that person to a police station with the person's agreement and (ii) to use reasonable force to detain a person or prevent him or her from leaving the scene in each year since their inception. [210154]

Ms Blears: This information is not collected centrally.

Commencement of paragraph 2 of Schedule 4 to the Police Reform Act 2002, whereby a Chief Constable may designate the power of detention to a Community Support Officer (CSO), took place on 23 December 2004. The Chief Constable of Essex is currently considering whether to designate CSOs on his force with the power to detain.

Holocaust Memorial Day

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of the impact of holocaust memorial day in increasing awareness of and drawing conclusions from the holocaust; and what plans he has for future commemorations. [223021]

Fiona Mactaggart: Home Office quantitative polling research included four questions about holocaust memorial day (HMD) in the August 2004 and February 2005 surveys. The February 2005 research findings show a significant increase in awareness with 77 per cent. of those interviewed having heard of HMD (compared with 53 per cent. in August 2004) and 66 per cent. agreeing that events like HMD have an important part to play in combating racism and discrimination (compared with 51 per cent. in August 2004).

To give a comparison, in February 2004 a BBC survey revealed only 55 per cent. of the UK's population had ever heard of Auschwitz. A new BBC survey conducted in January 2005 has shown that now 94 per cent. of the population in the UK has heard of Auschwitz. This awareness is not just superficial, with half of the UK population feeling that they now know quite a lot about the holocaust, compared to only 30 per cent. last year. In establishing HMD the Government wanted to drive up awareness and understanding of the holocaust. The televised national event in January, preceded by a reception for survivors at St. James's Palace in the presence of Her Majesty the Queen and supported by other media programming about the holocaust, has succeeded in this aim. Understanding the continuum of hatred and marginalisation that led from racist abuse to mass genocide will help new generations to stand up to anti-semitism, racism and intolerance.

The 2005 commemoration provides an excellent basis for the work of the new Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, which will shortly be launched and will assume responsibility for the delivery of HMD from now on.

Illegal Abortions

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions of individuals for unlawfully carrying out abortions there have been in each year since 1997. [222485]

Ms Blears: The available information is contained in the table and gives the number of offenders found guilty at all courts for "procuring illegal abortion", England and Wales 1997 to 2003.

Number of offenders found guilty at all courts for "procuring illegal abortion"[1] England and Wales 1997 to 2003

	Found guilty
1997	5
1998	3
1999	—
2000	1
2001	—
2002	—
2003	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.

Statistics on court proceedings for 2004 will be published in the autumn.

Illegal Experimentation (Human Embryos)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many convictions of people found to have experimented unlawfully on human embryos there have been in each year since 1997. [222484]

Ms Blears: Persons found guilty for offences of experimenting on human embryos over 14 days under section 41 of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 cannot be separately identified in the statistics collected centrally.

Inland Revenue

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1110W, on Inland Revenue, when the Inland Revenue first advised his Department that it had a necessary and proportionate requirement to use covert human intelligence sources; and when his Department advised *(a)* Inland Revenue and *(b)* other Departments making use of informers to conduct a review of their informers and practices for dealing with them prior to the coming into force of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. [223175]

Ms Blears: When approached by the Home Office in late 1999, as one of a number of public authorities that used or might use covert human intelligence sources, the Inland Revenue indicated that it did use such sources and wished to continue doing so but within the statutory framework which was to be provided by the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. At no time prior to

the coming into force of the 2000 Act did the Home Office advise the Inland Revenue, or any other public authority, to review its practices for dealing with informers.

National Missing Persons Helpline

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the funding base of the National Missing Persons Helpline; what representations he has received in respect of funding by his Department for the helpline; and if he will make a statement; [223030]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of the work of the National Missing Persons Helpline. [223031]

Ms Blears: We have approved funding of up to £300,000 for the National Missing Persons Helpline subject to a fuller understanding of their financial and management situation.

Neighbourhood Policy Document

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many copies of Neighbourhood Policy—Your Police, Your Community, Our Commitment *(a)* have been printed, *(b)* have been distributed to date and *(c)* have been distributed unsolicited; and what the costs to date are of (i) design, (ii) printing and (iii) distribution. [223267]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* The publication Neighbourhood Policing—Your Police, Your Community explains the Government's policies on community based policing. It is intended for those who work in policing and for the communities they serve.

A total of 300,00 copies of the publication were printed in English and 3,500 in Welsh.

To date 107,730 copies have been distributed to 21,546 addressees.

The costs of the publication were £850 for design; £42,474 for print and £24,000 for distribution.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department will provide a substantive reply to questions 202011 and 202012 tabled for answer on 6 December 2004. [220269]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1841W.

Parole

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are applied when considering whether a prisoner is eligible for parole; and if he will make a statement. [221471]

Paul Goggins: The Parole Board is required to take account of the Secretary of State's Directions when determining whether or not an offender held in custody is of sufficiently low risk to be released into the community.

The panel of the Board will consider the matter either on the papers or at an oral hearing, depending on the type of release and the status of the offender. Depending on the matter before the Board for consideration, the Board will have some or all of the following available to them:

Reports from the Probation Service;

Copy of the antecedents;

Reports from the Prison Service, including a copy of any adjudications and reports of progress in custody, including details of progress on offending behaviour programmes;

Court documentation; and

Details of the index offence.

A copy of the Directions can be found in the House Library.

Police

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methods are used in the national assessment process aimed at preventing racists from joining the police force. [221867]

Ms Blears: It is essential that we do all we can to exclude those with racist or other unacceptable attitudes from joining the police service.

We have introduced a national assessment and selection process across all forces which tests candidates' against seven competencies identified as requirements for a recruit police officer, including community and customer focus and respect for race and diversity.

The process aims to prevent people with prejudiced views and behaviour from joining the police service.

In particular, it comprehensively tests candidates' attitudes to race and diversity. Candidates' attitudes are tested at least seven times across all the exercises in the assessment centre, including at interview, in interactive role play exercises and through written assessment.

The exercises are all contextually based. Putting people through a range of exercises, using a range of assessment instruments when people are under pressure, makes it difficult for candidates to conceal attitudes and behaviours.

Those who do not score sufficiently highly in respect for race and diversity are not accepted—regardless of how well they have done in the rest of the selection process.

Moreover, candidates are failed automatically if they demonstrate inappropriate behaviour through their behaviour or language while at the assessment centre. This includes outside the testing environment, when they are in the corridors, waiting areas, and other public areas.

We are also encouraging all forces to use members of their minority ethnic communities as assessors in their selection processes.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent (i) police officers and (ii) civilian staff have been employed by Sussex police in each of the last 10 years. [222032]

Ms Blears: The latest figures on police strength for September 2004 were published in an online report number 23/05.

The information requested is given in the following table:

Sussex

	Officers		*Police staff*	
30 September	*FTE*	*Headcount*[1]	*FTE*	*Headcount*
1995	3,020	—	1,076	1,187
1996	3,097	—	1,167	1,296
1997	3,040	—	1,182	1,289
1998	2,924	—	1,216	1,332
1999	2,909	—	1,275	1,409
2000	2,812	—	1,405	1,515
2001	2,837	—	1,506	1,625
2002[2]	2,933	2,978	1,560	1,686
2003[2]	2,973	3,015	1,647	1,765
2004[2]	3,075	3,125	1,840	1,976

[1] Police strength headcount not collected prior to 2002.
[2] Comparable with previous years' data—excludes staff on career breaks and maternity/paternity leave.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the police received in funding in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [218615]

Ms Blears: Funding for the police service in England and Wales is set out in the following table.

£ million

	1997–98	*2003–04*
Home office police grant	3,473	4,288
Revenue support grant[1,2]	1,516	2,055
National non-domestic rates[1,2]	1,035	770
Total other grants[3]	—	658
Capital grants[4]	170	306
Revenue raised from council tax[1]	947	2,047
Total	7,141	10,124

[1] Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and National Assembly for Wales.
[2] Revenue Support Grant (RSG) includes SSA Reduction Grant and Central Support Protection grant in 1997–98. RSG and NNDR for the City of London Police are provided in respect of all the Corporation's functions.
[3] Specific grants for targeted programmes.
[4] Capital grants include Home Office police capital grant, supplementary credit approvals, Air Support, Premises Improvement Fund, Airwave capital and C3i. The figure for 1997–98 includes an element for major capital schemes allocated under the Priority Planning List (PPL) scheme.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the North Yorkshire Police Authority Medium Term Financial Plan 2005 to 2011. [221144]

Ms Blears: Each police authority is responsible for its own Medium Term Financial Plan, which will reflect the resource implications of local policing service levels and developments.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the central Government grant to Nottinghamshire constabulary was in *(a)* 1999–2000 and *(b)* 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [223207]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

£ million

	General grants[1]	*Specific grants*[2]	*Capital grant*[3]
1999–2000	110.7	0	4.3
2004–05	127.6	10.7	1.8

[1] Includes Home Office principal police grant, ODPM revenue support grant and redistributed business rates.
[2] Includes Crime Fighting Fund, Street Crime Initiative, BCU funding, CSO funding and Neighbourhood Policing Fund, DNA funding, Special Priority Payments and Airwave.
[3] Capital grant in 1999–2000 includes £3.4 million paid to Nottinghamshire Police Authority under the then arrangements to provide additional support for a limited number of major capital schemes each year. In addition, the authority received supplementary credit approvals of £2.6 million in 1999–2000 and £1.3 million in 2004–05 for grant supported borrowing.

Police Funding

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been allocated to police funding in each year since 2001. [201270]

Ms Blears: Government grant to support policing in England and Wales since 2001 is set out in the table.

£ million

	Home Office police grant	*National non-domestic rates*[1,2]	*Revenue support grant*[1,2]	*Total other grants*[3]	*Capital grants*[4]	*Total*
2001–02[5]	3,955	1,214	1,596	229	221	7,215
2002–03	4,005	1,311	1,504	349	316	7,485
2003–04	4,288	770	2,055	658	306	8,077
2004–05	4,380	744	2,222	708	261	8,315
2005–06	4,574	877	2,244	766	255	8,716

[1] Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and National Assembly for Wales.
[2] Revenue Support Grant (RSG) includes SSA Reduction Grant and Central Support Protection grant. RSG and NNDR for the City of London police is provided in respect of all its functions.
[3] Specific grants since 2000–01 for targeted programmes.
[4] Capital grants include Home Office police capital grant, supplementary credit approvals, Air Support, Premises Improvement Fund, Airwave capital and C3i. The figures included substantial capital for Airwave in 2001–02 (£74.3 million), 2002–03 (£101.2 million) and 2002–03 (£5.9 million). Totals up to 2001–02 include an element for major capital schemes allocated under the Priority Planning List (PPL) scheme.
[5] The grant figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are not directly comparable, owing to changes from 2002–03 in the method of funding the National Crime Squad and the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Prisons (Contestability Test)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will visit prison personnel at HM Prisons *(a)* Swaleside, *(b)* Elmley and *(c)* Standford Hill to discuss the contestability test; [224063]

(2) at which other prisons contestability tests will be conducted following those at HM Prisons Swaleside, Elmley and Standford Hill; and what implications for terms of employment of prison staff the contestability test has. [224064]

Paul Goggins: I hope to have the opportunity to visit staff at the three prisons on the Isle of Sheppey in the near future.

We are announcing one competition relating to prisons at this time. No decision has yet been taken about the future programme. If the public sector Prison Service is successful in its bid for running prisons on the Isle of Sheppey, there will be no changes to terms of employment of prison staff as a result of the competition. Should the public sector Prison Service be unsuccessful in its bid for running prisons on the Isle of Sheppey, then management of the "undertaking" will transfer to the private sector bidder.

All staff will form part of the "undertaking" and will therefore transfer to the new employers under the protection of TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking; Protection of Employment Act). TUPE provides that staff will transfer on such existing terms and conditions as those provided by the previous employer and thereafter changes in such terms and conditions will be negotiated directly between the new employer and the employees/recognised trade union as appropriate.

Pension arrangements for such staff have to be "broadly comparable" and within guidelines established by the Cabinet Office entitled "Fair Deal on Pensions".

Additionally, the recent establishment of the Code of Practice on Two-Tier Workforce, agreed by both the TUC and CBI, now makes provision that any new staff joining the transferred undertaking after the date of transfer must be employed on comparable terms and conditions as the existing workforce, hence creating a "level playing" field in terms of competition between bidders.

Private Mario Clarke

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 847–48W, on Private Mario Clarke, when a Home Office large murder inquiry system opened on the death of Private Mario Clarke; how many *(a)* officer hours were expended and *(b)* statements were taken (i) up to 31 January 2003 and (ii) in each month since January 2003; how many lines of inquiry were being pursued in relation to the death of Private Mario Clarke on 26 December 2003; and on what date a closing report was recorded. [215701]

Ms Blears: The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis reports that up to 31 January 2003 a total of 76 statements were taken. In each month since 31 January 2003, the following number of statements have been taken.

2003	*Number*
February	3
March	4
April	7
May	2
July	7
September	1

Up to December 2003 there had been six main lines of inquiry.

This is still an ongoing inquiry and as such no closing report has been completed.

The Met have indicated that information requested regarding the expansion of officer hours can be provided only at disproportionate expense to the Metropolitan Police Service.

Sex Abuse (Historical Cases)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what types of investigations other than historical sex abuse police use *(a)* trawling and *(b)* dip-sampling. [207457]

Ms Blears: The use of operational techniques in police investigations is an operational matter for the police. The Association of Chief Police Officers have advised that "dip-sampling", also referred to as "trawling", is rarely used during the course of police investigations. The use of "dip-sampling" is invariably limited to investigations involving allegations of historical sex abuse in care or residential homes, where the police need to identify any corroborating evidence relating to the allegations under investigation.

Sikhs

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will revise the Statutory Code of Practice to ensure that all public bodies recognise and monitor Sikhs for the purposes of the Race Relations Act 2000. [221660]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* I have no current plans to revise the current Statutory Code of Practice on the duty to promote race equality under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Statutory Code encourages public authorities to use the same ethnic classification system as the one used in the 2001 census, but it does provide public authorities with a degree of flexibility to add extra ethnic categories to fit their particular circumstances, providing these fit in with the census categories. This approach ensures consistency, allowing comparisons to be made over time and across different areas.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he last reviewed the list of Sikh organisations included in the list of groups proscribed in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [222550]

Ms Blears: The list of proscribed organisations is kept under regular review as a matter of policy, the Government do not comment on whether particular organisations are being considered for proscription or de-proscription under section 3 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Such decisions are only taken after the most careful consideration and on the basis of the best possible security advice.

Special Constables/CSOs (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* special constables and *(b)* community support officers there were in Leicester in each year since 2001. [222774]

Ms Blears: The following information has been provided by the chief constable of Leicestershire (Matt Baggott).

The table sets out the number of special constables deployed in the central area basic command unit which includes the City of Leicester from 2001.

Leicestershire constabulary—central area BCU Special constable strength

As at 31 March	*Special constable numbers*
2001	27
2002	19
2003	17
2004	23
2005 (18 March)	33

Source:
Leicestershire Constabulary

CSO were allocated to the central area basic command unit (BCU) for the first time during 2004–05. On 18 March 2004 the BCU had 22 CSOs.

Violent Crime

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on levels of violent crime. [216757]

Ms Blears: According to figures from the British Crime Survey (BCS), which are the most reliable indicator of long-term trends in violence in England and Wales, there were an estimated 2.52 million violent incidents in the 12 months to September 2004. Levels of violent crime are now stable after significant falls since the latter part of the 1990s—36 per cent. down from a peak in 1995 and 26 per cent. down from 1997. The fear of violent crime has also fallen steadily since 1998, with the proportion of adults with a high level of concern about violent crime down from 21 per cent. in 2002–03 to 16 per cent. in 2003–04.

Half of all violent incidents reported to the BCS in 2003–04 did not result in injury to the victim. However, this does not mean that public concern about violent crime is unjustified or that the ordeal of victims is not traumatic, even if injury has not occurred.

Recorded violent crime has risen since 1997, reaching 1.1 million incidents in 2003–04, but these data are affected by changes in reporting and recording practices. The Home Office Counting Rules for Recorded Crime were amended in 1998 to include a large number of offences particularly in the less serious violence categories. The introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002 also resulted in an increase in recorded crime. The effect of the change on the reported level of violent crime was estimated to be an increase of 20 per cent.

In addition, more violent crimes are being recorded by the police as public tolerance of violence in the family or by acquaintances diminishes. Along with a more proactive response from the police, more crimes that would have previously been unreported are finding their way into the official figures.

Witness Statements

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many witness statements were taken by police forces in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [208274]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Women Offenders

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in implementing the 2004 spending review commitment to pilot new approaches to *(a)* meet the needs of women offenders and *(b)* reduce the need for custody; and how much has been allocated from Home Office budgets to each. [217170]

Paul Goggins: The Home Secretary announced on 22 March 2005 that £9.15 million will be allocated to implement the 2004 spending review commitment to develop radical new approaches to meet the specific needs of women offenders.

This is the first time that Government funding has been allocated specifically to tackle women's offending. It will enable the development of a co-ordinated multi-agency response to women's offending and will show how this kind of approach can tackle issues such as drug dependency and mental health problems in the community and avoid the use of custody for women who do not need to be there.

Work Permits

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits were issued in each year since 1990 at *(a)* tier 1, broken down into categories *(a)* to *(e)* and *(b)* at tier 2. [223383]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The table outlines the number of work permits that were issued in each year since 2000 at *(a)* tier 1, broken down into categories *(a)* to *(e)* and *(b)* at tier 2. This two tier system was introduced in 2000 so figures are not available for previous years.

Work permits approved

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Tier 1						
Intra Company Transfers *(a)*	26,155	27,438	26,100	27,386	32,768	139,847
Board Level Posts *(b)*	974	788	607	473	392	3,234
Inward Investment *(c)*	53	41	26	24	19	163
Shortage Occupations *(d)*	24,485	47,718	49,916	41,847	40,120	204,086
Sponsored Researcher *(e)*	0	0	0	0	100	100
Total	51 ,667	75,985	76,649	69,730	73,399	347,430
Tier 2						
Total	19,103	28,591	41,109	51,487	55,618	195,908
Total	70,770	104,576	117,758	121,217	129,017	543,338

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Aggregates (Northamptonshire)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent research he has commissioned into the availability of glacial gravel and aggregate resources in Northamptonshire; and if he will make a statement. [223850]

Keith Hill: No recent research has been commissioned by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister into the availability of glacial gravels and aggregate resources in Northamptonshire. However, the British Geological Survey, funded through the Sustainable Land-Won and Marine Dredged Aggregate Minerals Programme, which is administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister within the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affair's Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund, is currently researching aggregate resource availability in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Region, an area that includes Northamptonshire. One of the objectives of this project is to collect new data on the sand and gravel resources, including those of a glacial origin, which occur in the study area. The project is expected to report in November 2006.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authority antisocial behaviour orders have been *(a)* applied for and *(b)* obtained in each local authority in each year since their introduction, broken down by recipients aged (i) under 10, (ii) 10 to 20, (iii) 20 to 30, (iv) 30 to 50 and (v) over 50 years; and how many have been breached in each case. [210757]

Ms Blears: I have been asked to reply.

The available information is given in tables which have been placed in the Library. Data prior to 1 June 2000 is not broken down by type of applicant. Data by the requested age groups are not readily available. However, age group data for juveniles (10–17) and adults (18+) are given. Antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) are not given to children under the age of 10.

Breach data are currently available for the period 1 June 2000 up to 31 December 2002. Data for 2003 are due to be released shortly

Asylum Seekers (Grants)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the payments and grants made by predecessor departments to each local authority in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland to reimburse the costs of supporting asylum seekers in each year from 1996–97 until the transfer of responsibility to the Home Office. [217783]

Mr. Raynsford: Immediately before 1 April 1999 the budget for support of asylum seekers was split between the then Department of Social Security (DSS) and the Department of Health (DoH). DSS were responsible for supporting applicants who made their application at a port of entry until such time as an initial decision was recorded on the claim for asylum. DoH picked up the costs of supporting those claiming asylum after entry and also all appellants (including those who made their original application on arrival). The budget for adult and family asylum seekers transferred to the Home Office on 1 April 1999. The budget for unaccompanied asylum seeking children transferred to the Home Office on 1 April 2000

For information on the costs the Government in relation to asylum seekers prior to 1999–2000, I refer the hon. Member to a response given by the then Home Secretary on 9 May 2000, *Official Report*, column 331W. The figures contained in the answer are global, and cover the entire of the UK. They cannot be broken down further into areas.

Gypsies and Travellers

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many *(a)* sites and *(b)* caravans he assesses would be reasonable to be contained within a Gypsy and Traveller development plan document drawn up by Brentwood borough council; [222206]

(2) what his assessment is of the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in *(a)* each (i) district and (ii) unitary authority in the county of Essex and *(b)* each county in the eastern region; and if he will make a statement; [222209]

(3) how he will assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in each *(a)* district, *(b)* county and *(c)* region; and if he will make a statement; [222211]

(4) how he will allocate the required number of Gypsy and Traveller sites between adjoining local authorities in each district, county and region. [223222]

Yvette Cooper: It is for Brentwood borough council to assess the need for Gypsy and Traveller sites in its area. The Housing Act 2004 will require that local authorities, when assessing local housing need should include the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and that they should develop a strategy on how to meet the needs identified.

Assessments of housing need are co-ordinated at the regional level and provide input to the revision of regional spatial strategies (RSS). Guidance in the draft circular "Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites" proposes that where there is an assessment of unmet need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the area the regional spatial strategy and development plan documents at local level should allocate land to meet those needs. The RSS should set out how the required number of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers might vary between constituent authorities. Development plan documents at local level should then allocate land to meet those needs.

In advance of provision in revised regional spatial strategies local authorities have a range of information available to them to inform the development of local policies and plans, including the twice-yearly caravan count, waiting lists for public sites and incidents of unauthorised encampment, and their own assessments.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria will be used in assessing a Gypsy and Traveller development plan document. [222207]

Yvette Cooper: Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that the purpose of the independent examination of a development plan document as being to determine whether:

(i) it satisfies the statutory requirements for the preparation of the plan as set out in section 19 of the Act and it is in general conformity with the regional spatial strategy or, in London, the spatial development strategy; and

(ii) it is sound.

A development plan document will be sound if it meets the procedural; conformity; and coherence, consistency, and effectiveness tests set out in paragraph 4.24 of Planning Policy Statement 12—Local Development Frameworks.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* authorised and *(b)* unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites there were in (i) each (A) district and (B) unitary authority in Essex and (ii) each county in the eastern region in the last five years for which figures are available. [222208]

Yvette Cooper: Detailed information on local authority Gypsy and Traveller sites in the east region is available in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans, as is data on the number of caravans on private authorised sites, unauthorised encampments and unauthorised developments of land without planning permission. The bi-annual count is published electronically on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website and paper copies are also available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Pickles: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he will use in deciding whether to exercise his powers to direct local authorities to draw up a Gypsy and Traveller development plan document; and if he will make a statement. [222210]

Yvette Cooper: Sections 21 and 27 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 set out the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's intervention and default powers. Planning Policy Statement 12—Local Development Frameworks paragraphs 4.31–4.35 sets out the circumstances in which the Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will use these powers.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1296W, on Traveller sites, for what reasons incorrect information was provided; which official was responsible for providing the incorrect information; when it was brought to Ministers' attention that incorrect information had been provided; and what action has been taken to prevent the re-occurrence of such errors. [219904]

Yvette Cooper: The original answer of 31 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 655W was inadequately researched. I was informed that the answer was inaccurate on 6 February 2005 and corrected this at the first opportunity in the pursuant answer of 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1296W. Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are regularly reminded of the importance of providing accurate information in parliamentary answers.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many unauthorised Traveller sites he estimates there are in each parliamentary constituency. [223138]

Yvette Cooper: The data gathered under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's bi-annual Gypsy and Traveller caravan count records the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans on authorised and unauthorised sites in each local authority area. The count is published electronically on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website and paper copies are also made available in the Libraries of the House. Data is not held centrally on the number of unauthorised sites on which Gypsy and Traveller caravans are found, neither is it possible to reorganise our data to reflect constituency boundaries.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on unauthorised Traveller encampments. [223416]

Yvette Cooper: The Government introduced new powers to deal with unauthorised camping in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. The joint Office of the Deputy Prime Minister/Home Office document, "Guidance on Managing Unauthorised Camping", was published in February 2004 and amended on 7 March 2005.

Homelessness

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much funding each local authority in London will receive from the Homelessness Directorate in 2005–06 to support local homelessness strategies; [223579]

(2) if he will make a statement on the funding available to support the Tower Hamlets Homelessness Strategy in 2005–06. [223580]

Yvette Cooper: The table shows the amount of homelessness funding allocated to each local authority in London for 2005–06. These grants are helping authorities to prevent homelessness, which can in turn generate wider savings in their General Fund expenditure on homelessness.

£

Local authority—London	*Revenue grant 2005–06 allocation up to*
Barking and Dagenham	28,000
Barnet	160,000
Bexley	58,000
Brent	740,000
Bromley	100,000
Camden	1,600,000
City of London	265,000
Croydon council	500,000
Ealing	600,000
Enfield	250,000
Greenwich	63,000
Hackney	550,000
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,400,000
Haringey	200,000
Harrow	178,000
Havering	27,000
Hillingdon	80,000
Hounslow	165,000
Islington	325,000
Kensington and Chelsea	875,000
Kingston upon Thames	90,000
Lambeth	2,000,000
Lewisham	100,000
Merton	80,000
Newham	200,000
Redbridge	100,000
Richmond	295,000
Southwark	1,050,000
Sutton	100,000
Tower Hamlets	735,000
Waltham Forest	200,000
Wandsworth	250,000
Westminster	6,500,000
Total	19,864,000

Mr. Gill: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been spent on supporting homeless people in *(a)* Leicester, South, *(b)* Leicester and *(c)* England since 1997. [223640]

Yvette Cooper: Before 2002–03 our homelessness grant funding was allocated to various voluntary organisations to support their work in reducing rough sleeping and tackling homelessness. It is not possible to break down allocations by local authority area prior to 2002–03.

Since 2002–03, homelessness grant funding has been mainly routed through local authorities to sustain rough sleeping, end the long term use of bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation for homeless families with children and to tackle homelessness more effectively. The following table is a breakdown of the total figure of homelessness grant funding allocated to Leicester city council (which would cover Leicester South) and all local authorities and voluntary sector agencies in England since 1997.

Homelessness grants

£ million

	Leicester	*England*
1997–98	—	12.0
1998–99	—	19.0
1999–2000	—	25.0
2000–01	—	39.0
2001–02	—	32.0
2002–03[1]	0.3	90.0
2003–04	0.4	70.0
2004–05	1.5	60.0

[1] First year of funding routed through all local authorities.

On 14 March, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced our new strategy for tackling homelessness "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives" which builds on our successes in tackling the worst aspects of homelessness—a 70 per cent. reduction in rough sleeping since 1998 and ending the long term use of homeless families with children living in B&B accommodation. It also sets out plans to reduce homelessness further and halve the use of temporary accommodation by 2010. On the same day, we announced that £200 million will be made available over the next three years to support homelessness prevention schemes.

A copy of "Sustainable Communities: settled homes; changing lives" has been made available in the Library of the House and is also available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at: www.odpm.gov.uk

The Supporting People programme which went live in April 2003 also plays an important part in tackling and preventing homelessness. How local authorities allocate Supporting People grant is a matter for local discretion. However, on the basis of expenditure patterns at April 2003, it is estimated that the sums in the following table were available to authorities to help tackle and prevent homelessness in their areas.

Client group	*Homeless families with support needs*	*Single homeless with support needs*	*Rough sleepers*
England			
2003–04	51,750,009	288,847,929	12,720,645
2004–05	51,225,000	286,947,000	12,505,000
Leicestershire County			
2003–04	64,576	1,096,914	0
2004–05	66,000	1,118,000	0
Leicester Unitary Council			
2003–04	1,621,164	4,841,224	0
2004–05	1,591,000	4,751,000	0

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is increasing the supply of new social rented homes by 50 per cent. by 2008, providing 75,000 new social rented homes over the next three years which, with our continued investment in homelessness prevention, will help to turn around the rising trend in homelessness.

Housing

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many affordable housing units were built or procured through the Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund in

London in each year since 1997–98, broken down by *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded general low cost ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovement to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase Homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative. [222371]

Substantive answer from Keith Hill to Oona King:

In my reply to your Parliamentary Question on 17 March about the number of dwellings built or procured through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) and Challenge Fund, in London, by various categories in each year since 1997–98, I undertook to write to you when the information had been collated.

The attached table shows the dwellings built, procured or improved under each of the headings listed. Miscellaneous works are not recorded as improved dwellings as the work undertaken is small scale, such as an adaptation for a person with a disability or improved insulation. New Build Homebuy and Key Worker Living were both introduced in 2004/05. The Starter Home Initiative (SHI) was a programme in its own right and was not included in the ADP.

A copy of this letter and the attachment is being placed in the House library.

Completions in London

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
ADP							
Mixed funded rent (inc Challenge Fund)	4,747	4,900	4,245	4,007	4,748	3,775	4,030
Temporary social housing	1,042	611	390	429	376	388	385
Homebuy Market Purchase (inc Challenge Fund)	0	0	445	655	466	426	1,373
Homebuy New Build	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed funded sale (inc Challenge Fund)	1,150	1,275	1,053	959	699	912	1,397
Miscellaneous works	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Re-improvements rent	190	251	433	172	138	146	180
Works Only rehabilitation	200	189	26	84	15	23	36
Re-improvements sale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Challenge Fund							
Intermediate Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	200
ADP Key Worker Living							
Homebuy Market Purchase for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homebuy New Build for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed funded sale for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Starter Home Initiative	0	0	0	0	13	1,373	2,639

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much Housing Corporation Approved Development Programme and Challenge Fund funding has been spent on *(a)* mixed funded social rented housing, *(b)* temporary social rented housing, *(c)* homebuy general market purchase, *(d)* homebuy general new build, *(e)* mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, *(f)* miscellaneous works to registered social landlord (RSL) stock, *(g)* reimprovements to rented RSL stock, *(h)* works-only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, *(i)* works-only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, *(j)* intermediate rented accommodation for key workers, *(k)* homebuy market purchase for key workers, *(l)* homebuy new build for key workers, *(m)* the London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase Homebuy, *(n)* mixed funded sale for key workers and *(o)* starter home initiative in London in each year since 1997–98. [222372]

Substantive answer from Keith Hill to Oona King:

In my reply to your Parliamentary Question on 17 March about the expenditure through the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme (ADP) and Challenge Fund in London by various categories in each year since 1997–98, I undertook to write to you when the information had been collated.

The attached table shows the expenditure attributed to each of the headings listed. New Build Homebuy and Key Worker Living were both introduced in 2004/05. The Starter Home Initiative (SHI) was a programme in its own right and was not included in the ADP.

A copy of this letter and the attachment is being placed in the House library.

Expenditure in London

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
ADP							
Mixed funded rent (inc Challenge Fund)	152.95	170.71	202.64	237.43	279.92	342.04	470.25
Temporary social housing	6.55	4.63	5.48	4.93	7.56	7.90	17.72
Homebuy Market Purchase (inc Challenge Fund)	0.00	0.00	11.64	18.95	15.16	16.28	60.22
Homebuy New Build	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mixed funded sale (inc Challenge Fund)	29.02	24.17	25.58	38.59	28.31	46.59	127.72

Expenditure in London

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Miscellaneous works	0.00	0.00	5.89	5.32	5.04	0.00	5.42
Re-improvements rent	0.00	0.00	6.53	5.26	3.26	3.46	8.08
Works Only rehabilitation	0.00	0.00	0.90	1.27	0.58	1.26	1.07
Re-improvements sale	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Challenge Fund							
Intermediate Rent	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	32.22
ADP KWL							
Homebuy Market Purchase for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Homebuy New Build for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
London Challenge Teacher Market Purchase	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mixed funded sale for key workers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Starter Home Initiative	0	0	0	0	0.35	40.99	98.19

Ideal Home Exhibition

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* capital and *(b)* running costs were of his stand at the Ideal Home Exhibition. [223594]

Yvette Cooper: The capital cost of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's corporate stand was £30,000. This stand represents the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister around the country at a wide variety of public and private events, and is expected to last for five years. The cost of attending the IHS was £52,730.

The Ideal Home Show will receive over 450,000 visitors over the four weeks from across the country. The stand is providing information on Building Regulations, Home Information Packs, Key Worker homes and Planning. Part of the stand is also dedicated to the Fire Kills campaign—an essential part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's drive to help reduce fire deaths.

Local Authority Finance (Lincolnshire)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much financial assistance his Department has provided to *(a)* North Lincolnshire council and *(b)* North East Lincolnshire council in each year since 1997. [223465]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established following the machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The tables set out the amounts of formula grant and other grants and payments made to *(a)* North Lincolnshire council and *(b)* North East Lincolnshire council by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister since 2002–03. For earlier years, the tables show the amounts paid by the predecessor Departments from programmes which are now administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

(a) Financial assistance to North Lincolnshire council

£ million

	Formula grant[1]	*Other grants and payments*[2]
1997–98	86.00	2.637
1998–99	90.638	3.287
1999–2000	95.031	3.441
2000–01	98.677	3.645
2001–02	101.332	6.701
2002–03	104.586	8.229
2002–03	116.245	10.409
2004–05	117.896	11.235

[1] These figures may not be comparable year-on-year due to changes in the funding and function of local authorities.
[2] For 2004–05 this is a forecast figure.

(b) Financial assistance to North East Lincolnshire council

£ million

	Formula grant[1]	*Other grants and payments*[2]
1997–98	98.355	2.848
1998–99	104.436	3.104
1999–2000	109.088	3.472
2000–01	114.535	4.42
2001–02	117.847	6.492
2002–03	120.577	7.429
2003–04	133.289	17.443
2004–05	133.996	23.982

[1] These figures may not be comparable year-on-year due to changes in the funding and function of local authorities.
[2] For 2004–05 this is a forecast figure.

Additionally, we have issued exceptional capitalisation directions to North East Lincolnshire for total maximum amounts of £4.5 million in 2003–04 and £10.5 million in 2004–05, and under our local government intervention programme we have approved a grant determination for £3.8 million, which relates to work for 2004–05 and it is as yet unclaimed.

Local Government Pension Scheme

Mr. Edwards: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress of negotiations with trade union representatives about the future of the Local Government Pension Scheme. [222676]

Phil Hope: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister announced on 18 March, following a constructive dialogue with local authority employers and trade unions that it has been decided to establish a tri-partite committee of key stakeholders to consider and negotiate the long term future of the Local Government Pension Scheme. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has made clear the intention to revoke the Local Government Pension

Scheme (Amendments) (No.2) Regulations 2004 at the earliest parliamentary opportunity, subject to statutory consultation, as required by the Superannuation Act 1972. A meeting with the employers and trade unions will be taking place as soon as possible to discuss the next steps with nothing ruled in and nothing ruled out.

Local Strategic Partnerships

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what status local strategic partnerships have within the democratic decision-making process of local government; and if he will make a statement. [223312]

Yvette Cooper: Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) are non-statutory, non-executive bodies which bring together public, private, voluntary and community interests to work together more effectively. They are not designed to replace local government, but are a vehicle through which councils can exercise their community leadership role by facilitating effective partnership—working to produce a strategic direction for a locality.

Elected officials who sit on LSPs also have a responsibility to scrutinise them, therefore maintaining a clear link to the democratic decision making process.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister to whom local strategic partnerships are accountable. [223313]

Yvette Cooper: Within a local strategic partnership (LSP), individual partners will remain responsible and accountable for decisions on their own services and the use of their own resources. Accountability to the partnership, therefore, cannot override these individual commitments. The LSP partner organisations already have established lines of accountability, to their own customers and the wider community. LSP accountability arrangements need to build on these frameworks.

While local authorities are legally required to prepare community strategies, in the community strategy guidance they are encouraged to see LSPs as the vehicle to determine and deliver these.

For the 88 areas receiving neighbourhood renewal fund (NRF) resources, although the local authority remains the accountable body, ultimately it is the responsibility of the LSP to determine their allocation with the aim of meeting the partners' strategic priorities, improving public services in the most deprived neighbourhoods, and contributing to the achievement of public sector agreement (PSA) targets to narrow the gap between deprived areas and the rest.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list local strategic partnerships. [223314]

Yvette Cooper: A local strategic partnership (LSP) is a non-statutory, non executive organisation which brings together public, private, voluntary and community interests to work together more effectively to improve the quality of life in their area. There is no one model for the structure of a LSP nor is an area obliged to set one up; what works in one area may not work in another. As such this information is not held centrally by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister but the Government Offices (GOs) would have this information.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister who is responsible for *(a)* appointments to and *(b)* removal of members of local strategic partnerships. [223315]

Yvette Cooper: Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) are a collaborative partnership where each member is an equal partner. Partners are not appointed by any one person or any one organisation. They join on a voluntary basis to help organise the delivery of local services more effectively. Each partner has a different contribution to make to secure the economic, social and environmental well being of an area for those who live and work there.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he monitors the activities of local strategic partnerships. [223316]

Yvette Cooper: Local strategic partnerships (LSPs) are voluntary bodies and have no statutory responsibilities. They rely on the goodwill of their partners to operate. Therefore they are not required to develop any formal performance management mechanisms.

However, LSPs in receipt of neighbourhood renewal funds resources have all now developed performance management frameworks. This is primarily a self-assessment process. To ensure the process is robust, since 2004 Government offices have undertaken an annual review, with the outcomes of performance management forming the basis of these reviews. Government offices provide the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister with a report on each of the 88 LSPs in September each year.

New Deal for Communities (North London)

Mr. Mark Field: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action has been taken to respond to the petition submitted to his Department in November 2004 by local residents regarding the New Deal for Communities project in the Seven Sisters area of North London; and if he will make a statement. [223319]

Yvette Cooper: The petition, on behalf of two expelled Partnership Board Members, has been carefully considered and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister remains satisfied that the expulsions were handled fairly.

Official Residences

Chris Grayling: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the official residences for which his Department is responsible; who occupies each one; what the annual cost is of running each property; what contribution the occupants of each make towards running costs; what the total capital and refurbishment expenditure has been on those properties in each of the past five years; how much money was spent in each property on *(a)* flowers and plants, *(b)* wine and entertaining, *(c)* food, *(d)* telephone bills and *(e)* electricity and gas in 2003–04; how many (i) domestic and (ii) maintenance staff are employed at each property, broken down by post; and what the total cost of staff employment was in 2003–04. [213562]

Yvette Cooper: With regard to which residences the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for and who occupies them, I refer the hon. Member to my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister's answer of 20 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 1037W.

On general running and refurbishment/maintenance costs of residences, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Member for Corby (Phil Hope) to the hon. Member for Hertford and Stortford (Mr. Prisk) on 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1733W.

The costs of other expenditure items in the official residence in Admiralty House of my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister are as follows:

(a) There have been no flowers or plants provided from public funds.

(b) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's entertainment budget does not detail expenditure by venue and this could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

(c) There has been no expenditure on food from public funds.

(d) The cost of telephone calls was £857.20 in 2003–04.

(e) The cost of electricity and gas was £1,361.00 in 2003–04.

i. There are no domestic staff providing services in the official residence occupied by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

ii. Maintenance within the residence is provided under a Cabinet Office contract and the cost of this is included within the service charge. There are no maintenance staff employed exclusively in my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's official residence.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister also has the use of Dorneywood, which is a Trust property available for use by Ministers.

Parking

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been spent on *(a)* provision of parking spaces for civil servants and *(b)* parking tickets and penalties incurred by civil servants in the Department and its predecessors in each year since 1997. [213831]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Car parking spaces are provided for staff (including those with disabilities) and visitors. For the buildings of both the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and its predecessors, the car parking spaces are included in the rent of each building and this element cannot be separated from the overall cost.

Civil servants in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are personally responsible for meeting the cost of any parking tickets and penalties they may incur. Since May 2002 one fine costing £50 has been paid by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This was as a result of a Government Car and Despatch Agency car being used by a member of staff incurring a penalty charge.

The value of any fines incurred prior to the establishment of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

This answer does not include information pertaining to Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Quality Mark

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the proposals developed in conjunction with the construction industry and consumer bodies to revive the Quality Mark initiative; whether he anticipates incorporating his Department's existing Competent Persons Schemes under the Building Regulations into the proposed successor initiative; and if he will make a statement. [223997]

Phil Hope: Officials from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have taken part in discussions with the Department for Trade and Industry, the construction industry and consumer bodies to develop a possible successor to the Quality Mark Initiative. Existing and future competent person schemes and their registered installers will be free to take part in any successor if they wish to do so.

Social Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 25 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 902W, on social housing (right to buy), what estimate he has made of the amount of capital receipts from right to buy sales in debt-free authorities that will be centrally pooled in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06, *(c)* 2006–07 and *(d)* 2007–08. [223296]

Keith Hill: Current estimates are tabled as follows:

	£ million
2004–05	51
2005–06	102
2006–07	150
2007–08	197

The increase year-on-year is a feature of the transitional arrangements, which allow debt-free local authorities to retain 75 per cent. of the value of poolable receipts in 2004–05, 50 per cent. in 2005–06 and 25 per cent. in 2006–07. The transitional arrangements end in 2007–08.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Office sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220952]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was formed in May 2002. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not use eBay to dispose of any surplus stock. Any surplus stock that cannot be used within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister or any other Government Department is disposed of in accordance with departmental procedures which are contained in the Procurement Manual.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Gill: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with mobile phone operators on the siting of phone masts. [223641]

Keith Hill: The last meeting between a Minister of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Mobile Operators Association was held with me on 24 March 2004.

Monday 4 April 2005

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Air Quality (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the concentration of *(a)* nitrogen dioxide, *(b)* sulphur dioxide and *(c)* benzene in Leicester has been in each year since 1997. [223643]

Alun Michael: The table shows annual mean concentrations (in micrograms per metre cubed) for nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide from 1997 to 2004 measured by the Automatic Urban and Rural Network (AURN) air monitoring site in Leicester.

There are no measurements of benzene in Leicester. The table includes measurements from Birmingham, East (1997 to 2000) and Birmingham Roadside (2002–04). These are the nearest benzene monitors to Leicester.

Annual mean concentrations for nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide, measured by the Automatic Urban and Rural Network air monitoring site in Leicester, and for benzene measured at Birmingham, East (1997 to 2000) and Birmingham Roadside (2002–04)

Micrograms per metre cubed

	Nitrogen dioxide	*Sulphur dioxide*	*Benzene*
1997	41	10	3.3
1998	40	10	2.8
1999	41	9	2.4
2000	34	7	1.4
2001	35	9	—
2002	35	6	3.4
2003	37	6	3.8
2004	37	4	3.2

All historic and current air quality measurements from the AURN are published at www.airquality.co.uk

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much was paid under the Common Agricultural Policy to farmers in each *(a)* constituency, *(b)* county and *(c)* region of England in the last period for which figures are available. [213156]

Alun Michael: Tables setting out payments to farmers under the Common Agricultural Policy will be made available in the Library of the House.

The data relates to farm based schemes for the 2004 European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004.

The schemes included are:

Arable Area Payment

Beef Special Premium

Suckler Cow Premium

Extensification Premium

Slaughter Premium

Sheep Annual Premium

England Rural Development Programme

Structural Funds[1]

Over-thirty-months Slaughter

Payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of the farming activity.

[1] Structural funds are moneys made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe.

Crufts

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of her Department's stand at Crufts; how many man days were used to *(a)* erect and *(b)* man it; and what its purpose was. [223937]

Alun Michael: The costs of Defra's attendance at Crufts 2005 was as follows:

Cost of stand build including graphics production and literature storage—£9,031 plus VAT

Defra man days to install—1

Defra man days to occupy stand—19 (Thursday 4, Friday 5, Saturday 5, Sunday 5)

Defra attends many specialist exhibitions and shows as part of it's on-going communication with stakeholders. Crufts provides an excellent opportunity to target pet owners with messages about the Pets Travel Scheme, rabies, Countryside Rights of Way, the DACTARI scheme about exotic diseases in cats and dogs, the draft Animal Welfare Bill, and EU and UK legislation relating to the responsible ownership of dogs.

Environment Agency Inspectors

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many inspectors have been employed by the Environment Agency in the exercise of functions previously conducted within Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution in each year since 1997. [224007]

Mr. Morley: At the present time the Environment Agency has 335 employees working on tasks that would formerly have fallen under the umbrella of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution.

This is the readily available information. I will write to the hon. Member within the next three weeks when I have received further information from the Environment Agency.

Farm Support

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much public money was spent on support for farming in England in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* constituency, *(b)* county and *(c)* region. [213155]

Alun Michael: Tables setting out the amount of public money which has been spent on support for farming in England will be made available in the Library of the House.

In this context public funding is taken to mean the Exchequer funded element of payments under the Common Agricultural Policy which are not reimbursable by the European Commission.

The data relates to farm-based schemes for the 2004 European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004.

The main schemes included are:

England Rural Development Programme

Structural Funds [1]

Over-thirty-months Slaughter

All of which are jointly funded, in differing proportions, between Exchequer and EAGGF elements.

Payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of the farming activity.

[1] Structural funds are moneys made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000-01. [220948]

Alun Michael: Defra has not used the eBay auction website to dispose of surplus stock.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Disabled Teachers

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teachers in *(a)* primary schools and *(b)* secondary schools have registered disabilities in (i) Leicester, South and (ii) England. [224280]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Education Spending (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on education in Crosby in each of the last seven years. [223884]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is collected at local education authority level. Crosby is part of Sefton LEA and the following table contains the information requested:

Total funding (real terms) from 1997–98 to 2004

	Total funding (£ million)
1997–98	128.5
1998–99	133.4
1999–2000	139.2
2000–01	152.9
2001–02	161.2
2002–03	165.6
2003–04	173.7
2004–05	177.2

Notes:

1. Price Base: Real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education SSA/EFS settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. Where responsibility for funding a school transferred from an LEA, related funding no longer appears in the series.
5. Rounding: figures are rounded to the nearest £0.1 million.
6. Status: 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have not yet been finalised/audited.

Ethnic Minority Teachers

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans the Government have to *(a)* recruit more ethnic minority teachers and *(b)* encourage more people from ethnic minorities to become school governors. [223879]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Teacher Training Agency's commitment to increase the recruitment of trainees from minority ethnic backgrounds to 9 per cent. of the allocated training places has been a priority since 2000.

In 2004, the provisional figures for entry to initial teacher training show that 2,934 trainees (9.1 per cent.) were from a minority ethnic background. This is an increase of 759 (35 per cent.) additional trainees recruited since 2002. Despite meeting the 9 per cent. target, it remains a priority for the agency to further increase recruitment of trainee teachers from a minority ethnic background.

There are approximately 350,000 school governor places at maintained schools in England. 12 per cent. of serving governors are from a minority ethnic background.

Responsibility for the recruitment and appointment of school governors is shared between local authorities, schools themselves and any relevant body—such as a faith organisation—for schools with foundations. These local organisations are best placed to identify the most successful ways to recruit good quality, suitable candidates. The Department supports the recruitment activities of schools and LEAs by providing the generic Help Schools Help Children recruitment leaflets, available in 11 minority languages, and a recruitment toolkit. Additionally, since November 1999, the Department has funded the School Governors' One Stop Shop (SGOSS) to recruit school governor volunteers with transferable skills from the business world. Since their establishment SGOSS have identified 6,437 candidates. Of these candidates 3,047 have already been appointed to governing bodies, with 18 per cent. coming from a minority ethnic background.

Food Provision

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public subsidies were available to *(a)* employers and *(b)* training providers delivering national vocational qualification food preparation and cooking at levels one to four in each of the past three years. [223955]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Learning and Skills Council funds these qualifications as part of apprenticeship programmes or through colleges and other providers working with employers.

The Learning and Skills Council funding rates are in the attached annex.

Annex A

Funding through apprenticeships

Food processing and cooking: NVQ at level 2

	16–18 rate	*19+ rate*
2002/03	3,106	1,941
2003/04	3,449	2,242
2004/05	3,535	2,398

Food preparation and cooking: NVQ level 3

	16–18 rate	*19+ rate*
2002/03	5,797	3,106
2003/04	6,437	3,449
2004/05	6,598	3,889

Funding through FE colleges

NVQ levels 1 and 2 in food processing and cooking (normally delivered over one year)

	Mode A	*Mode B*
2002/03	1,482	991
2003/04	1,411	943
2004/05	1,282	857

NVQ levels 3 and 4 in food preparation and cooking (normally delivered over two years)

	Mode A	*Mode B*
2002/03	2,964	1,982
2003/04	2,822	1,886
2004/05	2,564	1,714

Mode A: Delivery by provider and employer jointly, mainly at the workplace and partly at provider
Mode B: Delivery by provider and employer jointly, entirely at the workplace

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what *(a)* public and *(b)* trade consultation was carried out during the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority funded consultation on the People 1st National Vocational Qualification for food preparation and cooking; which organisations made representations (i) supporting and (ii) opposing the inclusion of a mandatory nutrition unit at levels 1 to 4; and for what reasons. [223957]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: People 1st held over 30 consultation meetings throughout the UK for employers, industry and training providers, FE colleges, external verifiers and the Food Standards Agency (FSA). In addition, 571 people downloaded the Standards from the People 1st website.

The DfES and the FSA both supported the inclusion of a mandatory nutrition unit. The majority of industry personnel consulted were opposed to the inclusion of a mandatory nutrition unit because a knowledge-based unit would not be easily assessable in the workplace and because it would not reflect current work practice.

Learning and Skills Council

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Learning and Skills Council spent on consultants in 2004; and if she will make a statement. [223669]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to my hon. Friend with this information and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Letter from Mark Haysom to Mr. David Drew, dated 31 March 2005:

I write further to your recent question to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills regarding how much the LSC spent on consultants in 2004.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) financial year 2004–05 covers the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005. At this juncture my officers are in the process of implementing rigorous year end procedures to ensure that all activity occurring during the 2004–05 financial year is correctly accounted for, this will then be impartially audited by the National Audit Office prior to publication of the LSC's Annual Report and Accounts. As you will appreciate these accounts are predicated on assurance work undertaken in partnership with a number of providers, such as FE Colleges and WBL providers. As a result, the LSC's accounts will not be available until some time later in the year.

Consequently, the most recent financial year for which the information you have requested is available is 2003–04.

Table 1 below shows the total expenditure coded as consultancy in the LSC's accounts for the 2003–04 financial year.

£000

Organisation	*National*	*Regional*[1]	*Local*	*Total*
Higher Education Funding Council	8,814	0	0	8,814
KPMG LLP	3,513	0	129	3,642
Learning and Skills Development Agency	3,328	0	5	3,333
NIACE	1,890	0	10	1,900
RSM Robson Rhodes	1,825	0	2	1,827
Prospects Services Ltd.	0	0	1,638	1,638
Baker Tilly	1,588	0	0	1,588
Pricewaterhouse Coopers	1,376	0	0	1,376
Oakleigh Consulting	1,038	0	0	1,038
Raithbone Training Company	924	0	2	926
Other consultancy firms	27,441	0	16,510	43,951
Total	51,737	0	18,296	70,033

[1] A regional structure to further strengthen the LSC's focus upon delivering frontline provision was introduced during the 2004–05 financial year. Unfortunately, 2003–04 expenditure cannot be analysed on a Regional basis.

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Nutrition Training

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what plans she has to include nutrition as a mandatory unit within the new Food Preparation and Cooking NVQ; [223952]

(2) what her policy is on the inclusion of a mandatory nutrition unit in the national vocational qualification for food preparation and cooking. [223956]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Qualifications relating to food preparation and cooking are developed in response to employers needs, and at this point most employers do not want nutrition as a mandatory element. However, our recent work on improving school meals has shown the advantages of school catering staff having knowledge of nutrition and healthy eating. DfES, the Food Standards Agency and People 1st are developing the content of a school catering qualification that will provide basic knowledge of this subject, and we envisage the recently announced School Food Trust will consider this and other issues related to training school kitchen staff in due course.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what further consultation occurred after the expiry of the formal consultation deadline of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority funded consultation on the People 1st National Vocational Qualification, regarding whether nutrition should be a *(a)* mandatory and *(b)* optional unit at levels 1 to 4. [226958]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: There was further consultation on the standards and the levels of some units. Nutrition was covered in this consultation and, again, the results indicated that there was not a strong enough industry view that nutrition should be included as a mandatory unit in the new food preparation and cooking N/SVQs.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what meetings have taken place between Ministers in her Department and *(a)* People 1st and *(b)* the Food Standards Agency in relation to the development of nutrition elements of the national vocational qualification for food preparation and cooking. [226959]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: No such meetings have taken place.

Pupil Funding (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent on each school pupil in Crosby on average in each of the last seven years. [223882]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is collected at local education authority level. Crosby is part of Sefton LEA and the following table contains the information asked for:

Funding (real terms) per pupil aged 3–19

	Funding per pupil (£ million)
1997–98	2,740
1998–99	2,810
1999–2000	2,930
2000–01	3,200
2001–02	3,360
2002–03	3,480
2003–04	3,640
2004–05	3,770

Notes:

1. Price Base: real terms at 2003–04 prices, based on GDP deflators as at 30 September 2004.
2. Figures reflect relevant sub-blocks of education SSA/EFS settlements and exclude the pensions transfer to EFS and LSC.
3. Total funding also includes all revenue grants in DfES departmental expenditure limits relevant to pupils aged 3–19 and exclude EMAs and grants not allocated at LEA level.
4. The pupil numbers used to convert m figures to per pupil are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus PLASC three-year-old maintained pupils and estimated three to four-year-olds funded through state support in maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
5. Rounding: figures are rounded to the nearest £10.
6. Status: 2003–04 and 2004–05 figures are provisional as some grants have yet to be finalised/audited.

School Buildings (North-West)

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many schools have been refurbished since 1997 in *(a)* Liverpool, Riverside, *(b)* Liverpool, *(c)* Merseyside and *(d)* the North-West; [223982]

(2) how many new schools have been built since 1997 in *(a)* Liverpool, Riverside, *(b)* Liverpool local education authority, *(c)* Merseyside and *(d)* the North-West. [223984]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We do not hold this level of detailed information centrally. The information will be held locally. Much of the Department's support for capital investment is allocated to local authorities and schools so that investment decisions can be made locally, based on asset management planning processes. We have, however, made available significant capital support. Last November we announced capital allocations covering the next three years. This means that schools in Liverpool, Merseyside and the North-West will benefit from the following investment:

2005–06 to 2007–08

	£ million
North-West	652.7
Merseyside	146.3
of which:	
Liverpool	37.7

In addition, Knowsley, Lancashire and Manchester are in wave 1 of Building Schools for the Future, and are due to receive investment under that programme from 2005–06. Liverpool will be in wave 2 (2006–07), and Salford and Tameside will be in wave 3 (2007–08). Building Schools for the Future aims to renew, refurbish and transform the secondary schools' estate over 15 waves.

School Catering

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the reasons were for introducing a new vocational qualification for school catering managers and staff from April. [223934]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: In 2004, the Department for Education and Skills in partnership with the Food Standards Agency funded research that looked at school lunch standards in 79 secondary schools in England. It found that pupils made healthier food choices in those schools where catering staff had received training. It is for this reason that we are developing a new qualification for school catering staff.

School Funding (Wimbledon)

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Wimbledon in each of the last seven years. [224244]

Derek Twigg: The Department does not hold information on funding for ICT in schools at constituency level. However, Wimbledon is in Merton LEA and allocations for this authority since 1998 are detailed in "Funding for ICT in Schools in England" which is available in the House Library.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding each school in Wimbledon has received under the new deal for schools. [224245]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Merton local education authority (LEA) was allocated the following amounts under the four phases of new deal for schools (NDS):

£000

Period	*NDS funding*
1997/98	360
1998/99	1,287
1999/2000	1,217
2000/01	1,922

Of the funding included in the table, Wimbledon schools received £106,998. Information on other projects is not held centrally.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Wimbledon in each year since 1997. [224246]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The following table indicates the level of capital funding allocated to Merton local education authority since 1997:

£000

Period	*Total capital allocation*
1996/97	383
1997/98	583
1998/99	2,022
1999/2000	4,214
2000/01	5,032
2001/02	12,574
2002/03	[1]71,923
2003/04	7,293
2004/05	5,836

[1] Includes £56,600,000 of PFI credits.

Decisions regarding how the allocation is spent are taken locally by the local education authority. Information is not held centrally on how much is spent on repairing each school in Wimbledon.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Wimbledon *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [224247]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Information on the number of teaching assistants in service is collected in January of each year. The following table shows the number of teaching assistants in maintained schools in Wimbledon from 1997 to 2004, the latest information available.

Full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants

	Teaching assistants
1997	70
1998	80
1999	80
2000	90
2001	110
2002	100
2003	100
2004	150

Notes:
1. Figures include non-maintained special.
2. Teaching assistant figures include nursery assistants, special needs and support staff and minority ethnic pupil support staff.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

Source:
Annual School Census.

Synthetic Phonics

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will undertake a review of the National Literacy Strategy following the publication of the Clackmannanshire research into synthetic phonics teaching of reading. [223996]

Derek Twigg: The National Literacy Strategy has constantly evolved since its introduction in 1998 in response to the latest research. This will continue to be the case.

The Clackmannanshire study is a valuable piece of research which highlights the importance of having a well structured and direct programme of synthetic phonics teaching in schools. It lends further weight to the approach to teaching reading and spelling advocated by the National Literacy Strategy which has at its heart early and direct instruction in synthetic phonics, very similar to the teaching methods trialled in Clackmannanshire.

While the pupils who took part in the Clackmannanshire study made significantly faster gains than pupils in the control group, their attainment in reading comprehension was broadly the same as that achieved by an average 11-year-old in an English school who would be taught using the National Literacy Strategy.

Teachers (Key Stage 3)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate she has made of the

number of Key Stage 3 teachers who are *(a)* not fully qualified in the subject they are teaching and *(b)* not fully qualified to teach the age group they are teaching. [223893]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Details of the qualifications held by secondary school teachers in the subject they teach are available but cannot be split by Key Stage level. The information was published in table 24 of the Statistics of Education, School Workforce in England Volume, 2004 edition, a copy of which has been placed in the House of Commons Library. Alternatively it may be accessed at the following URL: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/VOL/v000554/index.shtml

No estimate has been made of the number of Key Stage 3 teachers who are not fully trained to teach at that level.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Referendums

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission which EU institutions may be permitted participants in a referendum, under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [224264]

Mr. Viggers: Section 105(1) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA) sets out the definition of 'permitted participant' in relation to a particular referendum to which Part VII of that Act applies. Ultimately, it would be for the courts to decide whether any particular body falls within the scope of this definition in relation to any particular referendum.

As I informed the hon. Member for Vauxhall (Kate Hoey) on 7 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1666–67W, The Electoral Commission has already indicated that it does not regard the European Commission as falling into any of the categories of organisation that can be a permitted participant in a referendum on the EU Constitution. Beyond this, the Commission has not expressed any views on whether EU institutions may be permitted participants in any particular referendum to which Part VII of PPERA applies.

PRIME MINISTER

Audiences with the Queen

Mr. Allen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will ask Her Majesty the Queen to allow cameras to film *(a)* the audience he has with Her Majesty when he requests the dissolution of Parliament and *(b)* the audience Her Majesty has with the person invited to form the next Government. [224567]

The Prime Minister: I have no plans to do so.

Iraq War (Legal Advice)

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister what classification the Attorney-General's legal advice on the use of force in Iraq has under the Official Secrets Act 1989. [224458]

The Prime Minister: The Official Secrets Act does not prescribe any classification system for Government documents.

Adam Price: To ask the Prime Minister whether the Government *(a)* showed the Attorney-General's legal advice on the use of force in Iraq to and *(b)* discussed the legal advice with the US Administration. [224459]

The Prime Minister: It is not the practice of the Government to make public details of all discussions with foreign Governments.

Lord Birt

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether Lord Birt has requested that his position be turned into a paid one. [224024]

The Prime Minister: There are no plans to change Lord Birt's status as an unpaid adviser.

Sudan

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the Government of Sudan regarding the situation in Darfur. [224087]

The Prime Minister: We are in constant contact with the Government of Sudan about the crisis in Darfur, both at ministerial and official level. I visited Sudan in October last year, and since then the embassy in Khartoum has monitored commitments given to me during that visit. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary (Mr. Straw) recently met the Sudanese Foreign Minister in London on 10 February.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Council Grants (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding theatres in Leicester have received from the Arts Council since 1997. [223639]

Estelle Morris: Total grant in aid funding from Arts Council England for theatres in Leicester since 1999 is shown in the table:

£

	Total grant in aid funding
1999–2000	942,150
2000–01	971,965
2001–02	993,420
2002–03	1,279,151
2003–04	1,379,360
2004–05	1,467,332

Information regarding funding between 1997 and 1999 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Institute of Sport Reviews

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the external reviews that have been undertaken into *(a)* the United Kingdom

Institute of Sport and *(b)* the English Institute of Sport; and if she will place a copy of each report in the Library. [222157]

Mr. Caborn: An external review of the English Institute of Sport was conducted by KPMG in June 2003. A copy of the report will shortly be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

There have been no external reviews of the United Kingdom Institute of Sport.

Licensing

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on how the new licensing regulations will apply to eating establishments. [224195]

Mr. Caborn: The Licensing Act 2003 affects eating establishments to the extent that they carry out any licensable activities—that is, the sale by retail of alcohol; the provision of regulated entertainment; and the supply of late night refreshment (i.e. the provision of hot food or drink to members of the public between the hours of 11 pm and 5 am for consumption on or off the premises). For example, the proprietor of a restaurant with a bar which currently has a justices' licence permitting the sale of alcohol under Part IV of the Licensing Act 1964 will need to convert to a premises licence. He can apply to extend his hours and/or provide regulated entertainment under the same licence. Further details of how and in what circumstances applications could and should be made can be found on our website (www.culture.gov.uk < http://www.culture.gov.uk >) under alcohol and entertainment.

Olympic Bid

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what undertakings the Government have given to the London Olympic Bid team on meeting shortfalls in the budget for a London Olympics should the bid be successful. [223707]

Tessa Jowell: The costs of staging and operating a London Olympic Games would be met and managed by the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG). In line with the requirements made by the International Olympic Committee of candidate cities, the UK Government have provided a guarantee that underwrites these costs.

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport which locations outside London the International Olympic Committee visited during its recent visit. [224292]

Tessa Jowell: The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Evaluation Commission decided only to visit those venue locations outside the Greater London area which have not previously held World Class Events. The locations visited were: Broxbourne, Hertfordshire (canoe slalom); Weald, Essex (mountain biking); and Eton Dorney, Berkshire (rowing and flat water canoeing).

Playing Fields (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many playing fields that were in use in 1997 in Leicester, South constituency are no longer used for that purpose. [223655]

Mr. Caborn: This information is not held centrally. Through Active Places we are creating a new database which, from June 2005, will be able to identify the current stock of playing pitch provision and how that changes over time.

The Government have dramatically reduced the overall number of sales of both school and community playing fields, by introducing legislative changes and improving checks to the planning system.

We fully support the recent upgrade of the rules governing the sale of school playing fields. As a result of the changes, the sale of a school playing field must now be an absolute last resort, sale proceeds must be used to improve outdoor facilities wherever possible and new sports facilities must be sustainable for at least 10 years.

Sport (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance the Government have given to *(a)* amateur sports clubs and *(b)* sport in schools in York since 1997. [224592]

Mr. Caborn: In April 2002 the Government introduced the Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) scheme. It provides such clubs with a relief of 80 per cent. on their non-domestic rates and Gift Aid on donations from individuals, as part of a wider package of benefits intended to promote community and grass roots sport.

More than 2,400 clubs have so far registered with the scheme and received an estimated total of £5 million in tax reliefs as a result of doing so.

21 clubs in York are enjoying the benefits of CASC status.

In 2002 we launched the first ever comprehensive national physical education, school sport and club links strategy with an investment of £459 million. Two school sport partnerships involving seven School Sport Co-ordinators and 31 Primary Link teachers are based at Oaklands and Burnholme schools in the City of York.

Sport England

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what criteria are used to assess Sport England's performance in meeting the Government's criteria for *(a)* partnership with and *(b)* funding of voluntary sector organisations. [224306]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport assesses Sport England's performance at quarterly meetings, on the basis of our Funding Agreement. The current Funding Agreement contains no references to criteria for partnership with, or funding of voluntary sector organisations.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what provisions are included in Sport England's contract with national

governing bodies of sport under the Whole Sport Funding Plan concerning *(a)* public announcements, *(b)* confidentiality, *(c)* disrepute and *(d)* adverse comments about Sport England. [224307]

Mr. Caborn: The following provisions are incorporated within Sport England's contracts with national governing bodies of sport under the Whole Sport Plan funding arrangements:

(a) Public Announcements

There are no specific clauses in the agreement as currently drafted that refer to public announcements. The agreement does not prevent Governing Bodies from making public announcements about Sport England, although Sport England does ask for prior consultation before any press announcement is released.

(b) Confidentiality

The agreement requests that neither party disclose information relating to the agreement, its subject matter, the negotiations or the other party unless that information is publicly available or is required to be disclosed by law, provided that Sport England shall disclose all information it holds that it is required to disclose in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Governing Body shall assist Sport England if required in order that Sport England may comply with its obligations under this Act. The clause relating to confidentiality places reciprocal obligations and is intended to protect the interests of both parties.

(c) Disrepute

The agreement provides that neither party shall act in a way that brings the Governing Body's sport, sport or Sport England into disrepute. This does not prevent adverse comments and complaints being made about Sport England through the appropriate channels. If there is any case of genuine misadministration, there is nothing in the agreement to prevent the Governing Body from raising this and pursuing any appropriate means of redress,

(d) Adverse Comment

There is no mention of adverse comment in the body of agreement and no restrictions on Governing Bodies making adverse comments, subject to the disrepute clause. There is a requirement in Annex 3 that athletes who are funded or supported by a Sport England award agree not to make adverse comments about his or her sport, sport in general or Sport England.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* staff head count was and *(b)* total salary costs were at Sport England in each year since 2000. [224308]

Mr. Caborn: The table provides a breakdown of figures for the number of staff and annual salary costs for Sport England since 2001–02:

	2001–02 Actuals		*2002–03 Actuals*		*2003–04 Actuals*		*2004–05 Projections*	
	Number of staff	*Cost (£000)*	*Number of staff*	*Cost (£000)*	*Number of staff*	*Cost (£000)*	*Number of staff*	*Cost (£000)*
North East	20	504	22	664	20	633	14	561
Yorkshire	20	557	21	602	12	634	18	644
East Midlands	14	529	17	643	15	644	11	567
East	20	541	19	579	18	658	15	613
London	22	642	22	717	20	818	18	810
South East	29	864	30	934	19	826	21	767
South West	19	531	21	624	22	639	17	670
West Midlands	21	545	23	593	21	626	16	671
North West	25	721	23	792	15	692	18	718
Headquarters	258	12,463	200	12,469	124	8,750	127	6,677
Total	435	17,895	385	18,617	273	14,920	275	12,698

Sport England changed its accounting system for the 2001–02 year. Information is therefore not readily available for previous financial years.

The costs shown include posts funded through specific programmes by other agencies and temporary staff costs. The headcount numbers exclude posts funded through specific programmes and temporary staff as these can vary throughout the year. For 2001–02, the average number of externally funded staff was 42 and temporary staff was 96, bringing the total staff number to 573.

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations have been received from sports national governing bodies about Sport England's Whole Sport Funding Plan. [224309]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 558W. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has subsequently received representations about Sport England's Whole Sport Plans from the Rugby Football Union (RFU), on behalf of the RFU, the Lawn Tennis Association, the Football Association and the England and Wales Cricket Board.

CABINET OFFICE

Contaminated Land

Llew Smith: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when his department's business regulation team will publish the Remediation Licensing Task Force proposals for permitting on-site processing of contaminated soils. [224465]

Mr. Miliband: Cabinet Office officials have been involved in the work of the Remediation Licensing Task Force. However, the Environment Agency is the regulator responsible for enforcing the new system. The Agency published a press release, along with a supporting

regulatory guidance note setting out the changes, on 29 March 2005. The announcement was welcomed by the Environmental Industries Commission.

Waste Policy

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office whether the review to assess the merits of focusing all central Government's waste policy in one Department undertaken by his Department following the Strategy Unit's Report, Waste not want not, has been completed; and what date he has planned for the publication of its conclusions. [224301]

Mr. Miliband: The Cabinet Office expect to finalise this review shortly and to publish its conclusions during the summer.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Annunciator System

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) if he will bring forward changes to the current practices of television annunciator use on the parliamentary estate so that sets do not turn on automatically in non-public spaces; [222398]

(2) what steps are taken to ensure that television sets on the parliamentary estate are not automatically activated on non-sitting days. [222509]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: There are different types of annunciator and television sets on the parliamentary estate, all of which are presently pre-set to turn on each working day in public and non public spaces whether or not the House is sitting. It would be possible to set them to be off on non-sitting days. But the majority are older style annunciators which cannot be switched on by means of remote handset and are sited out of easy reach. They could therefore be switched on individually only at disproportionate cost.

Misuse of House of Commons Facilities

Mr. Steen: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission when he expects the Serjeant at Arms to report on the alleged misuse of House prepaid envelopes by the hon. Member for Teignbridge (Richard Younger-Ross). [223948]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: This is not a matter for the Commission. Any complaints that the rules on the use of House stationery and post-paid envelopes have been breached are considered by the Serjeant at Arms on behalf of Mr. Speaker.

Printer Cartridges

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will estimate how many printer cartridges used by offices on the parliamentary estate were *(a)* recycled and *(b)* added to the general waste stream in the last year for which figures are available. [222399]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: In the current financial year, the Serjeant at Arms Department has sent 1,066 printer cartridges for recycling. Members are encouraged to hand cartridges to Office Keepers for recycling but many prefer to send them to other organisations or charities to be recycled. In addition, 120 photocopier toner cartridges have been recycled. Since Members place orders to purchase cartridges for their parliamentary and constituency offices directly with suppliers, the total number purchased is unknown.

Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what targets have been set to reduce the amount of waste material produced on the parliamentary estate; and if he will make a statement on the outcomes measured against those targets. [222327]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: It is the House's policy to minimise waste, but no quantified targets have been set.

TREASURY

Alcohol/Tobacco (Tax Revenues)

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total tax revenues earned from alcohol and tobacco were in the UK in each year since 1975, broken down by *(a)* duty paid and *(b)* tax raised from alcohol and tobacco. [223703]

John Healey: Tobacco and alcohol duty revenue figures are published by HM Customs and Excise in the Tobacco and Alcohol Factsheets, copies of which are available in the Library of the House and from Customs' website: www.uktradeinfo.com

The above website provides 10 years' information on tobacco and alcohol duty revenues. HM Customs and Excise do not collect data on VAT from individual goods or services, but the above website provides broad estimates of VAT on alcohol and tobacco in recent years. The back series of duty revenues are shown in the Office for National Statistics publication "Financial Statistics", table 2.1D, which is available at the ONS website: www.statistics.gov.uk

Annual Growth Rate

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps the *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU economies are taking to meet the objective of 3 per cent. annual growth to bridge the economic gap with the United States. [224142]

Mr. Timms: The European Council concluded at its spring meeting this year that

> 'it is essential to relaunch the Lisbon Strategy without delay and re-focus priorities on growth and employment'.

The Government are committed to promoting economic reform at home and in Europe. And they continue to work closely with other member states and the Commission to advance structural reform.

The Government's annual report sets out the measures and reforms they believe are required to deliver the Lisbon objective. The 2005 report, "Growth and Opportunity: prioritising economic reform in Europe",[1] was published in February this year. Further analysis was set out in the 2005 Budget companion document, "Long-term global economic challenges and opportunities for Europe".[2]

[1] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/261/64/Growth_and_Opportunity-381MB.pdf

[2] http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/A1D/6B/global_final_140305.pdf

Burmese Community

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the size of the Burmese community in the UK. [223679]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Alistair Carmichael dated 4 April 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your parliamentary Question on the size of the Burmese community in the UK. (223679)

The Office for National Statistics does not collect and code information specifically on those persons identifying themselves as ethnically Burmese.

We do, however, collect and code information on country of birth in the census of population, such that persons who reported Myanmar (Burma) as their country of birth can be estimated every 10 years. The number of persons born in Myanmar and resident in the United Kingdom at the time of the 2001 census was 9,922.

Among those born in Myanmar and resident in the United Kingdom at the time of the 2001 census, the main ethnic groups were as follows: white, 3,759 people (38 per cent); mixed ethnic group, 1,792 people (18 per cent); Indian, 1,049 people (11 per cent); and other ethnic group, 2,838 people (29 per cent).

Cabinet Office Budget

Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to increase the Cabinet Office budget to enable the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser to enhance the advice he can provide on security issues, as recommended in paragraph 27 of Cm 6492, Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction; Implementation of its Conclusions. [224464]

Mr. Miliband: I have been asked to reply.

The need to ensure access to relevant scientific expertise as part of the rigorous analysis of intelligence material has been recognised. As indicated in Cm6492, the increase in size of the Cabinet Office Assessments Staff will include at least one individual with a scientific background. All members of the Assessments Staff are tasked with ensuring that the relevant expert advice is sought as part of the assessment and analysis process. There are already significant scientific resources available to government on a wide range of subjects. Sir David King is being consulted on how best use of those resources in supporting analysis of security issues can be made.

Cancer

Mr. Gill: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have under the age of 25 years suffered from cancer in *(a)* England, *(b)* the East Midlands and *(c)* Leicester South in each year since 1997. [224284]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Parmjit Singh Gill, dated 4 April 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning the number of people under the age of 25 years who suffered from cancer in *(a)* England, *(b)* the East Midlands and *(c)* Leicester South in each year since 1997. (224284)

The most recent available figures are for the year 2001. The number of newly diagnosed cases of cancer in people under the age of 25 years registered in the years 1997 to 2001 are given in the table below for England, East Midlands Government Office Region and Leicester unitary authority (which includes the Leicester South Parliamentary Constituency). Information cannot be provided for Parliamentary Constituencies that are not coterminus with administrative areas.

Number of newly diagnosed cases of all cancers[1] in people aged under 25 years in England, the East Midlands, and Leicester, 1997–2001

Number of cases

	England	*East Midlands (GOR)*	*Leicester unitary authority*
1997	2,544	186	20
1998	2,465	197	17
1999	2,529	189	11
2000	2,576	207	14
2001	2,527	217	16

[1] All cancers defined as all malignant cancers excluding non-melanoma skin cancer International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes COO-C97 excluding C44.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Church Buildings (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will expand the VAT exemption scheme in Northern Ireland to cover all church buildings. [224068]

John Healey: The Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme was introduced while we negotiate with our European partners to secure a reduced rate of VAT for the repair and maintenance of listed places of worship. The Government recognise the importance of these buildings within their communities and that the need to use specialist craftsmen and costly materials means that their upkeep can be a heavy burden, particularly on small congregations. The same considerations do not apply to all places of worship.

Civil Service

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Departments and agencies he expects will be affected by the proposed reduction in civil service numbers; what account his Department has taken of local unemployment levels in preparation of these plans; and whether he expects that the proposed changes will affect civil servants employed in Southend-on-Sea. [223766]

Mr. Boateng: The planned levels of reductions in total and in detail were set out in the Spending Review 2004 White Paper, and are summarised in Chapter 2, Table 2.2.

It is for each Department to develop their own efficiency plans, including those for workforce reductions, taking into account their business needs. Departments are currently working through detailed implementation planning including location and local numbers, in consultation with all stakeholders including unions and staff. Departments will come forward with details of their plans as these are finalised.

Jobcentre Plus is due to close a Social Security Office in Southend-on-Sea on 1 April 2007. It is anticipated that staff will move to the Basildon Benefit Processing Centre.

In response to planned workforce changes, the Government have established the Efficiency and Relocation Support Programme to provide information and support to those affected.

Mr. Quentin Davies: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the Departments and agencies in which the 12,500 reduction in civil service posts outlined in the Budget have been achieved. [223773]

Mr. Boateng: The following Departments have announced reductions in their workforce:

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Education and Skills

Ofsted

Trade and Industry

Work and Pensions

Health

HM Treasury

Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise

Defence

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Currency Speculation Tax

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the Government's policy is on an international currency speculation tax. [224033]

Dawn Primarolo: Currency transaction taxation is a long-established idea that has recently re-emerged in international discussions on how to raise development financing. The Government are prepared to consider all proposals for raising international finance for development, but there would be significant technical problems with a tax of this sort and it is not being actively considered at the present time. We believe the International Finance Facility remains the most developed proposal for providing additional resources in the region of the required $50 billion estimated for meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Customs and Excise

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what his estimate is of the cost of funding additional travel to work by staff of the Droitwich Spa Customs and Excise following the closure of the office; [223768]

(2) with which Government Departments with offices in Worcestershire he has discussed the transfer of staff consequent on the closure of the Customs and Excise office in Droitwich Spa; [223770]

(3) whether staff transferred from the Customs and Excise office in Droitwich Spa will be offered permanent contracts in the Department to which they are transferred; [223771]

(4) what assessment he has made of the effect of the closure of the Droitwich Spa Customs and Excise office on *(a)* part-time and *(b)* flexible working staff. [223774]

Dawn Primarolo: Customs are looking at the feasibility of moving staff to their offices in Wolverhampton, Birmingham and possibly Coventry. No final decision has been taken as to where staff will be relocated and it is not possible to quantify any additional travelling costs.

Inland Revenue, DEFRA and the Crown Prosecution Service have been made aware of the position of Customs staff at Droitwich.

There is a mix of permanent and fixed term contract staff at Droitwich. The fixed term staff were originally employed on work that was not due to be retained at Droitwich on a permanent basis. The closure of Droitwich has not altered this position.

It is expected that permanent staff who choose to move to other Departments will do so on a permanent basis.

All staff based at Droitwich are being consulted on an individual basis about the practicalities of them following their work. An initial assessment has been completed and local managers are in the process of exploring options with each member of staff.Customs' Regional Head would be pleased to meet the hon. Member to explain where matters stand once the picture is clearer.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223432]

Mr. Timms: Resource and capital departmental expenditure limit (DEL) budgets up to 2007–08 are set out by department in annex C of Budget 2005. DEL budgets beyond 2007–08 will, as normal, be determined in future spending reviews.

Enhanced Capital Allowances

Mr. Watts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many companies have received enhanced capital allowances in each of the last three years; and what the total cost was. [224015]

Dawn Primarolo: The total number of companies that ticked a box on their Corporation Tax returns to show a claim to enhanced capital allowances (ECAs) on their annual investment in designated environmentally beneficial technologies, including cars with low carbon dioxide emissions is detailed as follows.

Companies claiming ECAs on their corporation tax return form[1]

	Number
2001–02	60
2002–03	848
2003–04[2]	1,412

[1] These numbers do not include claims to capital allowances made or amended after a company has sent in its corporation tax return for (CT600).
[2] Information for 2003–04 is not yet complete.

The actual costs to the Exchequer of ECAs are not available. However, an estimate of the expected cost of the scheme is set out in Table 3.1 on page 210 of the Budget report 2005.

Mr. Watts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment has been made of the application process for enhanced capital allowances. [224016]

Dawn Primarolo: There are no special rules for businesses claiming enhanced capital allowances for investments in environmentally beneficial technologies (ECAs). Businesses claim these allowances in their corporation or income tax returns, in the same way as they would claim other capital allowances. The Inland Revenue keep all processes connected with tax reliefs under regular review, and are not aware that businesses have any particular difficulty in claiming ECAs.

European Union

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total value is of the UK's financial contribution to the European Union since the UK joined. [224291]

Mr. Timms: The UK's total net contribution (i.e. gross contribution, after abatement, less public sector receipts) to the EC Budget over the period 1973–74 to 2003–04 was some £50.9 billion. The Government's latest estimate for 2004–05 is £4.3 billion (net contribution).

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the UK's *(a)* rebate from the EU, *(b)* net contribution to the EU excluding the rebate and *(c)* net contribution to the Common Agriculture Policy excluding the rebate has been in each year since the rebate was introduced; how the rebate is calculated; how it is affected by changes in the UK net contributions to (i) the EU and (ii) the CAP; and if he will make a statement. [224585]

Mr. Timms: The European Commission is directly and solely responsible for calculating the UK abatement. The formula for the calculation is set out in Article 4 of the Own Resources Decision (Council Decision 2000/597/EC, Euratom of 29 September 2000 and explained in more detail in a Working Methods Paper first published in 1988 and revised in 1994 and 2000 (10646/00 ADD 2 of 21 September 2000). A more detailed explanation can be found in the Glossary of the 2004 "European Community Finances" White Paper (Cm 6134, page 26).

The UK rebate and net contribution to the EC Budget, excluding the rebate, for the period 1985–86 to 2003–04 are set out in the following table.

£ million

	UK Rebate	*UK net contribution, excluding UK rebate*
1985–86	823	1,815
1986–87	1,343	2,564
1987–88	1,137	2,948
1988–89	1,600	2,767
1989–90	1,317	3,769
1990–91	1,838	4,023
1991–92	2,428	3,371
1992–93	1,993	4,161
1993–94	2,350	4,542
1994–95	1,648	3,289
1995–96	1,576	5,428
1996–97	2,418	4,712
1997–98	1,563	4,130
1998–99	2,447	6,557
1999–2000	2,206	5,531
2000–01	2,223	6,541
2001–02	4,427	5,903
2002–03	3,233	6,314
2003–04	3,874	7,139

The Government's latest estimate of these two figures for 2004–05 are £3,722 million and £8,032 million respectively. The UK makes its contributions to the EC Budget as a whole and not to specific areas of expenditure. There is not therefore a UK net contribution to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Financial Inclusion Fund

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Financial Inclusion Fund will be set up; how applications to it will be made; and if he will make a statement. [223906]

Mr. Timms: The 2004 pre-Budget report announced a Financial Inclusion Fund of £120 million over the 2004 Spending Review period. In particular, the fund will support the Government's aims to increase access to forms of affordable credit and to see a significant increase in the capacity of free face-to-face money advice. Further details will be announced shortly.

High Energy Manufacturing Industries

Mr. Watts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will take steps to reduce taxation on high energy manufacturing industries. [224492]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government conducts an on-going dialogue with representatives across the manufacturing industry. The Chancellor will consider any changes to the corporate tax system as part of the normal Budget cycle.

Job Creation (Wimbledon)

Roger Casale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many new jobs have been created in Wimbledon since 1997. [224243]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been ask to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Roger Casale, dated 4 April 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about the number of jobs created in Wimbledon. (224243)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs from year to year.

The attached table shows the number of jobs in Wimbledon from 1997 to 2003 and the net change over that period. This is the latest period for which information is available.

The Annual Business Inquiry and Annual Employment Survey, are sample surveys and therefore the estimates used in this answer are subject to sampling variability. The small change in the number of jobs in Wimbledon from 1997 to 2003 should therefore be treated with caution.

Number of employee jobs and change in jobs[1,2] in the parliamentary constituency of Wimbledon: 1997 to 2003

	Number
1997	43,000
1998	45,000
1999	48,000
2000	50,000
2001	48,000
2002	46,000
2003	43,000
Change[3] in number of jobs since 1997	-1,000

[1] Excludes self-employed jobs.
[2] These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1993 SIC) have been excluded.
[3] The change from 1997 to 2003 has been rounded to the nearest thousand separately from rounded levels.
Source:
1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled. 1998–2002: Annual Business Inquiry

Listed Places of Worship

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will allow listed places of worship under his Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme to reclaim VAT paid on renovations and improvements which are designed to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000. [224025]

John Healey: There is already a VAT zero rate for approved alterations to certain listed buildings, including places of worship. There is also a VAT zero rate for certain works to improve facilities for disabled people within charity buildings.

Most works of renovation and improvement to listed places of worship which are necessary to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act will come within the scope of these reliefs or are covered by the Listed Places of Worship Grant scheme.

Nuclear Plants

Llew Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the effect on tax revenue of the implementation of Statutory Instruments No. 644, of 10 March, in respect of the Thorp nuclear reprocessing plant and the Sellafield Mox plant, over the full period of the operation of those plants. [224043]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not expected that any tax will be lost to the Exchequer. Statutory Instrument 2005/644 is expected to protect tax revenues as the activities it deals with are likely to be loss-making for tax purposes. The background to this and the purpose of the legislation was set out in more detail in the explanatory notes to Section 27 of the Energy Act 2004.

Part-time Workers (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* male and *(b)* female part-time workers there are in City of York parliamentary constituency. [224643]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Hugh Bayley, dated 4 April 2005:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about part-time employment in the City of York Parliamentary Constituency. (224643)

According to responses to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) sample survey for the twelve month period ending in February 2004, among people resident in the City of York Parliamentary Constituency 3,000 men and 13,000 women were working part-time.

These estimates from the LFS are, as with any statistical sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Pension Funds

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the limits on the commutation of small pension funds into lump sums. [224261]

Mr. Timms: From 6 April 2006 there will be a facility for pension scheme members to commute trivial pensions and take the pension as a lump sum, where pension benefits have a total capital value of less than 1 per cent. of the lifetime allowance. The lifetime allowance will be £1.5 million at its introduction in April 2006, rising to £1.8 million by 2010. So, at the introduction of the simplified tax regime, the trivial commutation threshold will be £15,000. People in this position will be able to choose a year falling between their 60th and 75th birthdays in which all trivial pensions may be commuted.

The trivial commutation rules ensure that members will not be forced to purchase an annuity with very small amounts of pension savings which could prove to be uneconomic and disproportionately bureaucratic for both schemes and members.

The rules are the result of extensive consultation prior to legislation. As part of this consultation the Government published "Simplifying the taxation of pensions: increasing flexibility for all" (December 2002) and "Simplifying the taxation of pensions: the Government's proposals" (December 2003).

Property Values (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many properties valued at between £60,000 and £120,000 there are in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley. [223788]

Dawn Primarolo: The Valuation Office does not hold statistics on the numbers of residential property within the value range indicated at current levels of value. The

Valuation List however lists all residential property in England according to capital value as at 1 April 1991 for council tax purposes. As at 31 October 2004 residential properties in Lancashire (including Chorley) and Chorley were assessed for council tax in the following bands:

CT band	Value range (£)	Total Lancashire	Total Chorley
A	Up to 40,000	258,145	13,836
B	40,001 to 52,000	123,626	9,733
C	52,001 to 68,000	112,203	8,241
D	68,001 to 88,000	68,841	5,485
E	88,001 to 120,000	39,431	4,133
F	120,001 to 160,000	18,112	1,632
G	160,001 to 320,000	10,489	716
H	Over 320,000	806	62

The Valuation Offices's property market report indicates that levels of value in Lancaster for an average semi-detached property increased some 135 per cent. between spring 1991 and July 2004.

Southend

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many persons aged 17 and under have lived in Southend in each year since 1995. [223976]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 4 April 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the number of people aged 17 and under that have lived in Southend in each year since 1995. (223976)

Below is a table showing the 1995 to 2003 mid-year population estimates for those aged 17 and under within Southend Unitary Authority.

Mid-year population estimates for those aged 17 and under

(Thousand)

	Number
1995	35.9
1996	36.1
1997	36.7
1998	36.5
1999	36.5
2000	36.2
2001	36.0
2002	35.9
2003	35.6

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Stability and Growth Pact

Keith Vaz: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the likely effect on the economies of EU countries of the recent changes to the operation of the Stability and Growth Pact. [224141]

Mr. Timms: The Government have consistently argued for a prudent interpretation of the Stability and Growth Pact that takes account of country-specific factors including debt sustainability, the economic cycle and public investment.

Tax Avoidance

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures he is planning to put in place to enhance anti-avoidance measures for tax purposes at an international level. [224032]

Dawn Primarolo: The Chancellor announced a package of anti avoidance measures during his Budget speech which tackle the avoidance of UK tax by international tax planning.

Measures were announced to prevent the avoidance of capital gains tax by individuals and trusts. Action has also been taken to prevent individuals and companies manipulating the rules that give relief for overseas tax, and to strengthen the existing controlled foreign company rules.

Anti avoidance measures were also announced by the Chancellor which affect both UK and international avoidance, including action against avoidance through arbitrage, persons who act together and collectively control a business and avoidance using shares and derivatives in place of loans.

The Government are committed to creating a fairer tax system. Artificial and contrived tax avoidance schemes undermine fairness, at the expense of those who do not indulge in them.

Tax Credits

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1064W, on tax credits, whether the omission of earnings of one partner on tax credits awards issued in 2003–04 occurred as a result of *(a)* human processing error and *(b)* a computer systems failure. [222429]

Dawn Primarolo: My earlier answer stated that the Inland Revenue is aware of a small number of occasions in 2003–04 when the earnings of one partner were omitted in a joint tax credits award. This error occurred when staff did not follow the correct procedure to update the tax credits computer system with more recent information about income.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the take-up of *(a)* working tax credit, *(b)* child tax credit and *(c)* child care tax credit was in 2003–04. [223763]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the take-up rate of child and working tax credit will not be available until household survey data for 2003–04 have been analysed. Subject to ensuring the data and methodology are sufficiently robust, we expect the analysis to be completed towards the end of 2005–06.

Latest statistics show that at 3 December 2004 5.9 million families were benefiting from these tax credits.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will extend Table 3 on page 30 of "Tax credits: reforming financial support for families" (March 2005) so as to show marginal deduction rates of over 50 per cent. and over 40 per cent. *(a)* before 1998 and *(b)* in 2005–06. [224664]

Dawn Primarolo: The table is an extension of table 4.3 in "Tax credits: reforming financial support for families", and also of table 4.2 in Budget 2005 (HC 372).

Marginal deduction rate (percentage)	*Before budget 1998*	*2005–06 system of tax and benefits*
Over 100	5,000	0
Over 90	130,000	30,000
Over 80	300,000	165,000
Over 70	740,000	235,000
Over 60	760,000	1,730,000
Over 50	760,000	1,900,000
Over 40	800,000	2,095,000

Figures are cumulative. This table shows marginal deduction rates for working households in receipt of income related benefits or tax credits, where at least one person works 16 hours or more a week, where the head of the household is not disabled, and where higher earnings would lead to reduced benefits or tax credits. They include the marginal effects of income tax and national insurance contributions, and the withdrawal of housing benefit and council tax benefit.

This analysis does not take into account the way in which the new tax credits will respond to rises in income. The new tax credits only respond to rises in income in the current year of more than £2,500, disregarding the first £2,500 of any rise. This means that recipients will not see their tax credits reduced as soon as their income rises, so reducing the effective marginal deduction in any one year.

As a result of the Government's reforms, around half a million fewer low-income households now face marginal deduction rates in excess of 70 per cent. than did so in April 1998. The increase in the number of households facing marginal deduction rates of between 40 and 70 per cent. is primarily due to the introduction of tax credits, and more recently the extension of support to workers aged 25 or over without children. The number of heads that face an excess of 70 per cent. has fallen. This is because administrative data suggests a reported fall in the number of families on multiple tapers, i.e. non-disabled persons working more than 16 hours in receipt of tax credits and housing benefit and/or council tax benefit.

Tax Rates (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Yorkshire and the Humber and *(c)* the City of York pay (i) half or more than half of their income tax and (ii) all of their income tax at the 10 pence starting rate. [224686]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to table 2.1 "Number of individual income taxpayers" on the Inland Revenue website www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_tax/table2-1.pdf. This table shows that 3.4 million income taxpayers in the UK in 2004–05 pay all of their income tax at the starting rate. 4.7 million UK income taxpayers pay half or more than half of their total income tax liability at the starting rate. These estimates are based upon the Survey of Personal Incomes 2002–03 and are consistent with the pre-Budget report 2004. Estimates consistent with the Budget 2005 will be published on the Inland Revenue website at the end of April 2005.

I refer the hon. Friend to table 3.11 "Income and tax, by region and country", 3.15 "Total income by parliamentary constituency" and the introductory note on personal incomes on the Inland Revenue website for the available income tax statistics for Yorkshire and the Humber and the City of York. The information can be found at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table311-0203.pdf, www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/table-3-15.pdf and www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/income_distribution/inc-distribution-note.pdf.

VAT (Child Care)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact on the voluntary sector's ability to deliver welfare services of his decision to refund the VAT which local authorities incur in the provision of child care and children's centres. [224198]

Dawn Primarolo: Where the Government procure welfare services from voluntary and community sector providers, it should be on the basis of full cost recovery, including any associated VAT costs providers incur. This decision will therefore have no adverse impact on the delivery of welfare services by voluntary and community sector organisations.

Working Tax Credit

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his latest estimate is of the number of families eligible for, but not claiming, working tax credit in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Northern Ireland, *(d)* England and *(e)* Bridgend; and what plans he has to improve take-up. [224303]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on the number of families eligible for, but not claiming working tax credit is not available.

Estimates of the number of UK families who are entitled to child and working tax credit in 2003–04 will not be published until household survey data have been analysed. Subject to ensuring the data and methodology are sufficiently robust, we expect the analysis to be completed towards the end of 2005–06.

Estimates of the number of in-work families receiving tax credits in each country and constituency appear in "Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics. Geographical analyses. December 2004." This can be found on the Inland Revenue website at http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm. The estimates are based on a sample of cases, and are subject to sampling uncertainty.

For details of the Inland Revenue's work to encourage take-up, I refer the hon. Member to my reply on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 949–50W to the hon. Member for Coventry, South (Mr. Cunningham).

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people aged over 50 years have claimed the return to work element of the working tax credit in each quarter since the introduction of the payment. [224675]

Dawn Primarolo: Numbers of beneficiaries based on final 2003–04 incomes and circumstances will be published on 31 May 2005.

TRANSPORT

Air Fares

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has made an assessment of the likely effect on air fares of the new compensation rules agreed by the European Union in respect of air passengers; and if he will make a statement. [224151]

Charlotte Atkins: An assessment of the likely impact of Council Regulation 261/2004 on air fares was set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) accompanying Explanatory Memorandum 12190/03 sent to the Parliamentary Scrutiny Committees on 29 September 2003. A final, updated version of the RIA will be placed in the Llibraries of both Houses shortly as an annex to the RIA accompanying the UK's associated enforcement Regulations.

Air Travellers (Financial Protection)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what estimate he has made of the percentage of UK international leisure air travellers that were covered by ATOL in each of the last 10 years; and what percentage his Department estimates will be covered in five years' time; [224609].

(2) if he will implement the Transport Select Committee's recommendation in its report, Financial Protection for Air Travellers, Fifteenth Report, Session 2003–04, to apply a levy on the sale of all tickets. [224610]

Charlotte Atkins: Statistics compiled by the Civil Aviation Authority indicate the percentage of UK international leisure air travellers covered by ATOL over the last 10 years was as follows:

	Leisure passengers (million)	*ATOL protected passengers (million)*	*ATOL protected (percentage)*
1994	22.7	17.0	75
1995	23.2	19.1	82
1996	22.2	21.3	96
1997	24.0	23.5	98
1998	27.4	25.0	91
1999	30.3	26.4	87
2000	33.5	28.0	84
2001	35.9	29.1	81
2002	36.8	27.9	76
2003	39.6	27.6	70

The Civil Aviation Authority has not yet submitted advice to Government on its economic assessment of the wider options relating to the future financial protection of air travellers. This advice will project ATOL protection over the next 10 years. Only when we have considered this advice will the Government be in a position to respond substantively to the Transport Select Committee.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what research he has undertaken into the effectiveness of scheduled airline failure insurance as a means of repatriating those stranded overseas following airline failure; [224611]

(2) what percentage of air travellers his Department estimates are protected by scheduled airline failure insurance. [224612]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department has not commissioned research into the effectiveness of scheduled airline failure insurance, which allows stranded passengers to recover their costs of getting home. We understand from the insurance industry that some 7 million people are estimated to be protected by such insurance, bought either directly by the customer or indirectly via the agent selling the air ticket. This represents approximately 20 per cent. of the UK international leisure travel market.

Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how long after a vehicle is *(a)* licensed for the first time and *(b)* relicensed the information about that licence is included on the database for Automatic Number Plate Recognition. [224517]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency provides police automated number plate recognition cameras with details of vehicles which have been unlicensed for two months or more. From April this information will be provided twice monthly. Details of licensed vehicles are not provided.

As a separate exercise, the DVLA vehicle database is downloaded onto the Police National Computer every 24 hours. This gives the police access to information about the vehicle keeper and indicates if the vehicle has been unlicensed for more than three months.

Brighton Main Line

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to issue his official response to the route utilisation study strategy for the Brighton Main Line. [224022]

Mr. McNulty: Consideration is being given to the issues raised during consultation and a final route utilisation strategy will be published in due course.

Crossrail

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's latest assessment is of the timescale for the implementation of the Crossrail project. [224164]

Mr. McNulty: Main construction of Crossrail could not start until the necessary powers are in place. A hybrid Bill seeking such powers was introduced on 22 February 2005. Previous experience, with the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Bill, suggests that the

Crossrail Bill will not complete its passage before 2007. On that basis, the assumption remains that Crossrail services would start in 2013.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223445]

Charlotte Atkins: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary today.

East Midlands Airport

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will require the management of Nottingham East Midlands airport to provide full and frank factual information about its plans for expanding the number of night flights in and out of the airport. [224353]

Charlotte Atkins: We would expect the airport operator to include this information in its draft master plan, which is expected to be published for consultation during the summer.

Free Bus Passes

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether *(a)* pensioners and *(b)* people with disabilities wishing to travel by bus to neighbouring local authority areas will benefit from the free bus pass proposed in the Budget. [223985]

Charlotte Atkins: Concessionary fares schemes for older and disabled people are provided by non-metropolitan district councils, unitary councils, passenger transport executives and the London boroughs. Councils have the discretion to provide concessionary fares on journeys in neighbouring authorities, and authorities can agree to provide joint schemes over a wider area, such as a county, or a county and neighbouring unitary council. Many already do so and they will continue to be able to do so when the statutory minimum fare is increased from half fare to free fare in April 2006.

Freedom of Information Act

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what advice or instructions he has given to the Civil Aviation Authority about the need to deal expeditiously and candidly with requests from the public under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; and if he will make a statement. [224352]

Charlotte Atkins: The statutory guidance for public bodies on Freedom of Information, the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs' Code of Practice on the discharge of public authorities' functions under Part I of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, is produced by the Department of Constitutional Affairs. The document is on the internet at the following address http://www.foi.gov.uk/codepafunc.htm, and is available in the Library of the House.

The Department for Transport has not given any supplementary advice or instructions to the Civil Aviation Authority on handling Freedom of Information requests. However, the Department has provided its own internal guidance on Freedom of Information to the authority, to assist it in producing its own guidance.

In line with the Code of Practice, the Civil Aviation Authority has established its own complaints procedure; in the first instance, an applicant should pursue a complaint through this if he/she is dissatisfied with the authority's handling of a Freedom of Information request. If this process is exhausted and the applicant remains dissatisfied, the applicant may complain to the Information Commissioner.

General Lighthouse Fund

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost in each year since 2000 was of the provision by the UK General Lighthouse Fund of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [224204]

Mr. Jamieson: The contribution from the General Lighthouse Fund to the provision of navigational aids in the Republic of Ireland since 2000 is given as follows:

	£ million sterling
2000–01	4.4
2001–02	5.5
2002–03	5.8
2003–04	5.9

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether the UK General Lighthouse Fund is a public corporation. [224205]

Mr. Jamieson: The independent Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for classifying economic entities in accordance with the European System of Accounts. The General Lighthouse Fund is classified by ONS as a public corporation.

Global Road Safety

Dr. Moonie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what action his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take in response to UN resolution A/58/L60 on improving global road safety; and if he will make a statement; [224101]

(2) what action his Department has taken in response to the World Health Organisation and World Bank report on road traffic injury prevention of April 2004; what plans his Department has to work with road safety organisations towards meeting the report's objectives; and if he will make a statement; [224102]

(3) what mechanisms are in place to facilitate co-operation between his Department and the Department for International Development on global road safety issues; [224103]

(4) what contribution his Department has made to the pursuit of global road safety issues; and if he will make a statement; [224105]

(5) what action his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* plans to take in response to UN resolution A/58/L60 on improving global road safety; and if he will make a statement. [224106]

Mr. Jamieson: The joint World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Bank "World report on road traffic injury prevention" focused attention on the global impact of road accidents on low and middle income countries. The Department for Transport also welcomes the UN resolution on improving road safety. The resolution noted the recommendations of the World Report and invited the WHO to act as co-ordinator on road safety issues.

The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) was founded in 1999 to increase awareness of road safety and promote reductions in deaths and serious injury resulting from road traffic accidents in developing and transition countries. GRSP is a partnership between businesses and governments and is sponsored by the Department for International Development.

Department for Transport officials support the activities of WHO in this area and are presently participating in work on child injury prevention. We recognise the problems faced by developing countries and have provided support where we are able, including sponsoring a conference on driver training and testing, held in India in 2002.

Highways Agency Business Plan

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Highways Agency Business Plan 2005–06 will be published; and on what date in 2004 the Business Plan for 2004–05 was published. [224207]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency Business Plan 2005–06 was published on 24 March 2005 and the Business Plan for 2004–05 was published on 30 March 2004.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason the Highways Agency Business Plan 2005–06 includes no reference to improving the A358 between Ilminster and the M5; and if he will make a statement. [224501]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency's Business Plan 2005–06 sets out the forward programme of major schemes to be progressed in the period 2005–06 to 2007–08. Schemes expected to be taken forward after 2007–08, including the proposed improvement to the A358 between Ilminster and the M5, are not included in the Plan.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will announce whether schemes set out in the Highways Agency Business Plan 2005–06 as awaiting inclusion in the Targeted Programme for Improvements are to be included. [224502]

Mr. Jamieson: All the schemes set out in the Highways Agency Business Plan 2005–06 as awaiting inclusion in the Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI), with the exception of M11 J8–9 Widening, were added to the TPI on 24 March 2005.

In respect of the M11 J8–9 scheme, the Highways Agency has been asked to undertake further work so that it can be considered for entry to the TPI as soon as possible.

Liquid Natural Gas Tanker Shipments

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the suitability of Milford Haven for liquid natural gas tanker shipments; and if he will make a statement. [224547]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has not made any assessment of the suitability of Milford Haven for liquid natural gas shipments. Comprehensive risk assessments have, however, been undertaken by the statutory undertaker, the Milford Haven Port Authority.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the conclusions of the Health and Safety Executive's quantitative risk assessment of the liquid natural gas tankers proposed for Milford Haven; and if he will make a statement. [224548]

Mr. Jamieson: Neither the Department nor the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the UK's competent authority for regulating shipping, are aware of any risk assessment of natural gas tankers undertaken by the HSE.

The HSE has assessed the risk associated with storage and transport of liquefied natural gas at Milford Haven, and it is for the Harbour Authority to draw on this in producing its own comprehensive risk assessment. The Department for Transport has not made any assessment of the suitability of Milford Haven for liquid natural gas operations.

Local Authority Grants

Linda Gilroy: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what grants local authorities in the South West Region have been allocated for transport for the spending period *(a)* SR02, *(b)* SR03 and *(c)* SR04. [224625]

Charlotte Atkins: The total amount of supported transport capital funding and targeted transport revenue grants provided to the 15 local transport authorities in the South West Region between the years 2002–03 to 2004–05 was approximately £514 million. Capital maintenance and integrated transport schemes (each costing less than £5 million) are supported through Revenue Support Grant. Funding support for major schemes (each costing more than £5 million) has been provided through a combination of direct grants and borrowing supported through Revenue Support Grant.

The following table sets out the grants for each year.

£ million

South West— Nature of funding	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
Capital maintenance	82.343	83.194	96.103
Integrated transport block	59.15	58.8	61.598
Targeted bus grants[1]	15.980	12.374	9.855
Major schemes	9.498	9.443	15.656
Total	166.971	163.811	183.212

[1] Includes Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and Rural Bus challenge funding

Rail Freight

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what plans he has to expand rail freight movements through Bassetlaw using the existing coal freight line network; [223857]

(2) what plans he has to re-open the railhead at Manton colliery. [223858]

Mr. McNulty: There are no current plans for the expansion of rail freight movements through Bassetlaw on the existing coal freight line network, or for the re-opening of the railhead at Manton Colliery.

Roads Budget

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what change is planned in the roads budget over the next five years; and which road improvement projects are projected to be *(a)* started and *(b)* completed during that period. [224134]

Mr. Jamieson: We announced last year investment funding for the next three years (2005–06, 2006–07, 2007–08) of £4.6 billion. This funding covers transport schemes delivered by local authorities, including local authority major road and public transport schemes, and planned investment funding for regionally important schemes delivered by the Highways Agency. This funding is in addition to the £1 billion programme of major improvements to strategic roads of national importance over the next three years announced by the Highways Agency in December 2004. Funding from 2008–09 onwards will be subject to the next Spending Review.

Under the regional and national funding allocations for 2005–06 to 2007–08 announced in November and December 2004, the following table lists the road schemes that are either under construction and will be complete, or are currently projected to commence, by April 2008, subject to completion of all necessary statutory procedures and compliance with conditions of funding approval.

Local authority schemes

East Leeds Link Road
Leeds Inner Ring Road stage 7
Sheffield Inner Relief Road stages 2 and 3
Hemsworth A1 link road in Wakefield
Barnsley A628 Cudworth and West Green Bypass
North Yorkshire A165 Reighton Bypass
Wakefield Glass Houghton Coalfields Link Road
Rotherham West Bawtry Road Improvement
Rotherham A57 Junction 31—Todwick Crossroads Improvement
A142 Fordham Bypass in Cambridgeshire
A505 Baldock Bypass in Hertfordshire
A13/A127 Integrated Transport scheme in Southend
A507 Ridgmont Bypass and Woburn Link in Bedfordshire
Bedford Western Bypass
A1198 Papworth Everard Bypass in Cambridgeshire
B1115 Stowmarket Relief Road in Suffolk
South Lowestoft Relief Road and associated improvements
A167 Chilton Bypass in Durham
Scotswood Road in Newcastle
South Stockton Link—Stage 3
Sunderland Southern Radial Route
Northumberland Pegswood Bypass
Sunderland Central Route
North Middlesbrough accessibility improvements
Bletchley link in Milton Keynes
A228 Leybourne and West Malling Corridor Improvement
East Kent Access scheme (Phase 1)
A4146 Stoke Hammond to Linslade Bypass in Buckinghamshire
Plymouth Northern Corridor (mixed public transport and roads)
North West Taunton Package
Barnstaple Western Bypass—Weymouth Relief Road
Salisbury Brunel link/Harnham relief road
Poole Bridge Regeneration scheme
A39 Camelford Distributor Road in Cornwall
A391 St. Austell to A30 Cornwall
Salford A57 Cadishead Way
Rearsby Bypass in Leicestershire
Partney Bypass in Lincolnshire
Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route in Nottinghamshire
A6096 Ilkeston—Awsworth Link in Derbyshire
Markham Employment Growth Zone in Derbyshire
A43 Corby Link Road in Northamptonshire
A509 Isham Bypass in Northamptonshire
A612 Gedling integrated transport scheme in Nottinghamshire
The Oakham Bypass in Rutland
Burgh le Marsh Bypass in Lincolnshire
Orby Bypass in Lincolnshire

Highways Agency schemes

National schemes

Schemes under construction

M60 J5–8 (formerly M63 J6–9 Widening)
M25 J12–15 Widening
A1 (M) Wetherby-Walshford (DBFO)

Schemes planned to start construction by April 2008

M4 J18 Eastbound Diverge
M40/A404 Handy Cross Junction Improvement
M6 Carlisle to Guards Mill
A5117/A550 Deeside Park Junctions Improvement
A1 Bramham—Wetherby (including Wetherby Bypass)
M1 J6A to J10 Widening
A14 Haughley New St. to Stowmarket Improvement
M1 J21 to J30 Widening (early improvements)
M25 J1b to J3 Widening
M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge Roundabout)
M25 J16 to J23 Widening (DBFO)
M1 J19/M6
M62 J6 Improvement

Regional schemes

Schemes under construction

A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction
A421 Great Barford Bypass
A47 Thorney Bypass
A2 Bean-Cobham Widening Phase 1
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass
A249 Iwade—Queenborough (DBFO)

A5 Weeford—Fazeley Improvement
A500 City Road and Stoke Road Junctions
A1(M) Ferrybridge to Hook Moor (DBFO)
A64 Colton Lane GSJ
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction

Schemes planned to start construction by April 2008

M5 J17 to J18A Northbound Climbing Lane (Hallen Hill)
A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13
A1 Peterborough—Blyth
A19/A184 Testos Roundabout
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass
A66 Temple Sowerby
A57/A628 Mottram—Hollingworth—Tintwhistle
A2 Bean-Cobham Widening Phase 2
A2/A282 Dartford Improvement
A27 Southerham-Beddingham Improvement
A30/A3 82 Merrymeet Junction
A30 Bodmin Indian Queens
M5 J19 to J20 Northbound Climbing Lane (Tickenham Hill)
M5 J19 to J20 Southbound Climbing Lane (Naish Hill)
A419 Commonhead Junction
A38 Dobwalls Bypass
A419 Blunsdon
A45/A46 Tollbar End
A66 Greta Bridge to Stephen Bank Dualling
A66 Scotch Corner to Carkin Moor Dualling
A66 Long Newton GSJ
A428 Caxton Common to Hardwick Improvement
A595 Parton—Lillyhall Improvement
A11 Attleborough Bypass

Speed Limits

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will require local authorities to make 20 mph the default speed limit outside schools. [223916]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department encourages local authorities to introduce 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones outside schools wherever appropriate, but recognises that particular circumstances at particular locations may make this inappropriate.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will require local authorities to make 30 mph the default speed limit in built-up areas. [223928]

Mr. Jamieson: Where built up areas have street lighting—as most do—30 mph is already the default speed limit, and local highway authorities are in any event able to set a 30 mph limit on any road.

Traffic Congestion

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is being taken to address congestion at the A14 and M11 junction. [224505]

Mr. Jamieson: Proposals to improve the A14 and M11 junction at Girton in Cambridgeshire are included in the proposed A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton Improvement. Public Consultation on proposals for the scheme started on 30 March 2005.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is being taken to address traffic congestion at the M4 and M5 junction. [224504]

Mr. Jamieson: A study report was produced in 1998–99 which recommended measures to reduce congestion at the M4/M5 Almondsbury Interchange. Of these recommendations two schemes, to improve the M4 westbound to M5 slip road diverge and the M5 south to M4 east slip road, have been completed. Both of these schemes improved capacity and safety by widening of the carriageway and providing additional lanes.

Further work is also taking place on a wider look at future transport needs for the area through the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study. Almondsbury Interchange and the nearby M5 Junction 16 are specifically identified as problems for the study to consider.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action is being taken to address traffic congestion at the M40 and A46 junction. [224503]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency has recently improved the M40 and A46 junction at Longbridge in Warwickshire by resurfacing and widening the carriageway around the roundabout and on the slip roads. New traffic signals have also been installed. These measures will ease congestion in the short term.

Proposals to provide a bridge over the M40 and new link roads to further improve the capacity of this junction are included in the M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge) Improvement. Draft Orders for the scheme are expected to be published in the autumn, and subject to satisfactory completion of the statutory procedures, work on the scheme could start in spring 2007 and be completed by autumn 2008.

Train Services (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many trains between Leicester and London St. Pancras *(a)* have been cancelled in the last (i) three and (ii) six months and *(b)* were cancelled in 2004. [223646]

Mr. McNulty: The cancellation figures are as follows:

	From Leicester	*From London*	*Total*
(a)(i)	48	49	97
(a)(ii)	69	73	142
(b)	176	201	377

Transport Access (Disabled)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on providing improved access to transport for disabled people on *(a)* buses and *(b)* the rail network in (i) England and (ii) Leicester South in each year since 1997. [224279]

Charlotte Atkins: Regulations introduced under Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) require that all new public service vehicles used on local and scheduled service with a carrying capacity of more than 22 passengers, and all new rail vehicles, have to be accessible to disabled people. In addition, duties under

Part 3 of the DDA require service providers to take reasonable steps to provide access to transport infrastructure such as bus and railway stations.

Prior to July 2000 the Government provided funding to improve access to public transport through the Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) system. Local authorities were allocated funding for individual schemes on an annual basis. This system was replaced by the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process which takes a more strategic approach. Local transport authorities in England outside London produce 5-year LTPs, and report on progress against these plans in Annual Progress Reports (APRs). The first 5-year plans were submitted in 2000. The following table details the funding for bus grant schemes since their introduction in the 1998–99 financial year, allocated nationally and to the Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan area, which includes Leicester, South. Decisions on how to target funding towards specific projects and initiatives such as those to improve public transport accessibility are made at local level.

Targeted bus grants[1]

£ million

	Nationally	*Leicester, South (Central Leicestershire) local authority*
1998–99	43.7	0.63
1999–2000	49.3	0.56
2000–01	53.7	2.18
2001–02	77.3	1.84
2002–03	85.7	0.81
2003–04	88.4	0.92
2004–05	51.0	0.85

[1] Includes Rural Bus Subsidy Grant and both Rural and Urban Bus challenge funding

On access to the rail network, I announced on the 22 March a £370 million Access for All Fund for improving the accessibility of railway stations. The SRA is currently consulting on their Disability Strategy and the outcome will determine how best to spend this extra money. In addition, by the end of this year more than 4,000 new fully accessible rail vehicles will have been introduced onto the network since 1997 at a cost of £4.2 billion. I note that many of these new trains serve Leicester station.

Zebra Crossings (Safety)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many road traffic accidents occurred on or near zebra crossings in each year since 1997. [224491]

Mr. Jamieson: The numbers of recorded injury road accidents which occurred on or near a zebra crossing in each year since 1997 are shown in the following table:

Number of accidents occurring on or near a zebra crossing: GB 1997–2003

	Fatal	*Serious*	*Slight*	*All*
1997	53	921	5,742	6,716
1998	49	843	5,775	6,667
1999	39	769	5,452	6,260
2000	34	722	5,046	5,802
2001	50	673	4,836	5,559
2002	45	727	4,794	5,566
2003	31	672	4,868	5,571

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Building Regulations

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he plans to extend requirements to comply with building regulations to those ex-nationalised industries which are excluded; and when he expects to reach conclusions about minimising the range of Crown exemptions under these regulations. [224355]

Phil Hope: Amendments made to the Building Act 1984 by the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004 will allow the exemption from the requirements of the Building Regulations granted to statutory undertakers to cease to have effect. The Government will shortly be consulting on the removal of this exemption.

At present the Crown has immunity from complying with the requirements of the Building Regulations. There is provision in the Building Act 1984 for the partial removal of this immunity. The Government would need to consult with those covered by the immunity about how far and how quickly it should be removed.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to publish his proposed changes to part L of the Building Regulations; and if he will make a statement. [224358]

Phil Hope: Following a public consultation officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are reviewing the proposed changes to part L in conjunction with a Working Party of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee. The proposals are expected to be finalised this summer and published at the first opportunity thereafter.

Business Rates

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many non-domestic hereditaments with a rateable value of less than £25,000 there are in each billing authority following the 2005 revaluation of non-domestic properties for business rates. [223989]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House.

Fair Trade Products (Best Value)

Mr. Alan Duncan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will exempt Fair Trade products from the requirement on local authorities to purchase less expensive alternatives under the terms of their Best Value procurement obligations. [224232]

Mr. Raynsford: Local authorities are responsible for taking their own decisions on procurement within the framework of the European Union Treaty, the EU Procurement Directives, the regulations that implement them in the UK and other domestic legislation. Fair trade options have to be considered by local authorities within this framework. The duty of Best Value, as laid down in legislation, requires authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Best Value recognises that successful

procurement strategies are likely to be based on whole life cost considerations that include subsequent revenue implications, and not simply the lowest initial tender price.

Fire Service (Assaults)

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many assaults there have been on fire crews in each year since 1997. [224112]

Mr. Raynsford: Since April 2004 fire and rescue authorities in England and Wales have been asked to report attacks on firefighters through the Fire or Incident of Special Interest (FOSI) system. The FOSI (attacks on firefighters) definition includes verbal abuse, acts of aggression, harassment, objects thrown at appliances and physical abuse. Since that time 605 incidents in England and Wales have been reported to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Housing

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless families there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223147]

Yvette Cooper: Information about local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation is collected quarterly and is in respect of households rather than families. The number of households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in priority need and the number of households in temporary accommodation arranged by local authorities under homelessness legislation as at 31 March of each year in Shrewsbury and Atcham, since 1997, is tabled as follows. Also shown is the number of acceptances, and those in temporary accommodation, as a percentage of all households in Shrewsbury and Atcham.

After being accepted as homeless, a household will be placed in some form of accommodation. They may be placed in temporary accommodation, until a settled solution becomes available, or they may be given a settled solution straight away depending on the accommodation available to the local authority. As an alternative to temporary accommodation an authority may arrange for a household to remain in their current accommodation (homeless at home), until a settled solution becomes available.

Shrewsbury and Atcham district council

		Acceptances[1,2]		*Households in temporary accommodation*[2,3] *(as at 31 March)*		*Rough Sleepers*[4]
	Mid-year household estimates[5] *(thousand)*	*Total*	*As a percentage of all households*	*Total*	*As a percentage of all households*	*Total (number of persons)*
1997–98	40	84	0.21	39	0.10	—
1998–99	40	94	0.24	61	0.15	0
1999–2000	41	92	0.22	103	0.25	0
2000–01	41	88	0.21	108	0.26	0
2001–02	40	104	0.26	116	0.29	0
2002–03	41	200	0.49	92	0.22	0
2003–04	41	299	0.73	73	0.18	6

[1] Households eligible under homelessness legislation and found to be unintentionally homeless and in a priority need category. Figures provided are for the financial year (ie April-March).
[2] ODPM P1E homelessness returns (quarterly).
[3] Households in accommodation either pending a decision on their homelessness application or awaiting re-allocation of a settled home following acceptance. Excludes those households designated as "homeless at home" that have remained in their existing accommodation and have the same rights to suitable alternative accommodation as those in accommodation arranged by the authority.
[4] ODPM Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (annual). Data not collected prior to 1998.
[5] Estimated as at 30 June each year. ODPM.

Information is also collected, since 1998, on the number of people who sleep rough, that is, those who are literally roofless on a single night. The above table shows number of persons sleeping rough in Shrewsbury and Atcham district, on a single night.

Quarterly Statistical Releases on statutory homelessness published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister include information on decisions, and households in temporary accommodation, at local authority level in an associated supplementary table. The latest release, of 14 March, and previous editions are available both in the Library of the House and via the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

Andrew George: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much Housing Corporation *(a)* Approved Development Programme funding and *(b)* Challenge funding was spent on (i) mixed funded social rented housing, (ii) temporary social rented housing, (iii) Homebuy general market purchase, (iv) Homebuy general new build, (v) mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, (vi) miscellaneous works to RSL stock, (vii) reimprovements to rented RSL stock, (viii) works only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, (ix) works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, (x) intermediate rent for key workers, (xi) Homebuy market purchase for key workers, (xii) Homebuy new build for key workers, (xiii) mixed funded sale for key workers and (xiv) Starter Home Initiative in the South West region in each year since 1997–98; [224523]

(2) how many affordable housing units were built or procured through the Housing Corporation *(a)* Approved Development Programme and *(b)* Challenge Fund, broken down by (i) mixed funded social rented housing, (ii) temporary social rented housing. (iii) Homebuy general market purchase, (iv) Homebuy general new build, (v) mixed funded low cost home ownership for sale, (vi) miscellaneous works

to RSL stock, (vii) reimprovements to rented RSL stock, (viii) works only rehabilitation of rented RSL stock, (ix) works only rehabilitation of RSL stock for sale, (x) intermediate rent for key workers, (xi) Homebuy market purchase for key workers, (xii) Homebuy new build for key workers, (xiii) mixed funded sale for key workers and (xiv) Starter Home Initiative in each year since 1997–98 in the South West region. [224524]

Keith Hill: The information available on the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme has been made available in the Library of the House. There has been no Challenge funding available in the South West region.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the provision of affordable homes in the Vale of York. [224194]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's recently published Five Year Plan, 'Sustainable Communities: Homes for All' set out our proposals for housing, including expenditure plans for the next two years, in the context of our longer term Sustainable Communities Plan. This takes a co-ordinated approach to the provision of affordable housing, including not only additional financial resources—expenditure of £2 billion in 2007–08, more than double the 1997 level, for new social rented housing and home ownership initiatives, plus more for PFI—as well as changes to the planning system so that it can help authorities deliver more affordable housing. All these policies apply fully to rural areas, where we are committed to addressing housing needs and have already more than doubled the provision of affordable housing in small settlements funded through the Housing Corporation.

The provision of affordable housing in high demand areas, including rural areas and market towns, is one of the priorities identified in the current Regional Housing Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber and its accompanying Investment Framework. The Regional Housing Board's current two year investment plan for affordable housing delivered by the Housing Corporation includes 45 dwellings in the Vale of York. The board is also helping to fund the extra care housing scheme at Easingwold, Hambleton district council's Young Single Homeless scheme and affordable housing initiatives in the 'Golden Triangle' high demand, high price area including north Leeds, Harrogate and York. These priorities continue into the board's revised draft strategy, which is currently out for consultation. Sub-regional housing partnerships are currently working on their investment proposals for 2006–08 for submission to the board and subsequent approval by me later this year, and I would expect to see them appropriately reflect the needs of the Vale of York. Recently completed research into 'Rural Housing in the Yorkshire and Humber Region' for the Housing Corporation and the Countryside Agency will help in addressing rural housing needs.

However, it is important to make full use of all opportunities to provide additional affordable housing where it is needed. There are already good achievements by Vale of York authorities in using the planning system to deliver affordable housing, and I hope that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's recent changes to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 will help them to do more. I was also pleased to recently give approval to North Yorkshire county council to implement an affordable housing scheme using their share of the proceeds from the flexibility that we gave local authorities to reduce the council tax discount for second homes. The first phase comprises a proposed county-wide programme with an investment of almost £12 million, including 15 dwellings in the Vale of York.

Housing Market Renewal Areas

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 579W, on housing market renewal areas, what specific targets the Government has agreed with the Merseyside pathfinder in relation to housing market renewal in the Welsh Streets of Liverpool. [223983]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not agreed with New Heartlands, the Merseyside pathfinder, targets in respect of housing market renewal specifically in relation to the Welsh Streets of Liverpool.

Parish Councils

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to change the number of parish councils. [223927]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's policy is to create new parishes, as we consider appropriate, where this is recommended in reviews of parish arrangements undertaken by a district council or requested in a petition of local electors. In 2004 23 new parish councils were created.

Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to implement sections *(a)* 1, *(b)* 2, *(c)* 3, *(d)* 4, *(e)* 5, *(f)* 6, *(g)* 7, *(h)* 8, *(i)* 9, *(j)* 10 and *(k)* 11 of the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004; and if he will make a statement. [224563]

Phil Hope: Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 of the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004, which amend or add to provisions in the Building Act 1984, will be used as appropriate to make regulations to improve the sustainability and security of buildings. All proposals for regulations will be subject to full public consultation and a full regulatory impact assessment.

Section 6 of the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004 requires a biennial report on the progress of sustainability in the building stock in England and Wales to be presented to Parliament. The first report must be presented by 16 November 2006. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently establishing baselines for this report.

Sections 10 and 11 of the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004 do not require implementation.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what additional resource commitments he plans to make to deliver the improvements in *(a)* monitoring and data capacity on climate change in Africa, *(b)* scientific collaboration to enhance the development process and *(c)* the integration of climate information and science into development, as set out in his Department's joint report on Climate Proofing Africa, published on 22 March. [224234]

Hilary Benn: DFID is committed to helping Africa adapt to climate change by improving climate monitoring networks and strengthening capacity to management climate risks to development including in disaster prevention.

DFID believes a concerted international response is the best way of providing effective assistance and are seeking a joint commitment from the G8 countries under the Climate Change pillar of the Government's G8 Presidency. To that end, the Secretary of State for the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and I raised these matters on the agenda of the recent G8 Environment and Development Ministers meeting. I am pleased to say that Ministers agreed on the urgency of the problem and committed, in principle, to help build scientific capacity and integrate measures to address climate change in development assistance and national development plans. We will be working to agree specific practical measures at the G8 Heads of Government meeting at Gleneagles. In that context, we are currently considering additional UK resource commitments.

Details of the outcome paper from the meeting entitled 'G8 Environment and Development Ministerial, 18 March 2005', is available in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many permanent staff from his Department are stationed in *(a)* Sierra Leone, *(b)* Nigeria, *(c)* Angola, *(d)* Namibia, *(e)* Malawi, *(f)* Zambia, *(g)* Tanzania, *(h)* Kenya, *(i)* Uganda and *(j)* Ethiopia; and what changes have taken place in (i) the deployment of staff and (ii) the levels of expenditure by his Department in these countries in each of the last three years. [224300]

Hilary Benn: Numbers of permanent staff by country were as follows. Figures include UK-based staff, staff appointed in country and some permanent staff seconded to other organisations in country.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Angola	—	3	3
Ethiopia	[1]17	[1]36	46
Kenya	43.5	43.5	42.75
Malawi	24	42	59
Namibia	4	4	2
Nigeria	71	71	81
Sierra Leone	[1]8.5	[1]10.25	[1]11.75
Tanzania	36	44	48
Uganda	44	46	52
Zambia	[1]2	34	34

[1] For these years, DFID staff were based in British embassies/high commissions, preceding the opening of DFID offices.

Total DFID spending by country, for the last three completed financial years, was as follows:

£ million

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Angola	3.6	9.9	7.8
Ethiopia	11.8	42.7	43.3
Kenya	27.5	44.5	25.8
Malawi	46.6	52.3	54.8
Namibia	2.0	2.2	1.4
Nigeria	20.9	30.5	31.2
Sierra Leone	37.1	32.4	34.3
Tanzania	65.0	95.9	80.5
Uganda	68.5	54.9	56.0
Zambia	44.8	41.4	28.4

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many visits have been undertaken by staff from his Department to *(a)* Sierra Leone, *(b)* Nigeria, *(c)* Angola, *(d)* Namibia, *(e)* Malawi, *(f)* Zambia, *(g)* Tanzania, *(h)* Kenya, *(i)* Uganda and *(j)* Ethiopia in each of the last three years; and for what purpose, in each case. [224299]

Hilary Benn: Visits to these countries are a frequent and routine aspect of programme management and administrative support to DFID overseas offices. Visits include those from Ministers and senior officials, project and programme design missions, policy and technical advisers, missions to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of DFID programmes, and support to the management and running of DFID in-country offices in areas such as staff training, audit and accounts, estates management and communications. To obtain the information requested would incur a disproportionate cost.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment the Commission for Africa made of the economic and environmental sustainability of uranium exports from African countries. [223765]

Hilary Benn: No specific assessment was made of the economic and environmental sustainability of uranium exports from African countries in the Commission for Africa's work.

Angola

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what reports he has received of the discussions between the International Monetary Fund and the Government of Angola concerning budgetary control and transparency of taxation; and if he will make a statement. [224590]

Hilary Benn: The Bretton Woods institutions confirm that most areas of off-budget spending in Angola decreased in 2004. However, much more progress has to be made to eradicate this practice completely. The next mission of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to Angola is expected in early April. The purpose of this mission is to conclude negotiations on the start of a Staff Monitored Programme (SMP) which will, among other things, focus on bringing all revenue and expenditure into the annual budget process in a transparent fashion. Fiscal discipline is another area which the Ministry of

Finance itself has identified as a national priority. DFID, working together with the World Bank, is planning to fund a training programme in budgetary processes including fiscal discipline for line ministry staff at both the central and provincial levels.

As regards transparency of oil revenues, including taxes from the oil industry, Angola has taken several significant steps forward. These include full annual financial audits of Sonangol, the state oil company, and publication of up-to-date oil revenues by production blocks on the website of the Ministry of Finance. The UK continues actively to encourage the Government of Angola to make progress on the remaining components of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). One other important issue which the IMF will be raising during its forthcoming mission is how the Government intends to use the windfall resulting from higher than expected oil prices. The first step will be to declare how much additional revenue has accrued and then to ensure that these funds are incorporated transparently into the annual budget system.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much aid was disbursed to Angola by the UK in 2004–05; what aid is planned for 2005–06; and what projects will be the major recipients of that aid. [224616]

Hilary Benn: DFID's programme to Angola amounted to some £8 million in 2004–05. £8.6 million has been allocated for the Angola programme in 2005–06. This will focus on the key areas of consolidation of peace, relief and recovery, democratisation and economic reform, poverty reduction and HIV/AIDS. Projects currently being funded are:

Consolidation of peace (£0.3 million)

Integrated Regional Information Networks Radio Soap Opera

Christian Aid Civil Society Peacebuilding

Centre for Common Ground—peace-building media programme

ACCORD Conflict and Vulnerability Assessment

Relief and recovery (£1.2 million)

Oxfam—Water and Sanitation project (£0.1 million)

World Food Programme—rebuilding of bridges (£1.05 million)

Economic reform and poverty reduction (£2.9 million)

One World Action—Land Reform Seminars/Workshops (£0.1 million)

World Bank—Trust Fund for Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (£0.25 million)

Luanda Urban Poverty Programme (£2.6 million)

HIV/AIDS (£1.68 million)

BBC World Service Trust—promoting HIV/AIDS awareness through media (£0.5 million)

UN AIDS—Assistance to the National Aids Commission (£0.08 million)

Population Services International—Condom Social Marketing (£0.8 million)

GOAL—Voluntary Counselling and Testing (£0.3 million)

We are currently considering funding for further projects in the above-mentioned areas of focus.

Cambodia

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance the Government has provided to the Government of Cambodia in removing landmines. [224488]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID supports a sizeable programme of global mine action, including direct funding of mine clearance. DFID provides funding for global action to the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Development Programme and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

In Cambodia, in the past three years, DFID has provided more than £1 million to support the mine clearance efforts of the HALO Trust and the Mines Advisory Group, and some £500,000 to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre for demining projects. We recently approved a further grant to the Mines Advisory Group of £378,156 for technical survey work and are considering further funding support to the HALO Trust and Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

Correspondence

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Manchester, Withington dated 5 January 2005 about his constituent Catriona Roussel. [224121]

Hilary Benn: The right hon. Member's letter of 2 February 2005 on behalf of Catriona Roussel was originally sent to the Foreign Secretary for reply and passed to me on 1 March. A reply was issued on 31 March.

Cuba

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* members of his Department and *(c)* representatives of the UK Government have had with members and representatives of the Government of (i) the United States of America and (ii) Cuba regarding tying Cuba's humanitarian assistance to South and Central American countries into a multilateral approach to humanitarian aid between the EU, the US and Cuba; and if he will make a statement. [224582]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has had no recent discussions with either the Cuban or US Government concerning Cuban humanitarian assistance to South and Central American countries, nor a multilateral approach to humanitarian aid between Cuba and the EU and US. Representatives of HMG have had wide-ranging discussions with the Cuban authorities, including on their relations with South and Central American countries. Cuba provides technical assistance to a number of countries in the region, most notably Venezuela, but no assessment of its effectiveness has been shared by the Cuban Government or been made independently. Following Hurricane Ivan DFID contributed £50,000 to Cuba through the Regional Appeal of the International Federation of the Red Cross. The Regional Appeal included the provision of shelter and non-food relief for affected families.

Darfur

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the role of livestock in the rebuilding of the rural economy of Darfur, with particular reference to working animals. [223160]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Animal husbandry is dominant in the rural economy of much of Darfur. Animals are raised for sale outside the state, traded and consumed locally, used as beasts of burden and, less frequently, to provide traction for farm equipment. So livestock is central to prospects for economic recovery in the state.

In Darfur, DFID support includes £1 million to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), who provide veterinarian support for livestock. This includes the provision of feed and health care to donkeys, small ruminants, and chickens both in camps and outside. In addition the programme includes provision for the training of community animal health monitors. We are continuing DFID support of these projects into the next financial year 2005–06 through a $4.5 million (approximately £2.3 million) contribution to the FAO under the UN Workplan.

However, before there can be any economic progress in Darfur, either livestock-based or otherwise, there will need to be an end to the conflict. The crisis in Darfur is caused by the conflict between the Darfur rebels and the Sudanese Government and can end only through a political, negotiated settlement in line with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in January this year.

The UK is pressing all parties to abide and implement the ceasefire and humanitarian and security protocols which they have signed, and is supporting the on-going African Union-mediated Abuja Peace Talks. DFID has also provided £14 million in support to the African Union observer mission that is there to monitor the ceasefire agreement.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the UN's current estimate is of the level of unmet requirements for its work on emergency assistance for agriculture and livestock in Greater Darfur. [223162]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The latest UN's Humanitarian Needs Profile covers a conflict affected population of 2.1 million people and indicates that 93 per cent. of this population is not receiving assistance for agriculture and livestock.

This gap is explained by the fact that funding is prioritised against immediate needs such as food, water, primary health care, and sanitation. In Darfur, assistance towards medium-term concerns is compromised by the scale of emergency needs and the degree of armed insecurity on the ground.

The poor security situation hampers access to arable land and progress on community development programmes. These include agricultural and livestock assistance. The situation is further exacerbated by the onset of severe drought in the region, with the most immediate concern being the provision of food.

To this end, of the £70 million in humanitarian assistance that the UK is providing to Sudan for the financial year 2005–06, £40 million is being channelled through the UN Workplan which is being disbursed based on recommendations by the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Sudan. 59 per cent. of the Workplan is for food aid in Darfur.

In the long-term, it is only through a political process to which both sides are committed that the situation in Darfur can be resolved and crucial assistance given towards key needs, including the re-development of agriculture and livestock.

Mr. Brazier: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what assurances he sought from the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation that they were capable of implementing the project proposals outlined in Emergency Assistance (agriculture and livestock) to vulnerable households in the Greater Darfur region of Sudan before awarding a grant for this work; and what steps he has taken to ensure the aid reaches the intended beneficiaries; [223163]

(2) what assessment he has made of whether *(a)* veterinary equipment, *(b)* medicine and vaccines and *(c)* food and fodder detailed in the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation project documentation has been (i) purchased and (ii) applied where it was required. [223161]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) undertakes the implementation of its Emergency Assistance Programme through International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs). The FAO has been in Darfur for four years, but has worked previously with its implementing partners in other areas of Sudan. As such they have built up a good professional relationship based on mutual trust and responsibility. From previous reporting by the UN, as well as from my officials following monitoring visits and discussions within Sudan, I have confidence in the FAO's capability to implement their project proposals in this very difficult environment.

The UK has already funded the FAO project 'Emergency Assistance (Agriculture and Livestock)' with a contribution of £1 million (2004–05). This was agreed on the basis of in-depth dialogue with the FAO in Sudan. DFID has supplemented this with an additional contribution of $4.5million (£2.3 million) to the FAO, as part of DFID's contributions to the UN Workplan. Timely disbursements of funds are of especial importance to the FAO, as it needs to plan ahead so it has inputs available at the key points in the agricultural calendar.

This year DFID is piloting in Sudan some of the reforms to the International System that I have proposed on humanitarian reform supported by the Organisation for Co-ordination Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), notably empowering the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator (UNHC). The aim is for the UNHC to take the lead on responsibility for needs assessments, planning, and resource allocation. DFID funding to UN agencies this year is being channelled through the UNHC who is responsible for allocating funds to UN

agencies against priority needs. This most recent FAO contribution from-DFID (of $4.5million) forms part of his prioritised allocations for the first tranche of money (£14 million) we have made available.

In the Emergency Assistance project cereal seed is being procured locally (59.5 metric tons), some of which has already been delivered. The FAO is responsible for delivering the seed to the three regional capitals of the Darfur region where it is handed over to the INGOs. INGOs have identified a number of specific vulnerable groups totalling 261,000 families who have access to land at the moment. This equates to over 1,000,000 direct beneficiaries. These INGOs are then responsible for delivering directly to the families.

Overall monitoring and evaluation is the responsibility of the FAO who have to ensure appropriate performance of their implementing INGO partners. Co-ordination of these activities is carried out by the Food Security Co-ordination meeting, which is held bi-weekly in each of the Darfur regional capitals. The FAO will be reporting on their performance this year to both DFID and the UNHC. In addition, through DFID's humanitarian and livelihoods advisers in Khartoum and London, we will be undertaking monitoring of this programme during the course of this year.

The FAO has stressed that there still remains a considerable shortfall in the amount of seed required (855MT), but there still remains sufficient time to purchase and distribute as the rains will not be expected until a further two months.

Veterinary Equipment:

This has been purchased in Sudan and distributed to the three Darfur capitals. The equipment is dispatched to the INGOs who then distribute it to selected Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW). This cadre of staff has been selected by the community and trained by the INGOs. They are paid a small stipend by the INGO which is reimbursed by the FAO. Again, all activities are monitored and evaluated by the INGOs. Pertinent issues can and are raised in community dialogue in formal and informal manner.

Medicine/Vaccine:

These have been purchased in Khartoum and distributed through the same mechanism as above.

Food/Fodder:

A supplementary feed (concentrate pellets) for feeding is purchased in Sudan. Again, this is distributed by the INGOs direct to the beneficiaries with monitoring carried out by the CAHW.

The FAO has a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with each of its INGOs to purchase fodder in the local market. The implementing partner then agrees a sub-contract with a private contractor to deliver the fodder to them, which is then distributed direct to the beneficiaries and again monitored by the CAHW. This component is strongly linked to issues on protection. Women are usually required to go out and gather fodder, but have been subject to rape and violence when moving outside of camps. This intervention will help to minimise the risk.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Mr. Blizzard: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government are taking to assist rural populations living in and depending on the forests of the Democratic Republic of Congo to obtain security of land tenure. [224107]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) is not currently providing direct support to rural populations living in the forest areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). However natural resource management has been identified in our country engagement plan as one of the key areas of possible future UK support to the DRC. We are developing a DRC natural resources strategy, due later this year, which will indicate the nature of any likely support, including the forestry sector amongst others. DFID also keeps in regular touch with the World Bank and non-governmental organisations on forestry issues in the DRC.

DFID is also funding a review of the management of natural resource extraction in the DRC, to help in the establishment of more transparent means of natural resource management in the future for the benefit of the Congolese people.

Fair Trade

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action the Government have taken to encourage the adoption of fair trade rules by *(a)* the European Union, *(b)* the World Bank, *(c)* the IMF and *(d)* other international bodies. [224162]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are fully committed to a framework of rules for world trade that is fair as well as free, that works in the interests of the world's poor, and provides developing countries the opportunity to trade themselves out of poverty. This can only be achieved through the multilateral system, particularly the world trade organisations (WTO) and the current round of negotiations, the Doha Development Agenda (DDA).

DFID is working with its partners in the EU to press for a successful outcome to the Doha round and to ensure impact of the EU's trade policies on developing countries is taken into account. For example during negotiations between the EU and African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries over Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) we are working to ensure EPAs are designed to deliver long-term development, economic growth and poverty reduction in ACP countries. The UK Government also works closely with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other international bodies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to ensure developing countries receive support to engage in trade negotiations and integrate progressively into the global trading system.

Rwanda

Ms Oona King: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the extent to which Rwanda's new land policy safeguards the livelihoods of the rural poor; what assessment he has made of its likely impact on security

in the country; and if he will make a statement on how the UK will engage with Rwanda on the issue of land reform. [223852]

Hilary Benn: Rwanda is the most densely populated country in Africa with 90 per cent. of a population of over 8 million people earning their livelihoods from the land. Most families operate at the level of subsistence agriculture, producing almost entirely for their own consumption. Tenure of some 90 per cent. of the arable land in Rwanda is currently based upon customary rights, with no formal written title. Rwanda faces the challenge of trying to promote economic growth and reduce poverty in an economy largely dependent upon unsustainable, low productivity subsistence agriculture, while at the same time addressing a historical legacy of land disputes in the interests of national reconciliation.

Rwanda's Draft National Land Policy (June 2004) has the overall objective

> "to establish a land tenure system that guarantees tenure security for all Rwandans and give guidance to the necessary land reforms with a view to good management and rational use of national land resources"

Safeguards for the Livelihoods of the Rural Poor

The draft policy and land law include provisions that contribute to safeguarding the livelihoods of the poor in the following areas:

- Prohibition of any discrimination in land ownership or rights
- Preservation of existing land rights
- Limiting to an absence of 10 years on the right of refugees to claim back previously owned land now occupied by others
- Assertion that water is a public good to which everybody has access
- Provision of a land reserve, for allocation to landless people
- Local consultation for all proposed schemes for plot consolidation and compensation either financially or in kind where appropriate
- Administration of land belonging to genocide orphans under 18 years of age on their behalf until they come of age, and assistance to vulnerable orphans above 18 and widows in developing their land.

However, the draft land law gives the government and its officials considerable administrative powers in order to achieve its policy objectives. Protecting the livelihoods of the rural poor will depend upon the way in which these powers are exercised.

Likely impact upon security in Rwanda

A lack of consistent policy and an absence of procedure for dealing with land was a contributory factor in the conflict in Rwanda that culminated in the genocide in 1994. The land reforms seek to remedy this and hopefully make an important contribution to achieving long-term peace and security in Rwanda.

How the UK will engage with Rwanda on the issue of land reform

DFID has been providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Land in Rwanda since August 2002 and supported the development of the "Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation in Rwanda". From this engagement we judge that the Government of Rwanda are sincere in their intentions of taking forward land reform in the best interests of all Rwandan people. The Government have noted that the land reform process will take at least 10 years and that the procedures envisaged in the policy and law will need to be carefully tested before they are implemented across the country.

DFID's Rwanda programme is planning to provide support to produce a "road map" for the implementation of the land reform proposals. The support will focus on consultation with those affected by the land reform proposals; will test approaches to land reform based upon local priorities and provide the required, structured training for the Ministry of Land and other key Government of Rwanda staff involved in land reform.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what total aid budget to Rwanda is planned for 2005–06. [224579]

Hilary Benn: The total UK aid budget for Rwanda for 2005–06 is £47 million.

Of this, £31 million will be transferred to the Government of Rwanda as Poverty Reduction Budget Support to enable Rwanda to meet the costs of implementing policies and programmes under Rwanda's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Working in co-ordination with other donors in response to specific needs of the Government of Rwanda as set out in the DFID Country Assistance Plan for Rwanda, the remaining £16 million of the total UK commitment to Rwanda for 2005–06 will be provided in the form of projects and programmes. These will provide targeted technical assistance for capacity building activities in Government of Rwanda Ministries and other bodies. UK funded technical assistance in 2005–06 will focus support in the following areas: education; social protection (including support to genocide survivors); improving gender equity in public policy; land reform; civil service reform; support to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and public financial management.

In addition to our bilateral commitment to Rwanda, the UK has contributed an estimated €5.8 million to planned European Commission development programmes Rwanda for 2005.

Shipping Lines

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's spending was in each of the last two years with the shipping lines *(a)* P&O, *(b)* Nippin Yusen Kaisha, *(c)* Mitsui Osaka Shosen Kaisha, *(d)* Orient Overseas Container Line and *(e)* Mediterranean Shipping Corporation. [217316]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not made any direct payment to the shipping lines cited. All of DFID's shipping needs are met by specialised freight handling companies who we pay directly. We do not require these companies to maintain a central report of payments made to individual shipping lines and this information could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220946]

Hilary Benn: No surplus stocks of assets have been sold by DFID on eBay.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220971]

Hilary Benn: The value of sales of surplus assets by DFID is shown as follows:

	Value of sales (£)
2000–01	28,000
2001–02	109,264
2002–03	28,828
2003–04	106,685
2004–05	[1]76,860

[1] Year to date figure.

This information is included in departmental Resource Accounts, copies of which are normally available in the Library.

Technical/Logistical Expertise (Information Exchange)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what channels are available for the exchange of *(a)* technical and *(b)* logistical expertise between his Department and UK non-governmental organisations active in the field of international development; what fora his Department has (i) initiated, (ii) funded and (iii) run for such purposes since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [224576]

Hilary Benn: DFID consults extensively with NGOs on both policy and technical issues. We do this through a variety of channels including ministerial and official meetings with the British Overseas Aid Group (BOAG), British Overseas NGOs for Development network (BOND), regional visits and bilateral meetings.

DFID endeavours to carry out public consultations as recommended in the Code of Practice on Consultations published by the Cabinet Office in January 2004. When consulting NGOs, this guidance is used in conjunction with the 'Compact' between the government and the voluntary and community sector which includes a specific code of good practice on 'Consultation and Policy Appraisal'.

DFID has funded the British Overseas NGOs for Development network (BOND) since 1993 when it was established as a membership organisation. It now represents over 280 international development NGOs

Since 1997, there has been a great deal of consultation through a variety of ad hoc fora but no central record is held.. This information could be obtained only by incurring a disproportionate cost.

Technology Transfers

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the technology transfers effected by his Department in each of the last three years. [215315]

Hilary Benn: DFID funds research which generates a wide range of new or improved agricultural and other technologies, which are transferred to farmers and users in developing countries. These transfers occur over a period of years, rather than in a single year. Recent examples include the use of animal traction techniques for improved efficiency (Bolivia, Kenya and Zimbabwe) and seed priming on farms (soaking seeds in water before sowing) for improved crop establishment and higher yields (25 countries).

Further information on DFID's research programmes is available on the DFID website: www.dfid.gov.uk. Details of natural resources and infrastructure research and technology projects are included on two databases: www.narsis.org and www.infrastructureconnect.info.

World Bank

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which candidate the Government plan to support for the Presidency of the World Bank. [223375]

Hilary Benn: The broad support of the membership, including from developing country clients of the Bank group will be very important in taking their work forward.

The Government have noted Mr. Wolfowitz's nomination with interest. He is very distinguished and experienced internationally. There is of course a process that has to be gone through in which the views of developing countries are important. It is the Bank's board which makes the decision, and it is important that this is a transparent process. The UK Government are interested in Mr. Wolfowitz's vision for the future of the World Bank in reducing international poverty at a time when the need to make much faster progress has never been clearer.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Training Review

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list with a short biography the inspectors who took part in the Adult Learning Inspectorate Safer Training review into armed forces training. [223678]

Mr. Ingram: In May 2004 I commissioned the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) to conduct an independent and searching review of the way the armed forces train our personnel. Their report was published on 21 March 2005. I am grateful for the work of the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning for England and his inspection teams in undertaking this comprehensive and very detailed survey of Defence initial training. I am, however, unable to provide the names and biographical details of the inspectors requested, as it is my Department's policy in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 not to release

such information into the public domain as this might contribute to or facilitate an unwelcome invasion of their privacy.

British Nuclear Deterrent

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to remove the British nuclear deterrent from the Clyde. [218369]

Mr. Hoon: We have no plans to change basing policy for the UK's nuclear deterrent force.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will rule out the acquisition of battlefield nuclear weapons for use by British forces. [218370]

Mr. Hoon: Battlefield nuclear weapons are not required by the Government's policy on nuclear deterrence.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will rule out the use of UK nuclear weapons on a first strike basis. [218371]

Mr. Hoon: The United Kingdom Government would be prepared to use nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances of self-defence. We would not use our weapons, whether conventional or nuclear, contrary to international law.

A policy of no first use of nuclear weapons would be incompatible with our and NATO's doctrine of deterrence, nor would it further nuclear disarmament objectives. We have made clear, as have our NATO allies, that the circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote. Our overall strategy is to ensure uncertainty in the mind of any aggressor about the exact nature of our response, and thus to maintain effective deterrence.

Camouflage Garments

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many camouflage combat garments have been supplied by the factory in China under the cut and sew contract; and what the timetable for the delivery of all camouflage garments under the contract is. [223935]

Mr. Ingram: To date a total of over 100,000 items have now been delivered by the cut and sew prime contractor, this includes over 40,000 items of combat clothing. Under this Enabling Arrangement, the contract delivery schedule is agreed on each Warrant as it is issued.

Coalition Forces (Iraq)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will publish an up to date list of the countries providing troops to the coalition forces in Iraq and how many troops each country provides. [215163]

Mr. Ingram: In early March 2005, the United Kingdom had 7,961 personnel deployed in Iraq.

The number of personnel per troop contributing nation is a matter for individual countries. Open source figures provided by those countries, as at early March 2005, are as follows.

Countries	*Troops*
Albania	74
Armenia	46
Australia	312
Azerbaijan	154
Bulgaria	495
Czech Republic	92
Denmark	485
El Salvador	380
Estonia	47
Georgia	159
Italy	3,033
Japan	536
Kazakhstan	29
Lithuania	131
Latvia	117
Macedonia	34
Mongolia	130
Poland	2,400
Romania	727
Slovakia	105
South Korea	3,700
Ukraine	1,449
United States	140,000

Norway and Portugal retain nine and two staff officers respectively.

Contracts (Rolls-Royce)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value of each of his Department's contracts with the Rolls Royce Group was in each year since 1997. [223758]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Deaths in Service

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the full coroner's inquest will be held into the death of Paul Justin Connolly at Shaibah Logistics Base, Iraq on 26 December 2004. [224479]

Mr. Ingram: These arrangements are a matter for HM Coroner in line with the coroners' system in England and Wales.

Defence Estate

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average rent charged by his Department to farmers for land was per hectare in each county in the UK in the latest period for which figures are available. [222832]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence does not own land in every county in the United Kingdom and thus does not record or retain information on that basis. Land is held for purposes of military training and is made available without detriment to such training. Rent is set according to the conditions with which the Department is content to let the land, and this therefore becomes the market rent for that land taking into consideration these conditions. To provide the information requested, given that it is not held for defence purposes, would require disproportionate cost and effort.

Departmental Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of staff surveys in the Department was in each year since 1997. [213675]

Mr. Caplin: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Eurofighter

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will estimate how many UK jobs have been created by the supplementary order for Eurofighter aircraft; and if he will make a statement. [224140]

Mr. Ingram: Industry estimate that the Typhoon Tranche 2 order will, at the peak of manufacture, create or sustain some 16,000 jobs with United Kingdom defence manufacturers, many in areas of high technology, plus a significant number of jobs in supporting industries across the economy more widely.

Flight Refuelling (Brize Norton)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the change of responsibilities for the flight refuelling fleet at Brize Norton. [223890]

Mr. Ingram: There has been no change of responsibilities for the air-to-air refuelling fleet at RAF Brize Norton.

Gulf War Veterans

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many Gulf War veterans have committed suicide; [223887]

(2) what estimate he has made of how many Gulf War veterans have committed suicide in prison. [223888]

Mr. Caplin: As at 31 December 2004, there had been 120 deaths due to intentional self-harm and events of undetermined intent (suicides and open verdict deaths) among veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf Conflict, compared with an estimate of 112 in the comparison group of Service personnel who did not deploy.

From the information available to the Defence Analytical Services Agency, of the 120 deaths, the number where the recorded place of death is stated as a HM Prison is less than five; it is not appropriate to give the precise number for these events for reasons of confidentiality. In a number of the 120 cases, the place of death is not apparent.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many persons arrested by British service personnel in Iraq have been in custody for over a year without charges having been brought against them. [215479]

Mr. Ingram: Two internees originally taken into custody by the United Kingdom have been held for more than a year. Both are held at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility in Basrah Province. They were interned on the basis that they represented an imperative threat to security and not on the basis that they were suspected of any specific criminal offence.

Medals

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of paper records of medals issued to First World War combatants; what electronic records are kept of these medals; whether those records contain all the information contained in the paper records; and what arrangements he is making to ensure that records of these medals are not lost. [223633]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence, together with The National Archives, has been actively seeking to identify a suitable institution prepared to take these cards. So far, a home for just a small part of the collection has been found. No decision on the retention or destruction of the cards will be taken until all such avenues have been explored.

However, the information from the front of the First World War medal index cards is already preserved in a microfilmed format and is available to researchers at The National Archives (in Class WO 372) and through the National Archives website online.

During microfilming the reverse side of the cards was not copied as the vast majority of them are blank. Sampling found that information on the reverse is restricted to about 1 per cent. of the cards.

Northern Ireland (Royal Navy)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Royal Naval vessels are assigned to duties in Northern Ireland for 2004–05; and how many Royal Naval vessels are planned to be assigned to duties in Northern Ireland in each of the next five years. [223294]

Mr. Ingram: The Northern Ireland Patrol Vessel (NIPV) Squadron comprises three re-roled Hunt Class Mine Counter-Measure Vessels (HMS Brecon, HMS Dulverton and HMS Cottesmore) with one ship usually on station at any given time. I announced on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 69WS, that we have decided that the vessels will be decommissioned in September 2005. While there will be no permanent assignments of Royal Navy vessels for Northern Ireland following their release by the General Officer Commanding Northern Ireland, the Chief Constable is satisfied that routine Royal Navy activities around the UK and specific intelligence-led maritime operations will deliver an appropriate level of support to the police in countering terrorism.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what duties are performed by *(a)* land-based Royal Naval personnel and *(b)* ship-based Royal Naval personnel based in Northern Ireland; and what plans he has to change the numbers of each category. [223295]

Mr. Ingram: Royal Navy (RN) personnel provide a Naval Intelligence unit within Headquarters Northern Ireland and administration of HMS Caroline (a Royal Naval Reserve establishment). RN personnel also crew the Northern Ireland Patrol Vessel (NIPV) Squadron, with one ship usually on station at any one time. I announced on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 69WS, that we have decided that the NIPV vessels will be decommissioned in September 2005

releasing the crews for other duties. The removal of the NIPV may also result in changes in the number of land-based RN personnel.

Nuclear Test Veterans

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will carry out a study of the health of veterans of the British Nuclear Test Programme. [223378]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* A study into the general health of Nuclear Test Veterans would involve major practical and methodological difficulties. Such a study would necessitate individual contact with participants in the study or their GPs. Not only would this be a very large exercise to organise and undertake successfully, but there would also be considerable risk of bias arising from the difficulties of identifying, contacting and recovering responses from a fully representative sample of veterans or their dependants.

The Government do not therefore intend to institute such a study.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will answer the question from the hon. Member for Portsmouth South, reference 200301. [216498]

Mr. Ingram: I replied to the hon. Member on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 128W.

Penalties (Contractors)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on operating penalties on contractors who fail to deliver on contracts due to *(a)* quality and *(b)* time. [200744]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not include penalty clauses in its contracts as they are not generally enforceable under English or Scottish law.

Most Ministry of Defence contracts contain express quality provisions and performance criteria, occasionally associated with differential pricing or liquidated damages. The Ministry of Defence has the right to reject goods and services which do not conform to the contract specification and to require the supply of satisfactory replacements. This right is exercised in appropriate circumstances and the failure to achieve a satisfactory supply within the contracted time scales could lead to invoking liquidated damages provisions or termination of the contract.

RAF Menwith Hill

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision is made in the contract between his Department and the US authorities for the continuing use of RAF Menwith Hill. [223682]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* There is no such contract. RAF Menwith Hill is made available to the United States Visiting Force under the terms of the NATO Status of Forces Agreement of 1951, and other confidential arrangements.

Regiments

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many redundancies will take place when the Kings, Lancashire and Border Regiment is formed. [222288]

Mr. Ingram: As a result of the implementation of the future army structure there will be up to 335 commissioned officer and soldier redundancies across the infantry during 2006 and 2007.

Commissioned infantry officers have already received letters if they fall into the relevant redundancy categories and have until 5 May 2005 to lodge an expression of interest. Infantry soldiers in the relevant redundancy categories will receive letters around the turn of the year. Planned dates for notifying those officers and soldiers selected for redundancy are 8 July 2005 and 1 May 2006 respectively. Consequently, it is too early to speculate as to where the redundancies will fall in relation to individual regiments.

Further information can be obtained from the relevant Defence Council Instruction (DCI Army 7/05), a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many towns have granted freedom to *(a)* the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, *(b)* the King's Regiment and *(c)* the King's Own Borderers; and if he will list the (i) battle honours of each regiment and (ii) medals won by each regiment in the last 30 years. [222316]

Mr. Ingram: The towns, cities and boroughs that have granted freedom to the King's Own Royal Border Regiment (KORBR), the King's Regiment (Kings) and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment (QLR) are as follows:

KORBR

Appleby
Barrow-in-Furness
Carlisle
Kendal
Lancaster
Whitehaven
Workington

Kings

Liverpool
Manchester
Tameside

QLR

Blackburn
Burnley
Haslingdon (Rossendale)
Hyndburn
Pendle
Preston
The Fylde
Warrington
(Spandau, Berlin)

Note:
QLR is expected to receive the freedom of Chorley on 16 April 2005.

Battle honours for all regiments are listed in the Army List Part 1, which is available in the Library of the House. Regiments with a long tradition and a history of amalgamation inherit many honours: KORBR have 179, Kings 183 and QLR188.

The number of medals won by personnel in each of the KORBR, Kings and the QLR in the last 30 years runs into many thousands, details of which can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Royal Navy

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 414W, on the Royal Navy, how many Royal Navy ships are in a state of readiness for the Joint Rapid Reaction Force. [223584]

Mr. Ingram: There are 34 Royal Navy vessels currently in a state of readiness for the Joint Rapid Reaction Force.

Trident

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he has discussed a replacement for Trident with the Prime Minister. [218350]

Mr. Hoon: I routinely discuss a variety of matters with my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. It is not our practice to divulge the details of such discussions.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Arms Exports (Chile)

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list, for each year since 1997, the total number of arms export contracts agreed to Chile. [224532]

Nigel Griffiths: The Department is responsible for holding information on the licences we have issued, not on numbers of arms export contracts agreed. Since 1997 the Government have published an Annual Report on strategic export controls, and since 2004 also a Quarterly Report on strategic export controls, containing information on the total number of export licences issued to each destination and the goods summaries covered by those licences. The Annual Reports are available from the Libraries of the House, and the Quarterly Reports from the DTI Export Control Organisation website, www.dti.gov.uk/export. control.

Business Start-ups

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many business start-ups there have been in *(a)* North East Lincolnshire and *(b)* North Lincolnshire in each year since 1997. [223463]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 453,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2004, the highest number since the survey started in 1998.

Barclays data show that there were 1,900 business start-ups in North East Lincolnshire Unitary Authority in 2003 and a further 1,300 in 2004.

Barclays data show that there were 900 business start-ups in North Lincolnshire Unitary Authority in 2003 and a further 800 in 2004.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for North East Lincolnshire and North Lincolnshire Unitary Authorities are shown in the following table for 1997 to 2003. Data for 2004 will be available in Autumn 2005.

VAT registrations

	North East Lincolnshire	*North Lincolnshire*
1997	320	350
1998	320	325
1999	325	330
2000	320	345
2001	330	315
2002	325	375
2003	365	385

Source:

Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2003, Small Business Service, available from the Library of the House and also at: http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2003.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Wimbledon since 1997. [224254]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 453,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2004, the highest number since the survey started in 1988.

Barclays data show that there were 2,000 business start-ups in the London borough of Merton (which contains the constituency of Wimbledon) in 2003 and a further 2,500 in 2004. Data for London boroughs are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Wimbledon parliamentary constituency and the London borough of Merton are shown in the table for 1997 to 2003. Data for 2004 will be available in autumn 2005.

VAT registrations

	Wimbledon	*Merton*
1997	530	750
1998	625	840
1999	510	730
2000	580	765
2001	485	680
2002	455	640
2003	480	710

Source: (except for Wimbledon parliamentary constituency):
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2003,
Small Business Service, available from the Library of the House and also at: http://www.sbs.gov.uk/analytical/statistics/vatstats.php

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Only 1.8 million out of 4 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2003.

Catering Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been spent on *(a)* entertainment lunches involving civil servants and guests and *(b)* working lunches, in each year since 1997. [215052]

Ms Hewitt: The information on the amount spent on entertainment lunches involving civil servants and working lunches is not available as requested and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Correspondence

Sir George Young: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letters from the right hon. Member for North West Hampshire of 27 October 2004, 7 December 2004, 5 January, 9 February and 3 March relating to labels on bottles. [224356]

Nigel Griffiths: I apologise for the delay in responding to the letters. I responded on 30 March.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the most recent figures are for her Department's budget *(a)* in 2005–06 and *(b)* in each year for which projections have been made, broken down by budget sub-head. [223759]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI Business Plan 2005–08 published in February 2005 sets out the Department's budget for the period 2005 to 2008 broken down by business plan objective.

An electronic version of the Business Plan can be found at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/about/dti-businessplan-2004-08.pdf

Energy

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research has been funded by the Government on improving access to *(a)* the renewables obligation, *(b)* climate change levy exemption certificates and *(c)* renewables energy guarantees of origin for domestic consumers installing qualifying microgeneration technologies; what recommendations have been made from this work; what steps she is taking in the context of the current review of the renewables obligation to implement those recommendations; what additional work she intends to undertake further to improve access; and if she will make a statement. [224009]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Through the Distributed Generation Coordinating Group (DGCG), the Government have funded a report by Jade Energy on the accrual of renewables obligation certificates (ROCs), levy exemption certificates (LECs) and renewable energy guarantees of origin (REGOs). The report, which was published in February 2005, addresses concerns on the part of the microgeneration community (which includes domestic consumers who install microgeneration technologies) about access to the benefits of these schemes. The report makes recommendations on bulk processing of applications, meter data provision and "sell and buy back" contracts as well as recommendations to streamline the schemes and make them more user-friendly. Jade Energy's report is available on the DGCG's website (www.distributed-generation. gov.uk).

In the current review of the renewables obligation, the preliminary consultation addresses the issue of administrative arrangements for small generators and seeks views on a number of proposals with the potential to benefit microgenerators. In developing the Government's strategy on microgeneration, I will be assessing the usefulness of various measures including improving access to ROCs, LECs and REGOs, taking account of, among other things, the Jade Energy report.

Export Control Organisation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library copies of written representations *(a)* made by her Department to and *(b)* received by her Department from (i) representatives from industry and (ii) others relating to the future of the Export Control Organisation and private sector involvement in delivering some of that organisation's services. [221736]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* The DTI has carried out no public consultation on the matter. I have received two written representations, (which are commercially sensitive.)

International Conference on Nuclear Power

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what contribution her Department made to the International Conference on Nuclear Power for the 21st Century in Paris; and if she will place in the Library copies of relevant papers. [223931]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: None. The conference was organised by the International Atomic Energy Agency and hosted by the French Government. Information about the conference is available at www.parisnuclear2005.org/accueil.htm and www.iaea.org/.

Milford Haven (Liquefied Natural Gas Development)

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of whether the liquid natural gas tanker should be included in risk assessments for the liquid natural gas developments at Milford Haven; and if she will make a statement. [224544]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Risk assessment for the LNG developments at Milford Haven does not fall within the planning vires of the Department for Trade and

Industry. Hence I am told that prior to October 2004, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has had no direct contact nor discussions with the organisations mentioned concerning risk assessment either with regard to LNG tankers, or any other part of the LNG developments at Milford Haven.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what discussions she had with *(a)* the Health and Safety Executive, *(b)* Pembrokeshire National Park Authority, *(c)* Exxon Mobil and Petroplus, *(d)* the Department for Transport and *(e)* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister concerning risk assessments for the liquid natural gas developments at Milford Haven prior to October 2004; and if she will make a statement; [224545]

(2) what discussions she had with Pembrokeshire county council on whether the liquid natural gas (LNG) tanker should be included in the risk assessment for the LNG developments in Milford Haven prior to October 2004; and if she will make a statement. [224546]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Risk assessment for the LNG developments at Milford Haven does not fall within the planning vires of the Department of Trade and Industry. Hence I am told prior to October 2004, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has had no direct contact nor discussions with the organisations mentioned concerning risk assessment either with regard to LNG tankers, or any other part of the LNG developments at Milford Haven.

Minimum Wage (Leicester)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses were found to be employing workers for less than the minimum wage in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England, in each year since the minimum wage was introduced; and how many (i) were fined and (ii) were forced to cease trading. [223488]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The Inland Revenue did not start recording the information requested until April 2000.

The number of cases identified by NMW teams based in England where non compliance of minimum wage was identified:

	Number
1 April 2000 to 31 March 2001	1,505
1 April 2001 to 31 March 2002	1,345
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	1,476
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	1,660
1 April 2004 to date	1,153

For these cases a total of 55 penalty notices have been issued throughout this period.

A penalty notice may be issued where an employer fails to comply with an enforcement notice.

The Leicester NMW team was formed in April 2002 and the number of cases identified where non compliance of NMW was identified is as follows.

	Number
1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003	38
1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004	83
1 April 2004 to date	50

The Leicester team have not issued any penalty notices to date.

We do not hold information on the number of employers who ceased trading.

Newspaper Supply Chain

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of the likelihood of passive selling of magazines following proposals by the Office of Fair Trading to change the way in which magazines are distributed in the UK; [223533]

(2) whether she has commissioned an independent assessment of the analysis by the Office of Fair Trading of the UK newspaper and supply chain; [223547]

(3) if she will make a statement on the likely effect of passive selling on *(a)* the competitiveness of small independent newsagents and *(b)* consumer choice; [223556]

(4) what assessment she has made of the likely impact of the proposals by the Office of Fair Trading to change the UK supply chain for newspapers and magazines on delivery charges to *(a)* small independent and *(b)* larger retailers; [223570]

(5) what assessment she has made of the impact on relevant organisations of the changes proposed by the Office of Fair Trading relating to the newspaper supply chain. [223560]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In response to industry requests, the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has undertaken an informal consideration of the compatibility with competition law of agreements for distribution of newspapers and magazines. OFT's provisional opinion was announced on 23 February 2005 and a fuller draft advisory opinion will be published shortly for public consultation. The Government has no plans to commission any separate assessment of these issues which should be considered by the OFT as the UK's independent competition regulator. The OFT's opinion aims to help companies ensure that the arrangements they put in place for the distribution of their products are compatible with the law.

North Sea Oil

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* monetary value and *(b)* output in barrels was of North sea oil in each of the past five years. [224069]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The latest relevant annual data published by my Department are for 2003. Assuming 7.5 barrels per tonne of oil, the information sought is as follows.

UK continental shelf

	(a) Sales of crude oil (£ million)	*(b) Crude oil production (million barrels)*
1999	10,257	964.4
2000	16,275	884.1
2001	13,646	812.9
2002	13,629	805.7
2003	13,365	733.8

Nuclear Power

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received from Ineos Chlor expressing an interest in funding a new nuclear power plant. [224042]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: None.

Pharmaceutical Products

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether her Department has discussed the recall of pharmaceutical products with the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency as part of its consultation on the implementation of the general product safety directive. [223803]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Yes.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the reliability of instruments used to measure plutonium levels in drums at Sellafield; and what the maximum factor of error is relative to the estimated level present which it is accepted can occur. [221565]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Plants which handled plutonium waste drums at Sellafield operate under safety cases. These define the level of reliability required from instrument systems measuring the waste. Reliability varies according to the nature of the operations being conducted, but in all cases in instrument systems the required reliability levels. Both the safety cases and the substantiation process comply with industry standards and are subject to inspection by industry regulators.

It is normal for safety cases to require instrument systems to add to the reported plutonium figures an allowance for reasonable measurement uncertainties. The margin by which the results are overestimated depends on the specifics of the particular instrument system and upon the physical properties of the waste within each drum. In some cases this margin can be a significant fraction of the reported figure.

Solar Photovoltaics

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) whether funding allocations for domestic and other small-scale solar photovoltaic installations under her Department's Major Demonstration Programme will continue until August; [224073]

(2) what steps her Department is taking to ensure that funding allocations for domestic solar photovoltaic installations under her Department's Major Demonstration Programme will continue from summer 2005. [224074]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I would refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to her previously on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 76W.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what date the application for EU State Aid clearance was made for the £6 million solar photovoltaic Major Demonstration Programme announced by her Department in September 2004. [224075]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The application for State Aid clearance for the extension to the Major PV Demonstration Programme was made on 4 January 2005.

Wind Farms

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her most recent estimate is of the number of wild bird deaths from each wind farm; what advice she gives to wind farm operators to protect birds; and what assessment she has made of experience from wind farms in other countries in respect of the protection of birds from wind turbines. [224530]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We do not have estimates for the number of wild bird deaths from each wind turbine in the UK. However, we are not aware of any UK wind farms that have been associated with substantial adverse impacts on birds. As part of the planning process for wind farms in the UK, developers have to provide environmental assessments of their proposals which consider impacts on a range of factors, including those related to birds. The assessments are considered by the nature conservation agencies (English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales) and are made available for public scrutiny so other organisations such as the RSPB and local bird clubs can offer comments on the suitability of wind farm locations. The DTI advises wind farm developers to make early contact with these organisations as part of their preparatory planning for wind farm projects.

Experience from other countries shows that badly sited wind farms can have impacts on birds, for example, Altamont Pass in California where there is extensive wind development and also a high year-round raptor use which has led to high bird mortality rates. This should be kept in the context of the existing background bird mortality from collision with, for example, buildings and vehicles which is far greater.

I understand that research from Denmark suggests that birds, by day or night, tend to change their flight route some 100–200 metres before a turbine and so pass above it at a safe distance.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the area of onshore land which will be required to meet the Government's wind turbine programme. [217511]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have not made our own estimate of the area of onshore land required. That said, we note that the British Wind Energy Association

(BWEA), in a report dated November 2003, estimated that between 800 to 1,200 hectares across the UK would be used for foundations and access roads for onshore wind farms to meet the 2010 target.

Working Conditions

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on changes to working conditions for employees since 1997. [217465]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave on 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 797W.

World Intellectual Property Organisation

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to support the formulation by the World Intellectual Property Organisation of *(a)* a development agenda and *(b)* measures to promote the transfer across the jurisdictions of material in formats accessible to disabled people created under copyright exceptions in national legislation. [223735]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government, together with their European partners, are playing a positive role in supporting WIPO's work on the development-related aspects of IP. Our efforts build on commitments given in our response to the 2002 report on the subject by the Commission on Intellectual Property Rights. Specifically, the Patent Office is engaged in making and discussing proposals with WIPO officials, developed and developing countries aiming towards an IP system which enables developing countries to make best use of their innovative and creative activity so as to achieve social and economic progress. We must also ensure that the legitimate interests of those holding intellectual property are properly protected to facilitate wider international investment in developing countries.

In November 2004, the WIPO Standing Committee on copyright and related rights considered a proposal by Chile that the committee should address the subject of exceptions to rights for the purposes of education, libraries and disabled persons. A constructive exchange resulted in full support from those present, including the United Kingdom, for further discussion at the committee's next session planned for later this year.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Iraq (Legal Advice)

Adam Price: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the Attorney-General's duty to provide legal advice to Parliament. [223250]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General and I are legal advisers to the Government. On occasion—where this does not conflict with our Governmental role—we also give advice to Parliament on procedural questions, matters of standards and privileges, and on the meaning and effect of proposed legislation.

Adam Price: To ask the Solicitor-General whether the Attorney-General, or his advisers, in drafting the Parliamentary answer setting out his view on the legal basis for the use of force in Iraq dated 17 March 2003 had concluded that *(a)* there was no prospect of a successful legal challenge of a decision by Her Majesty's Government to use force in Iraq at any competent international court, *(b)* there were no legal grounds on which such a challenge could be based and *(c)* while justiciable grounds existed, such a challenge was unlikely to be initiated. [223779]

The Solicitor-General: The advice given by the Attorney-General is not publicly disclosed.

Adam Price: To ask the Solicitor-General on what date the Attorney-General agreed with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary the proposal to make a written statement to Parliament setting out his view of the legal basis for the use of force in Iraq; on what date this discussion was first initiated; on whose initiative; and when the Attorney-General was first informed of the question tabled by the Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale which he answered on 17 March 2003. [223783]

The Solicitor-General: Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale tabled her question to the Attorney-General on 17 March 2003. The question was inspired by the Government to enable the Attorney-General to set out his view to Parliament of the legal basis for the use of force against Iraq. Ministerial discussions about the making of a statement to Parliament are not disclosed.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to her answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on Iraq (Legal Advice), if she will publish the assistance furnished by Professor Christopher Greenwood, QC, in preparation of the Attorney-General's statement to Parliament of 17 March 2003. [224014]

The Solicitor-General: The assistance provided by Professor Greenwood in relation to the preparation of the Attorney-General's written answer of 17 March 2003 was given at a meeting with the Attorney-General on 16 March 2003, as described in a written answer given by the Attorney-General on 28 February 2005, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA1.

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Solicitor-General on what date the legal advice from Professor Greenwood relating to the war in Iraq was received; and how much was paid for the advice. [224070]

The Solicitor-General: As my right hon. Friend the Attorney-General said in reply to Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer on 21 March 2005, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA3, and as I said in my reply to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llew Smith) on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, Professor Greenwood was not instructed to advise on whether the war in Iraq would be lawful.

The answer given my right hon. Friend the Attorney-General on 21 March set out the fees paid to Professor Greenwood for the assistance he has provided between March 2003 and March 2005 in relation to a variety of different legal issues arising from the Iraq conflict. Christopher Greenwood QC was instructed in relation

to these issues because he is a highly regarded professor of international law and advocate who has advised the Government on issues of international law on many occasions, including in relation to cases in both domestic and international courts.

Adam Price: To ask the Solicitor-General if the Attorney-General will publish background papers used to prepare his written parliamentary answer on the legality of the use of force in Iraq of 17 March 2003. [224460]

The Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General's written parliamentary answer of 17 March 2003 was based on his legal advice. The Government do not intend to publish this advice.

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will list each legal authority consulted by the Attorney-General in the preparation of his opinion on the legality of taking military action against Iraq in March 2003. [224467]

The Solicitor-General: No. The information requested relates to the provision of advice by the Law Officers and is not disclosed.

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor General what criteria were used in deciding to engage Professor Christopher Greenwood as an adviser on considering the legality of military action against Iraq in 2003. [224469]

The Solicitor-General: As my right hon. Friend the Attorney General said in reply to Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column WA3, and as I said in my reply to the hon. Member on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, Professor Greenwood was not instructed to advise on whether the war in Iraq would be lawful.

The answer given by my right hon. Friend the Attorney General on 21 March set out the fees paid to Professor Greenwood for the assistance he has provided between March 2003 and March 2005 in relation to a variety of different legal issues arising from the Iraq conflict. Christopher Greenwood QC was instructed in relation to these issues because he is a highly regarded professor of international law and advocate who has advised the Government on issues of international law on many occasions, including in relation to cases in both domestic and international courts.

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General how many pages constituted the briefing material the Attorney-General used in support of his presentation to Cabinet on 17 March 2003 of his legal opinion on the legality of taking military action against Iraq. [224550]

The Solicitor-General: At the meeting of the Cabinet on 17 March 2003, the Attorney-General reported that he had answered a parliamentary question on the authority for the use of force in Iraq. He produced the text of that answer for Cabinet and made an oral presentation. It was also reported that the Foreign Secretary had sent a memorandum to the Foreign Affairs Committee on the legal basis for the use of force.

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General what meetings *(a)* she and *(b)* the Attorney-General held with (i) Ministers, (ii) Government special advisers, (iii) external contracted advisers and (iv) officials of foreign Governments between 7 March and 17 March 2003, in respect of the preparation of the Attorney-General's legal advice on military action against Iraq. [224555]

The Solicitor-General: Neither the Solicitor-General nor the Attorney-General held any meetings with Ministers, Government special advisers, external contracted advisers or officials of foreign Governments between 7 March 2003 and 17 March 2003 for the purpose of preparing the Attorney-General's legal advice on military action against Iraq.

Legal Advice (Ministers)

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor General if she will list the occasions since 1997 when legal advice to Ministers prepared by the Attorney General has been made publicly available. [223750]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend the Attorney General on 6 November 2003 to the Lord Lester of Herne Hill, *Official Report*, column WA128.

Ministerial Visits

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor General which departments of the United States Administration were visited by the Attorney General during his visit to Washington in February 2003; and what the purpose of each meeting was. [223787]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 24 March 2003, *Official Report*, column 21W, and the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Hampstead and Highgate (Glenda Jackson) on 30 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 48W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Court of Appeal (Criminal Division)

Ross Cranston: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the level of successful appeals against convictions to the Court of Appeal Criminal Division between 2000 and 2004, with particular reference to the implications for the funding of the Criminal Defence Service; and if he will make a statement. [222735]

Mr. Lammy: Between 2000 and 2004, in those applications where leave to appeal had been granted, on average 33 per cent. of appeals against conviction were successful. During the same period the overall annual spend from the Criminal Defence Service (CDS) Budget in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division varied between £5 million and £10 million. In the context of a current annual CDS Budget of approximately £1 billion, it is not considered that total spend in the Court of Appeal is excessive, nor that it threatens delivery of other CDS priorities.

Freedom of Information

Llew Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps have

been taken to disseminate information on best practice in the application of freedom of information guidance to Government Departments. [223930]

Mr. Lammy: My Department has provided support to Freedom of Information (FOI) practitioners in Government Departments through the FOI Practitioners Group forum as well as through the e-forum website. The Practitioners Group has provided a useful forum to discuss in depth the practical impact of FOI and the application of the suite of guidance issued by my Department on 26 October 2004. To provide more in-depth support on particular issues facing Government Departments, my Department has issued working assumptions on the application of exemptions to particular classes of information. The Access to Information Central Clearing House provides daily support to all Whitehall departments. My Department also ran training seminars for all Whitehall decision makers prior to 1 January.

Immigration

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Immigration Appeal Tribunal has considered the case of Mr. Aaron Chisango; and if he will make a statement. [223757]

Mr. Lammy: Permission to appeal was granted by the Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT) on 2 February 2005. The appeal has been listed for hearing by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal on Monday 9 May 2005, in accordance with The Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004 (Commencement No. 5 and Transitional Provisions) Order 2005 (SI 2005 No. 565 (C.25)).

Legal Aid (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list those cases in which legal aid has been *(a)* awarded and *(b)* applied for but not awarded to families in Leicester, South since 1997. [223647]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is not able to name individual cases due to the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Legal Services Commission contracts with suppliers in Leicester and elsewhere to provide a range of legal and advice services across different categories of law.

The following table outlines numbers of certificates *(a)* issued and *(b)* applied for but not issued in the family and non-family categories of civil legal aid for the Commission's Leicester contracting bid zone.

Applications issued in Leicester 1 January 1998 to 31 December 2004

	Issued family	*Issued non-family*	*Total application*	*Not issued family*	*Not issued non-family*	*Total application*
1998	1,758	1,069	2,827	520	603	1,123
1999	1,567	805	2,372	379	509	888
2000	1,194	425	1,619	301	309	610
2001	1,282	327	1,609	298	130	428
2002	1,260	325	1,585	282	94	376
2003	1,355	282	1,637	289	96	385
2004	1,192	196	1,388	229	87	316

Royal Marriage

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to his answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 462W, on the Royal Marriage, whether the spouse of HRH the Prince of Wales will be the Princess of Wales consequent on the marriage to be held on 9 April; and if he will make a statement. [224110]

Mr. Leslie: Following her marriage, Camilla Parker Bowles will be HRH the Duchess of Cornwall and the Duchess of Rothesay in Scotland. As was made clear at the time of the announcement of the marriage, she will be Princess of Wales but will not use the title.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH

Chile

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the Government of Chile's adherence to end user certificates in respect of arms exports from the UK. [224533]

Mr. MacShane: We believe that the Government of Chile issue end user certificates in respect of arms exports in good faith and that they take appropriate steps to safeguard UK-origin defence equipment. The UK Government undertake monitoring in the recipient country of arms supplied by UK manufacturers when we believe that this would genuinely help to minimise the risk of diversion and where such monitoring is practical. In addition, UK overseas Posts have standing instructions to report any misuse of UK-origin defence equipment. Evidence of misuse would be taken into account when the Government assess any subsequent licence applications for the end-user and we may also, if appropriate, revoke related licences.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has held with the Government of Chile concerning the prosecution of General Pinochet and other officials of the 1973 to 1990 regime; what assistance has been offered for forensic research; and if he will make a statement. [224588]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not discussed this issue with the Government of Chile. The Government have not received any request for forensic research. While it would be inappropriate to comment on specific cases still in process, we warmly welcome any measures taken by the Chilean Government to address past human rights abuses.

EU Constitution

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which Articles in the proposed Constitution for the European Union include provisions which are not already in force by virtue of existing treaties; and which of the Articles making new provisions have been subject to debate in Parliament. [223966]

Mr. MacShane: A Commentary analysing the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and comparing its provisions with the existing EU Treaties was published on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website: www.fco.gov.uk and laid before Parliament on 26 January. It was published as Command Paper 6459 in time for Second Reading of the EU Bill. The Commentary, in analysing every Article of the draft Treaty, sets out which provisions are new and explains where the Treaty provision derives from if it is not new. There has been considerable parliamentary scrutiny of all parts of the Constitutional Treaty, including during debates on the Convention on the Future of Europe and the Intergovernmental Conference in 2003–04. In addition, Parliament will be able to comment on the Treaty during the passage of the EU Bill.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Courts of the United Kingdom will be bound by the terms of the Charter of Fundamental Rights if the proposed Constitution for the European Union is adopted. [223967]

Mr. MacShane: The Charter of Fundamental Rights as set out in part 2 of the EU Constitutional Treaty will become part of UK treaty law by virtue of the EU Bill. The Charter binds only the EU's own institutions, and binds member states only when they are implementing EU law.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which body was responsible for drafting the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Community and Union; who the representatives of the United Kingdom on that body were; at which Heads of Government Council it was agreed that the Charter should be part of the draft Treaty establishing a Constitution for the European Union; and what parliamentary procedures occurred in the United Kingdom relating to it prior to signature of the Treaty for the Constitution on 29 October 2004. [223210]

Mr. MacShane: The Charter of Fundamental Rights was drafted in 2000 by a Convention of representatives of member state Governments, National Parliaments, the European Parliament and the European Commission. The UK Government's representative was my noble Friend Lord Goldsmith, and his alternate was Martin Eaton. The UK's National Parliament was represented by the noble Lord, Lord Bowness and my hon. Friend the Member for Bridgend (Mr. Griffiths). Their alternates were my hon. Friend the Member for Eastleigh (Mr. Chidgey) and my noble Friend the Baroness Howells of St. Davids. The UK was also represented through the European Parliament by Andrew Duff MEP and Timothy Kirkhope MEP. Their alternates were Graham Watson MEP and Philip Whitehead MEP.

The Charter was agreed as a political declaration at the Nice European Council in December 2000, where Heads of State and Government also agreed to review its legal status at the next intergovernmental conference (IGC). The UK Government agreed to the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights into the EU Constitutional Treaty at the June European Council in 2004.

There has been considerable parliamentary scrutiny of all parts of the Constitutional Treaty, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, during the Convention on the Future of Europe and the IGC in 2003–04. In addition, Parliament will be able to comment on the treaty during the passage of the EU Bill, and the public will be able to vote on it in the referendum.

European Court of Justice

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the process of appointment for members of the European Court of Justice for each member state is. [223988]

Mr. MacShane: The judges and Advocates-General of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) are appointed by common accord of the Governments of the member states and hold office for a renewable term of six years. The Court is composed of one judge per member state, so that all the EU's national legal systems are represented. If a judge or Advocate-General resigns or retires before the end of their term, the member state in question nominates a new candidate. Members of the ECJ are chosen from legal experts whose independence is beyond doubt and who possess the qualifications required for appointment to the highest judicial offices in their respective countries or who are of recognised competence.

European Legislation

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many *(a)* directives and *(b)* regulations of the European (i) Communities and (ii) Union are in force; and how many have come into force since 1 May 1997. [223965]

Mr. MacShane: Information relating to the number of European Community and European Union directives and regulations currently in force, and those which have entered into force since 1 May 1997, is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Government welcome the Commission's recent Communication 'Better Regulation for Growth and Jobs', which promises further work on assessing the impact of new measures and on simplifying existing legislation.

My hon. Friend may also wish to consult Standard Note SN/IA/2888 in the Library of the House which gives details of the number of measures adopted and the number which have been repealed or have expired in any given year.

G8 Summit

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the cost to public funds of *(a)* completed and *(b)* planned refurbishment and redecoration of (i) buildings and (ii) sites associated with the forthcoming G8 summit; and if he will make a statement. [223736]

Mr. Rammell: In preparation for the G8 Summit in July, some refurbishment work and building of temporary structures will be necessary, but the work has not yet started and the cost has not yet been finalised.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the cost to *(a)* the Scottish Executive and *(b)* his Department will be of completed or planned refurbishment and redecoration of buildings and sites for the forthcoming G8 summit; and if he will list (i) work completed, (ii) work planned and (iii) the buildings and sites involved. [224029]

Mr. Rammell: In preparation for the G8 Summit in July, some refurbishment work will be necessary at facilities in Scotland, as well as the building of temporary structures at the Gleneagles hotel. The work planned by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not yet started and the cost has not yet been finalised. We understand that some limited refurbishment and redecoration (amounting to less than £500) has taken place in a number of police buildings. Other property costs are being incurred in connection with security but it is not Scottish Executive policy to comment on security aspects.

Intelligence Operations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the nature is of the complexities and difficulties to which reference is made in respect of international co-operation on security intelligence, at paragraph 7 of Cm 6492, Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction, implementation of its conclusions. [224287]

Mr. Straw: The global nature of the current terrorist threat is such that groups and individuals from different countries may be involved in planning and supporting terrorist activity both in the country in which they are based and elsewhere. This presents challenges in managing investigations, prosecutions and other legal sanctions often simultaneously, across national boundaries, further complicated by other practical difficulties, such as different legal systems.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received concerning further steps to safeguard the archaeological heritage of Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [224452]

Mr. Rammell: The Government take very seriously the need to respect Iraq's cultural heritage. As United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 (June 2004) stressed, all parties need to respect and protect Iraq's archaeological, historical, cultural, and religious heritage.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials are in regular contact with the Iraqi Ministry of Culture. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell) has spoken with the Iraqi Minister of Culture and is kept closely informed of key cultural issues in Iraq. At the Iraqi Ministry's request we helped facilitate a British Museum visit to Babylon in December 2004.

The Government are currently funding three Iraqi interns to receive training on site management techniques and museology, based at the British Museum. We continue to look at ways of supporting the museum's involvement in Iraq.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will authorise Mrs. Elizabeth Wilmshurst to give a public account of her arguments and her reasoning on the legality of war in Iraq. [224470]

Mr. Straw: Elizabeth Wilmshurst is under continuing obligations by virtue of the Official Secrets Acts and her professional position. It would not be appropriate to relieve her of these obligations.

Irish Lights

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Irish Government about payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters; and if he will make a statement. [224206]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no contact with the Irish Government on this issue. However, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Ireland raised this issue with the Secretary-General of the Irish Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources on 17 June 2004. Officials at the Department of Transport have recently discussed with the Irish Government the principle of a review of the light dues system including the 1985 agreement. The Irish Government have indicated that it is willing for such a review to take place.

Kyrgyzstan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the political situation in Kyrgyzstan; and what steps he is taking through diplomatic channels to find a peaceful settlement. [224050]

Mr. Rammell: On 27 February 2005, Kyrgyzstan held parliamentary elections. On 4 March I made a statement noting that, while more competitive than previous elections, the elections had still not fully matched up to international standards.

The second round of elections on 13 March 2005 were marred by the same shortcomings as the first, with allegations of vote buying and pressure on the independent media.

In the course of the following week the number of protests against individual results escalated, and the demonstrations became increasingly assertive. By 21 March, the protesters had seized regional administrative buildings in the southern cities of Osh and Jalabad.

On 24 March a large demonstration took place in the capital Bishkek calling for President Akaev to resign. The demonstrators took control of the main Government building. The Government resigned and President Akaev left the country.

The opposition figures have formed an interim Government and attempted to restore order to the streets of Bishkek and to the country as a whole. The old Parliament has now dissolved itself, so legitimising the newly elected Parliament. However, 13 out of the 75 seats remain disputed. New elections will be held for them in the future. New presidential elections have provisionally been called for 26 June.

Our ambassador was in Bishkek on 24–28 March when the main action took place. With EU and Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) colleagues he met various members of the interim Government. They encouraged the Government to re-establish law and order, pursue a policy of national reconciliation and dialogue with all political forces in Kyrgyzstan and ensure continuity of reform programmes. In doing so they emphasised the need to respect fully democratic norms and human rights.

I reinforced these messages in a phone call to the acting Foreign Minister, Roza Otunbaeva, on 30 March. I noted that the upcoming elections would be crucial in determining the domestic and international credibility of the interim Government. I encouraged the interim Government to work closely with the OSCE and reaffirmed the willingness of the UK, with our EU partners, to co-operate with the interim Government in this respect.

Nepal

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will support a resolution at the Commission on Human Rights calling for the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Nepal to monitor the human rights situation; and if he will make a statement. [223853]

Mr. Straw: The UK is closely involved in negotiations at the UN Commission on Human Rights this year, as we were last year when we contributed significantly to a chairman's statement. We remain equally engaged this year in the new political context following the King's take-over of power on 1 February and his suspension of fundamental rights. We remain deeply troubled by all abuses carried out against the ordinary people of Nepal, both by the state and the Maoists, and remain committed to improving the human rights situation in Nepal. We are seeking to do this through a number of means, including by continuing to fund human rights organisations and remaining engaged with the Nepalese National Human Rights Commission. We are also seeking to effect change through the UN Commission for Human Rights and are currently working with our international partners to find the best way to take this forward. Unless radical progress is made in the short term, we will be looking to secure a robust statement calling for the release of all political prisoners, the restoration of fundamental rights and an appropriate mechanism for human rights monitoring. The final position is still evolving in negotiation with our international partners.

Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the Government are taking to encourage Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty signatory states to sign and ratify additional protocols; and whether it is his policy that adherence to additional protocols should be set as the standard for verifying compliance with the Treaty. [223330]

Mr. MacShane: The Government use every opportunity bilaterally and multilaterally to encourage universal acceptance of the International Atomic Energy Agency Additional Protocols (AP) and for recognition that, together with the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the AP is now the nuclear verification standard. We would like to see the AP accepted as a future condition of supply of sensitive nuclear materials.

Nuclear Proliferation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in what circumstances he would make public information received from friendly foreign intelligence services on nuclear proliferation activities. [224010]

Mr. Straw: Intelligence information is made public only in exceptional circumstances, and in the case where it has been received from a foreign security or intelligence service this would be done only with their agreement.

Porton Down

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs for what reasons the Secret Intelligence Service commissioned the chemical defence establishment at Porton Down to conduct experiments with the chemical LSD on service personnel; when these experiments took place; what the outcome was of the trials; how many service personnel were tested with LSD; how many Porton Down scientists were tested with LSD; and if he will make a statement. [220430]

Mr. Straw: In 1953 and 1954 the Secret Intelligence Service commissioned Porton Down to conduct tests on military service volunteers, and also on Porton Scientists themselves, to examine their reactions to LSD. The Government's defence interest in LSD began in the early 1950s because of its perceived potential as an incapacitant and/or interrogation aid. The 1953–54 LSD tests were but a small part of the continuing Porton Down volunteer test programme. The conclusion of the tests was that LSD had no demonstrable value for intelligence purposes.

Uganda

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the People's Redemption Army (PRA) in Uganda was formed; what installations the PRA has attacked; and if he will make a statement. [223795]

Mr. Rammell: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

(Chris Mullin) gave on 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1896W to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock).

United Nations (Secretary-General's Report)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response the Government will make to Chapter three of the Secretary-General of the United Nations' Report, In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights For All. [224135]

Mr. Rammell: We have warmly welcomed the publication of the Secretary General's report issued on 21 March "In Larger Freedom", and the bold reform proposals it makes. It is consistent with UK priorities for the Millennium Review Summit in September.

We are engaging actively with partners and with the UN on implementation of the report, including on many issues highlighted in Chapter III: Freedom from fear. We want to encourage agreement on a substantial package of UN reforms, including on the proposed Peacebuilding Commission and on strengthening the UN's response to the threat of terrorism.

We have also embarked on a public consultation exercise throughout the UK with the UN Association, to ensure that members of the public and civil society are given the opportunity of feeding in their views.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports his Department has received concerning the fundraising mission to the UK earlier in 2005 of Dr. Ghulam Adam from Zimbabwe; what action his Department has taken to ensure there has been no breach of the European Union's restrictive measures against Zimbabwe; and what action can be taken against individuals who may have donated money in contravention of the EU restrictions. [223866]

Mr. Straw: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office received uncorroborated reports earlier this year that Dr. Adam had previously been in the UK conducting fund-raising for ZANU-PF. Fund-raising for a political party is not in itself a breach of EU sanctions on Zimbabwe. These sanctions provide that

> 'no funds or economic resources shall be made available directly or indirectly to or for the benefit of natural or legal persons, entities or bodies listed',

a list which includes individual leading members of the Zimbabwean regime and of ZANU-PF but not the party itself. An offence would therefore have been committed only if the object or effect of the fund-raising was to give funds directly or indirectly to persons subject to the sanctions, and we have not received actionable evidence to that effect. We refer all credible allegations that the EU sanctions may have been broken to the relevant UK authorities. Those responsible for breaching sanctions are liable for prosecution.

HEALTH

A and E Departments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons the compliance target for the maximum four-hour accident and emergency waiting time has been set at 98 per cent. [222806]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The 98 per cent. operational standard was set to allow sufficient flexibility for clinicians to manage the small minority of patients who clinically require more than four hours in accident and emergency. It followed a wide consultation with clinicians and their representative organisations.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he plans to undertake unannounced inspections of hospitals accident and emergency departments to monitor compliance with the four-hour waiting time target. [222831]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service collects data for every patient who attends accident and emergency (A and E) showing performance against the four-hour target. There are clear reporting standards, set through national guidance, and there are rigorous checks at both local and national level to ensure that the data returns are robust. The Department also deploys a number of improvement teams who work directly with A and E departments and who are able to provide additional assurances about the quality and reliability of performance reporting. We do not consider that any additional checks are needed.

Agenda for Change

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to seek to ensure that pay scales on the Whitley scheme will be the same or greater following the implementation of the Agenda for Change programme after April 2006. [224478]

Mr. Hutton: The pay banding of staff under Agenda for Change is determined by the NHS Job Evaluation Scheme, which is designed to ensure equal pay for work of equal value. In the case of the minority of individual staff whose regular pay might otherwise be lower under the new system, their pay will be protected in accordance with the arrangements agreed by the NHS Staff Council. These arrangements are set in Section 46 of the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook, a copy of which is in the Library.

Appointments Commission

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he expects an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Appointments Commission to be initiated; [224035]

(2) what checks on declaration of interests the Department of Health undertakes alongside those of the Appointments Commission. [224036]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national health service Appointments Commission was reviewed last year as part of the Department's review of its arm's-length bodies. The review recommended a change of status to executive non-departmental public body and an extended remit.

As part of the current governance arrangements for the NHS Appointments Commission, the Department formally reviews progress in meeting annual business plan targets bi-annually. The Appointments Commission is also subject to regular audit by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

The Department does not undertake additional checks on declarations of interest. The Secretary of State has delegated the majority of his appointments functions to the NHS Appointments Commission.

Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the extent to which the standards set by the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance and included in his Department's publication Supporting People with Long Term Conditions, are achieved in the NHS. [224521]

Mr. Hutton: The Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance's standards for care for people with back pain were referenced in the Department's publication "Supporting People with Long Term Conditions" as an example of best practice.

"Standards for Better Health", published in July 2004, sets out the national standards for national health service patients to receive effective treatment and care that conforms to nationally agreed best practice.

In line with Shifting the Balance of Power, it is the responsibility of the NHS locally to manage the delivery of these standards with the independent Healthcare Commission responsible for assessing and inspecting health care, taking into account "Standards for Better Health".

Children's National Service Framework

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what structures are in place to monitor the implementation of the children's national service framework. [223845]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) is a key component of the Government's overall programme, "Every Child Matters: Change for Children", which aims to improve outcomes for children, including health outcomes. "Supporting Local Delivery", the delivery strategy for the NSF, described how progress would be measured. This will include internal evaluation using indicators which are under development, performance management by strategic health authorities and the inspection process. The inspectorates will be responsible for measuring progress against the NSF, to judge the contribution of services to improving these outcomes. Commencing in September this year, Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission and the Commission for Social Care Inspection will conduct joint area reviews of children's services to assess the contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people.

Assessment of progress against the NSF in the national health service specifically is the responsibility of the Healthcare Commission, which has recently completed an extensive public consultation on a new system of assessing and performance rating NHS trusts in 2005–06.

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how he plans to support primary care trusts in setting local delivery targets for the Children's National Service Framework. [223848]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is keen to encourage maximum flexibility in the setting of local targets, to ensure that they are appropriate to the needs of local communities. The Department has set out six principles for local target setting for the national health service and social care as part of its planning guidance, "National Standards, Local Action".

Primary care trusts must agree appropriate local targets, in line with the six principles, with their strategic health authority, which is responsible for offering support throughout the planning process. In providing the context for these principles, the guidance states that organisations will need to be guided by the evidence set out in national service frameworks.

COX-2 Inhibitors

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will ban the use of all COX-2 inhibitors. [223861]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), with expert advice from the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM), has continuously monitored the balance of risks and benefits of selective COX-2 inhibitors since they were first licensed in the United Kingdom, and has taken regulatory action to minimise risks and maximise safe use of these medicines on a number of occasions, as new evidence has emerged.

In 2004, new clinical trial evidence showing an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes with rofecoxib led the Marketing Authorisation holder to withdraw this selective COX-2 inhibitor. Subsequently, the CSM set up a working group to re-examine the cardiovascular safety of all selective COX-2 inhibitors. In addition, the UK has taken a leading role in a Europe wide review of this issue. Having reviewed all the available evidence, CSM has advised that selective COX-2 inhibitors should not be used in patients with heart disease or previous stroke, but should remain an option for other patients, with whom the balance of benefits and risk may be favourable. CSM's latest advice was communicated to healthcare professionals on 17 February 2005.

Crohn's Disease

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will exempt sufferers of Crohn's disease from prescription charges. [224165]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no plans to extend the existing list of medical conditions that give exemption from prescription charges. The list has been reviewed on a number of occasions but no clear cut case for extending it has emerged. There is no consensus on what additional conditions might be included in any revised list of medical exemptions, or how distinctions could be drawn between one condition and another.

Government policy is to help those who may have difficulty paying charges. The current exemption and charge remission arrangements are intended to ensure that

no one need be deterred from obtaining any necessary medication on financial grounds. Consequently 86 per cent. of prescriptions are dispensed free of charge.

Device Evaluation

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what resources have been allocated for device evaluation from April 2005–06. [222959]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The devices evaluation service is due to transfer from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency in 2005. Its budget is still being finalised but will be increased from the 2004–05 level.

Drug Reactions

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to improve the systems for detecting adverse reactions to drugs. [223860]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The United Kingdom has been working with other member states on the implementation of a European risk management strategy designed to strengthen drug safety monitoring by making best use of all available resource, both data and expertise. Changes proposed to legislation, which will come into force in November 2005, will further strengthen drug safety monitoring in requiring risk management plans at the time of licensing new medicines and in further strengthening the obligations on the industry to keep regulators informed of any issue that may impact on the safety of a marketed medicine.

Drug Treatment

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment he has made of differing reports by Nottinghamshire Drug Action Team and Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust of the number of people receiving treatment for drugs in Bassetlaw in 2003–04; what definition his Department uses of the term drug treatment; and what steps are taken to correlate this definition with that used by the Department of Health; [223015]

(2) what methodology was used to quantify the figure reported by Nottinghamshire Drug Action Team for the number of clients accessing needle exchanges in Bassetlaw in 2003–04; and what criteria were used by *(a)* the National Treatment Agency and *(b)* the local Government office to verify its authenticity. [223073]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* I have asked officials in the Nottinghamshire Drug Action Team to write to my hon. Friend directly with this information.

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will increase funding available for research into developing a therapy for Duchenne muscular dystrophy; and if he will make a statement. [224472]

Dr. Ladyman: The main agency through which the Government supports medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body, which receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology, part of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Elderly People (Falls)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to prevent falls by elderly people. [224260]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) for older people, launched in March 2001, requires integrated falls services to be in place locally by April 2005. The NSF provides a detailed description of what an integrated falls service should consist of. Adherence to this target is currently being monitored.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence also published on 24 November 2004 clinical guidelines on preventing falls in older people.

Electronic Referral Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress is being made on the choose and book electronic referral scheme. [224034]

Mr. Hutton: The choose and book implementation programme is making good progress. The choose and book service has been implemented in five reference sites. AH strategic health authorities (SHAs) and primary care trusts have submitted revised roll-out returns, based on the aim of the choose and book service being used for at least 80 per cent. of general practitioner referrals by the end of 2005. The Department is currently discussing these returns with SHAs.

Epilepsy

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued on whether people with epilepsy may be sectioned under the Mental Health Acts; and if he will make a statement on the case of Mr. Martin Buckley, currently in the care of the National Society for Epilepsy, Buckinghamshire, whose mother is a constituent of the hon. Member. [223898]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As epilepsy is not now regarded by clinicians as a mental disorder, I have issued no such guidance. The decision on whether a person meets the criteria for detention under the Mental Health Act can only be taken in the light of the facts of the particular case.

I am unable to comment on the particular details of the case of Martin Buckley for reasons of patient confidentiality.

Exercise and Sport

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to complete the process of evaluating *(a)* the Local Exercise Action Pilots, *(b)* the New Opportunities for Physical Education and Sport programme and *(c)* the Active England programme. [222825]

Mr. Caborn: I have been asked to reply.

The process of evaluating *(a)* the Local Exercise Action Pilots (LEAPs) will be completed in summer 2006 *(b)* the New Opportunities for PE and Sport

programme will be completed in 2008 and *(c)* the Active England programme by 2009. An interim report for LEAP will also be produced in May 2005 and interim reports for the other two programmes will be produced on a regular basis up until the final evaluation.

External Management Consultants

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on the employment of external management consultants in each of the last five years, broken down by type of project. [224251]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the costs of employing external management consultants and the type of project is not collected centrally.

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information he collects on the *(a)* roles and *(b)* extent of use of external management consultants in the NHS; and in what year this information was first collected. [224252]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally. The use of external management consultants is a decision for each national health service trust.

Free Personal Care

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria are used to determine which medical conditions qualify a patient for free personal care. [224006]

Dr. Ladyman: A patient who is assessed as needing national health service fully-funded continuing health care services will receive all those care services, including any personal care, free of change. Eligibility criteria for continuing health care services are currently set by strategic health authorities and are based on the need for care, not diagnosis.

General Medical Services Contracts

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce *(a)* inflammatory arthritis and *(b)* psoriatic arthritis into the quality and outcome frameworks of general practitioners' general medical services contracts. [223626]

Mr. Hutton: The national quality and outcomes framework (QOF) is under review. The review will include an independent expert group advising on the clinical evidence to support any changes to the current scheme. As part of that review, the Department will be submitting evidence to the expert group to ensure that the Government's priorities for improving the care delivered to patients by primary care practitioners is secured.

The expert group will then give advice to the national health service employers, who negotiate changes to the general practitioner contract on behalf of the Department and the British Medical Association about changes that may be made to the QOF for implementation from April 2006.

Head Lice

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress in dealing with the prevention and treatment of head lice; and whether there is evidence that the problem is being contained. [223865]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the incidence of head louse infestation is not collected centrally. The Department has no evidence that the problem is not being contained. Advice on tackling head louse infestation has been issued by the Department. Assistance is also available from the primary health care team, which includes health visitors, school nurses, general practitioners and community pharmacists. The Department also funds a voluntary group, Community Hygiene Concern, which promotes the "Bug Busting" approach to controlling infestation.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what records he keeps of the incidence of head lice infestation; what steps he is taking to reduce infestation; and what change there has been in the last five years in *(a)* the level of infestations, *(b)* the immunity of lice to treatment and *(c)* effectiveness of treatments for head lice. [224030]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the incidence, changing levels of head louse infestation or acquired immunity to insecticides in lice is not collected centrally. Advice on tackling infestation, and thereby reducing incidence, has been issued by the Department. Further assistance is available from the primary health care team, which includes health visitors, school nurses, general practitioners and community pharmacists.

A number of lotions are licensed for the safe and effective treatment of head lice. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency keeps the safety and efficacy of treatments under review and will cancel or restrict the licence of products which fail in terms of safety and/or efficacy. The Department also funds a voluntary group, Community Hygiene Concern, which promotes the Bug Busting approach to controlling infestation, which does not rely on lotions.

Health Services (Leicester, South)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were receiving NHS dental treatment in Leicester South in each year since 1997. [223731]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, Leicester South is served by Leicester City West Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Eastern Leicester PCT. The number of people in the PCT areas, that were registered with an national health service dentist for the years 1997 to 2004 are as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Number of people registered with an NHS dentist 1997 to 2004

	Eastern Leicester PCT	*Leicester City West PCT*
1997	129,541	60,993
1998	112,111	50,475
1999	112,397	51,637
2000	114,121	51,097
2001	119,118	49,789
2002	109,940	53,009
2003	109,637	54,665
2004	112,346	53,513

The drop in registrations between 1997 and 2004 is mostly attributable to the reduction in the re-registration period for patients from two years to 15 months.

The figures also exclude patients treated in dental access centres, who are not registered. In 2004, there were some 375,000 episodes of treatment in the 48 dental access centres then in operation in England. However, table 2 shows the breakdown of patients seen and treatments completed at the Leicestershire dental access centre, which opened in December 2001—up to and including data as of 31 January 2005.

Table 2: Number of patients seen, Leicestershire dental access centre December 2001 to January 2005

	Number of patients seen	*Number of courses completed*
2000–01	—	—
2001–02	698	705
2002–03	1,896	1,979
2003–04	2,637	2,775
Year to date	4,264	4,495

McKinsey and Company

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what payments his Department made to McKinsey and Company during the past 12 months. [223632]

Mr. Hutton: Since April 2004, the Department has paid £105,750 to McKinsey and Company to assist with implementing new financial arrangements for national health service foundation trusts.

Heart Surgery (Wimbledon)

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Wimbledon. [224249]

Dr. Ladyman: Revascularisation data is not available for the Wimbledon area and is only collected by trust. The table shows revascularisation waits at St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust.

Revascularisation waits at St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust

Month	*Procedure*	*Total number of patients waiting*	*Number waiting 0–3 months*	*Number waiting 3–6 months*	*Number waiting 6–9 months*	*Number waiting 9+ months*
July 2002	Coronary artery bypass graft (CABG)	172	100	47	23	2
January 2005	Coronary artery bypass graft (CABG)	61	61	0	0	0

Source:
Monthly monitoring.

Hospital Food

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is on sourcing pork, bacon and ham bearing the British Pig Executive's Quality Standard Mark in hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [223241]

Mr. Hutton: The procurement of pork and bacon within the English national health service has to comply with the European Union Procurement Legislation, as the value of meat and poultry consumed by the English NHS is in excess of the threshold values contained within the legislation. The framework agreements covering these products, developed by the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA), influence approximately 70 per cent. of the requirements of the NHS in England and aim to deliver best value for money in terms of price, quality and service from contracted suppliers.

The specifications employed by NHS PASA were created with the Meat and Livestock Commission and Louchry College in Ireland. For the pork and bacon products, the specifications call for all suppliers to comply with the NHS code of practice for the manufacture, distribution and supply of food, ingredients and food related products; additionally, along with a wider range of criteria, the specifications call for pigs to be slaughtered and processed on European Commission, or equivalent, approved premises and the labelling must include the country of origin. Provided that it satisfies the NHS code of practice, NHS PASA would purchase pork, bacon and ham carrying the British Pig Executive's quality standards mark if it represented value for money.

Over the past 12 months, in excess of 86 per cent. of the pork joints, chops, mince, loin steaks etc. procured against NHS PASA's framework agreements were sourced from pigs originating from the United Kingdom. In terms of bacon, approximately 50 per cent. of the bacon sourced from NHS PASA's contracted butchers was of UK origin. The remaining countries of origin were mainly Holland and Denmark.

Mental Health

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1909–10W, on mental health, what assessment he has made of the reasons for parts of the country being slow to use atypical antipsychotics; and what action he is taking to increase their take-up. [223851]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No evaluation has been made of the reasons as to why parts of the country may be slow to use atypical antipsychotics. However, the Department will continue to monitor prescribing trends of all antipsychotic drugs.

NHS Bank

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress in delivering the NHS Bank. [224037]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Bank has been in existence and supporting national health service financial management since 2002.

NHS Charges

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of

(a) providing free sight tests for all, *(b)* meeting the cost of all prescription charges and *(c)* meeting the cost of all charges for dental care; and what estimate has been made of the additional cost to the NHS of meeting the charges only for those currently ineligible in each case. [221808]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The cost of extending eligibility for free national health service sight tests to all those who currently pay privately for sight tests is estimated at about £90 million a year in England, based on the 2004–05 fee rate of £17.82 per test payable to optometrists, and assuming no change in the take up rate for sight tests.

Income from prescription charges is expected to amount to £452 million in England in 2005–06. If all prescriptions were provided free of charge that income would be lost. There would also be an unquantifiable, additional cost to the drugs bill.

The cost of providing free NHS dental care to all those patients who currently pay dental charges is estimated at about £500 million a year in England, based on the levels of NHS dental care provided in 2003–04.

Dentistry (Chesterfield)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists were practising in Chesterfield constituency on the latest date for which figures are available; and how many of them were accepting new NHS *(a)* adult patients and *(b)* child patients. [222626]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 54 dentists practicing in the Chesterfield primary care trust (PCT) area as at 31 December 2004[1].

The Trent strategic health authority (SHA) reports that, as at 30 March 2005, there are currently three dental practices accepting new national health service adult or child patients in the Chesterfield PCT area. In addition, a further five practices are accepting NHS adult patients on a qualified basis and three practices accepting children as NHS patients on a qualified basis.

The Government remain determined to improve access to NHS dentistry and has introduced a number of initiatives, which will help bring about improvements nationally and more locally. PCT funding for dentistry will increase by 19.3 per cent. from 2003–04 to 2005–06. Consequently, over £250 million of additional resources will be provided by 2005–06.

£127,000 has been provided to Chesterfield PCT as part of the dental access monies supplied to Trent SHA. This funding was due to deliver 2,120 new registrations.

However, it has in fact delivered 2,776 additional patient registrations as at the end of February 2005. It is estimated that this figure will increase by approximately 600 within the next six months.

Chesterfield PCT is keen to increase dental services in North Derbyshire. The Department has encouraged PCTs to be proactive in establishing early entry into the personal dental service (PDS). Orthodontic PDS will allow development of orthodontic services in the community and thereby reduce the waiting list for secondary care services. The PCT has pursued this goal and has developed good relationships with practice owners. It already has six early PDS practices and one more due to go live in May.

North Derbyshire PCTs have the following access agreements: four sessions per week with a practice in Clay Cross (in North Eastern Derbyshire PCT) and out of hours service for registered and non-registered patients for three hours during the evening on weekdays and three hours per day weekends and bank holidays at Scarsdale (within Chesterfield PCT).

[1] *Source:*
NHS website.

NHS Personnel (Ethnicity)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the ethnic composition of NHS personnel is broken down into the categories of the Census for *(a)* doctors, *(b)* consultants, *(c)* general practitioners excluding retainers, registrars and locums, *(d)* nurses, *(e)* midwives, *(f)* managers and senior managers, *(g)* other and *(h)* all NHS personnel. [224647]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the ethnicity of general practitioners and practice staff is not collected centrally.

Information on the ethnic composition of all other national health service personnel is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Medical and dental staff[1], and Non-medical staff[2] by ethnicity[3]

England as at 30 September 2004 *Number (headcount)*

	All HCHS staff	*HCHS medical and dental staff[1]*	*of which: HCHS Consultant*	*All non-medical staff[2]*	*of which: Professionally qualified clinical staff total*	*Qualified nurses*	*of which: Midwives*
All staff	1,184,748	82,951	30,650	1,101,797	521,526	375,371	24,844
2001 Population Census Ethnic Group Categories							
All 2001 Ethnic Groups	1,118,641	74,677	25,635	1,043,964	493,353	354,859	22,759
White	851,703	43,692	19,630	808,011	365,689	244,964	17,315
Black or Black British	46,933	2,569	605	44,364	23,738	21,099	1,585
Asian or Asian British	61,441	20,384	3,529	41,057	24,383	19,066	340
Mixed	9,331	1,333	274	7,998	4,026	3,021	141
Chinese	5,510	1,437	332	4,073	3,020	2,411	295
Any Other Ethnic Group	19,976	3,636	953	16,340	10,918	9,580	187
Not Stated	123,747	1,626	312	122,121	61,579	54,718	2,896

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS): Medical and dental staff[1], and Non-medical staff[2] by ethnicity[3]

England as at 30 September 2004 — *Number (headcount)*

	All HCHS staff	HCHS medical and dental staff[1]	of which: HCHS Consultant	All non-medical staff[2]	of which: Professionally qualified clinical staff total	Qualified nurses	of which: Midwives
Earlier Ethnic Group Categories[3]							
All Earlier Ethnic Groups	66,107	8,274	5,01 5 ;	57,833	28,173	20,512	2,085
White	55,956	6,005	4,131	49,951	23,883	17,503	1,815
Black	2,227	375	169	1,852	1,040	893	84
Asian	2,218	1,347	483	871	504	337	27
Any Other Ethnic Group	1,421	499	230	922	671	600	18
Not Stated	4,285	48	2	4,237	2,075	1,179	141

	Qualified ST&T total	Qualified AHPs	Qualified healthcare scientists	Other qualified ST&T	Qualified ambulance staff	Support to clinical staff Total	Support to doctors and nurses	Support to ST&T
All staff	128,883	58,959	28,242	41,682	17,272	368,285	303,630	55,025
2001 Population Census Ethnic Group Categories								
All 2001 Ethnic Groups	121,804	56,077	26,237	39,490	16,690	349,151	287,449	52,157
White	105,683	50,078	22,043	33,562	15,042	270,262	216,470	45,121
Black or Black British	2,567	853	755	959	72	14,192	12,567	1,525
Asian or Asian British	5,223	1,740	1,535	1,948	94	9,392	7,327	1,975
Mixed	916	374	207	335	89	2,442	1,952	411
Chinese	605	161	166	278	4	515	373	130
Any Other Ethnic Group	1,306	376	376	554	32	3,389	2,909	470
Not Stated	5,504	2,495	1,155	1,854	1,357	48,959	45,851	2,525
Earlier Ethnic Group Categories[3]								
All Earlier Ethnic Groups	7,079	2,882	2,005	2,192	582	19,134	16,181	2,868
White	6,204	2,614	1,676	1,914	176	16,870	14,266	2,559
Black	145	42	57	46	2	561	506	55
Asian	167	49	68	50	—	222	191	31
Any Other Ethnic Group	71	25	23	23	—	163	149	14
Not Stated	492	152	181	159	404	1,318	1,069	209

	Support to ambulance staff	NHS infrastructure support Total	Central functions	Hotel property ad estate staff	Managers and senior managers	Other and unknown total
All staff	9,630	211,489	99,831	73,932	37,726	497
2001 Population Census Ethnic Group Categories						
All 2001 Ethnic Groups	9,545	200,995	96,317	68,407	36,271	465
White	8,671	171,666	82,512	57,570	31,584	394
Black or Black British	100	6,433	2,829	2,813	791	1
Asian or Asian British	90	7,279	4,027	2,370	882	3
Mixed	79	1,518	755	505	258	12
Chinese	12	536	249	186	101	2
Any Other Ethnic Group	10	2,032	831	953	248	1
Not Stated	583	11,531	5,114	4,010	2,407	52
Earlier Ethnic Group Categories[3]						
All Earlier Ethnic Groups	85	10,494	3,514	5,525	1,455	32
White	45	9,167	3,071	4,852	1,244	31
Black	—	251	78	141	32	—
Asian	—	145	69	57	19	—
Any Other Ethnic Group	—	88	35	32	21	—
Not Stated	40	843	261	443	139	1

[1] Excludes Medical Hospital Practitioners and Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] In non-medical data, "Unknown" includes unstated and unrecorded ethnic group. The ethnic group of all bank staff is unrecorded.
[3] From 1 April 2001, newly appointed staff have been asked to classify themselves using the ethnic categories listed in the 2001 population census. Existing staff will be reclassified over time but data returns currently include a mixture of 2001 categories and older information based on 1991 population census categories.

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Practitioners
Department of Health non-Medical Workforce Census

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

NHS University

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the training programmes of the NHS University will be continued in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* Northern Ireland. [223968]

Mr. Hutton: Decisions on the future of NHS University training programmes will be announced shortly.

NIMHE

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the salaries are of the eight regional directors of the National Institute for Mental Health, England (NIMHE); what the cost is of running NIMHE; and how many people have been employed by NIMHE in each year since its inception. [222014]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The salary range for National Institute for Mental Health (NIMHE) regional directors is between £78,000 and £115,000. The eight regional directors are employed by different local national health service organisations and as such, their salary details are not collected centrally. The salaries of NIMHE regional directors are not set centrally but, are decided by the local arrangements of the host organisation.

NIMHE's budget for 2004–05 is £22.903 million. Of this, £10.61 million is allocated to regional development centres, £9.7725 million to NIMHE national programmes, £2.22 million for central running costs, and £300,000 for NIMHE fellows.

Since NIMHE's establishment in June 2002, NIMHE has employed 56.8 whole time equivalent (wte) members of staff in 2002–03, 139.9 wte in 2003–04, and 230.15 wte in 2004–05.

The NIMHE in England was established to directly support front-line organisations to improve their care, helping them to develop services consistent with the standards laid out in the national service framework. The NIMHE regional centres often employ or second in on a part-time basis—clinical staff from front line organisations.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the purpose was of the recent trip by National Institute for Mental Health, England staff members to Australia and the Far East; how many members of staff were involved; what their air travel arrangements were; and how much the visit cost. [222016]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The recent visit made by staff from the National Institute for Mental Health in England (NIMHE) was to New Zealand, rather than Australia and the Far East. The purpose of the visit was to attend the International Institute of Mental Health Leaders conference.

The visit to NZ is part of an international initiative to promote effective leadership of mental health services sponsored by the Department in England and the equivalent bodies in the United States of America, NZ and Australia.

The NIMHE paid for 11 people to visit NZ, which included a national service user (and his carer) and a national carer representative. All air travel arrangements were made following guidance issued by the Department. The total cost NIMHE was £24,000.

Examples of learning by involvement in the International Initiative Mental Health Leadership exchanges and conference encompassed seeing how NZ is taking a leading role internationally in tackling issues of direct relevance to services in the United Kingdom, including:

Engaging the voluntary and independent sector in playing a major role in providing mental health services—30 per cent. of services in NZ are delivered by this sector compared to less than 10 per cent. in England.

Developing innovative models of mental health service delivery for a complex multicultural society (35 per cent. of the population), which reflects the key role of families and local communities in supporting recovery.

Managing major public campaigns challenging stigma and discrimination to ensure that people with mental health problems can play their full role in the workforce and in the wider community.

Addressing the challenges of delivering services in rural communities with limited access to professional staff.

Among the issues that NZ staff were anxious to learn about were the UK experience of:

Creating a workforce with appropriate capabilities to meet the needs of rapidly changing services.

Challenging the social exclusion of people with mental health problems in employment, housing, education and social activities.

Establishing a national mental health research network to support the development of evidence based practice in health and social care.

Demonstrating how NIMHE has supported service improvement in front line service delivery, including improved access, booking and choice for service users and their families.

Organ Donation

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether it is his Department's policy that relatives of a deceased person on the organ donor register may refuse permission for the deceased's organs to be donated; and if he will make a statement. [222813]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Human Tissue Act 2004 makes clear that where an adult has, while alive and competent, given consent for one or more of the scheduled purposes to take place following their death, then that consent is sufficient for the activity to be lawful. In these circumstances, therefore, a relative of the deceased person may not refuse permission for the deceased's organs to be donated, but there may be cases in which donation may not be practicable. The Human Tissue Authority will be responsible for preparing codes of practice that set out what is lawful and the procedures to be followed to implement the Act. These codes of practice will be subject to consultation and parliamentary scrutiny.

Orthopaedic Joint Replacements (Sefton)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effect that

contracts with Interhealth Care Services for treatment centres will have on waiting lists for orthopaedic joint replacements in Sefton. [223754]

Mr. Hutton: Interhealth Care Services will carry out over 900 orthopaedic procedures in the Sefton area, starting from June 2006. Interim service with Nuffield hospitals and Capio Healthcare began in October 2004 and will provide South Sefton Primary Care Trust with an additional 269 procedures for their patients in that year.

These arrangements will help to speed up operations that patients might otherwise have had to wait longer for.

Paediatric Continence Services

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what structures are in place to measure the availability of integrated paediatric continence services in every community; [223846]

(2) how he expects that the children's national service framework will promote the provision of integrated paediatric continence services in every community. [223847]

Dr. Ladyman: The standard for an integrated, community-based paediatric continence service is defined in the children's national service framework (NSF). National health service primary care trusts (PCTs) are expected to ensure that accessible, high quality continence assessment and treatment is provided. This process will be informed by "Good Practice in Paediatric Continence Service Benchmarking in Action 2003". The Department has also set out principles for needs-based local target setting for health and social care as part of its three-year planning guidance, "National Standards, Local Action". PCTs must agree appropriate local targets with their strategic health authority, whose responsibility it is to ensure that local health services are of a high quality and are performing well. The guidance states that organisations will need to be guided by the NSFs, the standards of which will be inspected and reviewed by the Healthcare Commission over a 10-year implementation period, for the children's NSF.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what advice has been given to strategic health authorities on supporting the development of integrated paediatric continence services by primary care trusts; [224189]

(2) what guidance is available to primary care trusts to support the development of integrated paediatric continence services; and whether guidance has been distributed at the local level; [224190]

(3) what action he will take to promote the provision of integrated paediatric continence services. [224191]

Dr. Ladyman: Strategic health authorities (SHAs) and primary care trusts (PCTs) have all received the national service framework for children, young people and maternity services (children's NSF). This promotes the development of integrated, community-based paediatric continence services. It states that service provision should be informed by the NHS Modernisation Agency's 2003 publication "Good Practice in Paediatric Continence Services—Benchmarking in Action", which is available on the clinical governance support group's website at www.cgsupport.nhs.uk/PDFs/articles/Mod_Agency_Good_Practice.pdf.

The Department has also set out principles for local target setting for the national health service and social care as part of its planning guidance, "National Standards, Local Action". This requires PCTs to agree appropriate local targets with their SHA, which has a responsibility to offer support throughout the planning process. "National Standards, Local Action" states that organisations will need to be guided by the evidence set out in the national service frameworks. In the case of the children's NSF, the Healthcare Commission will inspect and review progress towards achieving the standards over a 10-year implementation period.

Residential Care Costs

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average level of personal care costs in residential homes in England was in the last year for which figures are available. [223775]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Separate figures on the average level of personal care costs in residential homes in England are not available. The average gross weekly expenditure by local authorities, on residential care, including board and lodging payments, personal care, management and support costs, in 2003–04 is shown in the table.

Weekly expenditure on residential care 2003–04

Supported residents	*Amount (£)*
Older people	376
Adults aged 18–64 with:	
Learning disabilities	745
Mentally health needs	450
Physical disabilities	601

Saneline

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how Saneline can benefit from the mental health helplines investment framework. [222662]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The chair of the mental health helplines partnership (MHHP), of which SANE was until recently a member has written to SANE offering MHHP's support. The Department has indicated to the chair of the MHHP that it would offer advice and support to MHHP in this matter.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will meet representatives of SANE to discuss future funding of Saneline. [222665]

Ms Rosie Winterton: SANE and the Department have met on a number of occasions to discuss the issue of funding for Saneline.

The Department's contract with SANE in respect of Saneline comes to an end on 31 March 2005. In terms of the future funding of the Saneline service, SANE is eligible to apply for government funding streams aimed at the voluntary and community sector.

Unified Health and Social Care Assessments

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what performance criteria are applicable to the *(a)* number and *(b)* type of assessments to be undertaken in the Unified Health and Social Care Assessment Process; [223961]

(2) how *(a)* nutrition and *(b)* malnutrition are included in the assessment domains of the Unified Health and Social Care Assessment Process; [223962]

(3) what data relating to *(a)* nutrition and *(b)* malnutrition his Department will collect within the assessment domains in the Unified Health and Social Care Assessment Process. [223964]

Mr. Hutton: The independent Healthcare Commission is responsible for developing the indicators for use in the national health service performance ratings. Details can be found on its website at: www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/indicators_2005/.

The Commission has recently completed an extensive public consultation on a new system for assessing and performance rating NHS trusts in 2005–06 and will be making an announcement in due course.

The independent Commission for Social Care Inspection is responsible for developing the indicators for use in social care assessment. Details can be found on its website at: www.csci.org.uk/council_performance/paf/performance_indicators.htm.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensioners

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend the £200 assistance to pensioners to women aged 60 to 64 years. [224072]

Malcolm Wicks: We have are no plans to extend the £200 assistance to pensioners to women aged 60 to 64 years.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in Coventry he expects will benefit from the £200 council tax assistance proposed in the Budget Statement. [223921]

Malcolm Wicks: We estimate that about 30,000 pensioners in Coventry will benefit from the 200 council tax assistance.

Note:
Local authorities are assigned by matching postcodes against the relevant ONS postcode directory.

Source:
IAD Information Centre

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of pensioners in Coventry who have not applied for pension credit since its introduction; and what rationale underlay the decision to means-test applicants for pension credit. [223922]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. As at 31 December 2005, there were 16,215 households (19,615 individuals) in the Coventry local authority area in receipt of pension credit. Information on numbers of households or individuals eligible for pension credit is not available at local authority or constituency level.

This Government's priority when we came to office was to tackle the legacy of pensioner poverty. We continue to do this by targeting help on today's poorest pensioners and by encouraging all pensioners to receive the benefits they are entitled to. At the same time, the Government believes that empowering individuals to make real and informed choices about working and saving for retirement is fundamental if they are to make sure people get the income in retirement they expect. Pension credit rewards those who have worked hard to provide modest incomes for themselves in retirement. Income-testing of benefits has existed since before and after the creation of the Welfare State in 1948. With the introduction of pension credit, and the ease by which it can be applied for, we have moved away from the stigmatising weekly means tests of the past.

Pension Service (Norfolk)

17. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has for the organisation of the Pension Service in Norfolk. [224425]

Malcolm Wicks: The Pension Service is undergoing a challenging transformation programme through to 2008, which will contribute towards the efficiency challenge announced in the Budget 2004. The Pension Service will be transforming at least 12 pension centre sites to deliver improved customer services, efficiencies and more fulfilling jobs for staff.

The Kingfisher House site in Norwich will support the recovery plans for the Child Support Agency, and will transfer to it by the end of December 2005. The Baltic House site will transfer to Jobcentre Plus by the end of March 2006 to support their transformation programme.

There will be no change to any telephone numbers and no disruption of service. Customers will continue to contact us, as they do now by phone—on our national number—by email and face to face support in Norfolk through The Pension Service Local Service network.

Child Support Agency

18. **Mr. Swayne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what criteria are used to determine the order of priority in migrating legacy Child Support Agency cases to the new system. [224426]

Mr. Pond: Where an old scheme case has a link with a new scheme application, that case will transfer early. However, the legislation allowing the transfer of unlinked cases will be put into effect only when we believe the IT is ready and not before.

We are determined not to repeat the mistakes of 1993 when the old scheme was brought in far too quickly.

21. **Ms Dari Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the investigatory powers available to the Child Support Agency to trace parents required to make child support payments. [224429]

Mr. Pond: The Government made clear in their response to the Select Committee on Work and Pensions that they are committed to keeping the investigative powers the Agency uses under review.

We acknowledge that the CSA has not made the most effective use of its information gathering powers and are looking for a significant improvement in the Agency's performance in this area.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* senior management posts and *(b)* enforcement officer posts there have been in each of the regional Child Support Agency centres in each of the last seven years. [216764]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Steve Webb, dated 4 April 2005:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many *(a)* senior management posts and *(b)* enforcement officer posts there have been in each of the regional Child Support Agency centres in each of the last seven years.

(a) For the purposes of this response I am regarding 'senior management' as posts filled by members of civil service grades 6 and 7. I am unable to provide a geographical breakdown of senior management posts prior to 2003. From 2003 onwards, the number of senior management posts is as follows:

Regional centre	*March 2003*	*March 2004*	*January 2005*
Midlands	6	5	
South Eastern	6	6	23
South Western	3	6	
Scotland and NE England	7	7	
Wales and NW England	6	5	12
Eastern	1	1	1
Total	29	30	36

We have altered the way senior management figures are reported from January 2005 to reflect recent changes in our organisational structure. 5 of the original business units have been amalgamated to become the Southern and Northern Territories.

(b) The number of specialist enforcement officer posts is as follows:

Regional centre	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Midlands	32	25	9	17	24	34	38
South Eastern	10	12	14	23	30	27	28
Scotland and NE England	22	46	38	45	46	48	46
South Western	37	16	18	24	30	41	43
Wales and NW England	14	13	14	36	33	36	33
Eastern	14	23	14	17	26	52	52
Total	130	136	107	162	189	237	240

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on progress in migrating the existing Child Support Agency caseload to the new formula and systems. [224348]

Mr. Pond: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Ashford, (Mr. Damian Green), on 8 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 568W.

Pension Credit

20. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent estimate he has made of the number of pensioners eligible for pension credit who are not claiming the credit. [224428]

Malcolm Wicks: Reliable estimates of the number of people eligible for pension credit but not receiving it are not yet available. We plan to publish definitive National Statistics on take-up and entitlement for the first six months of pension credit by the end of 2005.

At the end of December 2004, 3,600 pensioner households (4,460 individuals) in Mid Worcestershire were receiving pension credit, with an average weekly payment of £37.88 per household.

23. **Mr. Bacon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on measures taken by his Department relating to the take-up of pension credit. [224431]

Malcolm Wicks: We continue to devote considerable effort and resources to increasing levels of pension credit take-up.

We have already written to every pensioner household in the country about pension credit and we are re-contacting directly, by mail, telephone or personal visit, those people whom we believe particularly likely to be eligible.

New marketing campaigns seek to overcome the barriers which might prevent take-up of pension credit and the reasons which people give for not applying.

The Pension Service local service continues to work in partnership with local authorities and the voluntary sector, particularly in identifying and contacting older people who are vulnerable or who have yet to take up their entitlement.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether a pensioner's higher income from a deferred basic state pension will be taken into account in assessing entitlement to pension credit. [219554]

Malcolm Wicks: If a person receives a higher weekly income as a result of deferring, then that higher amount is taken into account in pension credit and may be rewarded in savings credit. There are no proposals to change this.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many phone calls have been made by the Pension Service informing pensioners of pension credit in each month since October 2003; [221764]

(2) how many pensioners in each parliamentary constituency, having been invited to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit through an unsolicited call from the Pension Service or other agency for which his Department is responsible *(a)* went on to make a successful application for pension credit and *(b)* did not go on to make a successful application for pension credit; [221776]

(3) how many pensioners in each parliamentary constituency have received telephone calls since September 2003 from the Pension Service or other agencies for which his Department is responsible, inviting them to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit; [221777]

(4) how many telephone calls the Pension Service has made since September 2004 to invite pensioners to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit *(a)* after 6.30 pm on weekdays and *(b)* at weekends; and to which parliamentary constituencies those calls were made; [221778]

(5) how many pensioners in each parliamentary constituency have since October 2004 received *(a)* telephone calls and *(b)* letters from the Pension Service or other agencies for which his Department is responsible, inviting them to explore the possibility that they may be eligible for pension credit; [221779]

(6) what criteria are used by *(a)* the Pension Service and *(b)* other agencies for which his Department has responsibility to identify and approach people who have not applied for pension credit but might be eligible for it. [221780]

Malcolm Wicks: The table shows the number of calls about pension credit made by staff in the pension credit application line between April 2004, when such calls were first made, and February 2005. These calls were not made 'cold' but were either to pensioners who were judged likely to be eligible for pension credit to ask if they wish to apply, or to those who had been sent a completed application form to sign and return but had not yet done so. All those who receive a telephone call would already have received at least one letter about pension credit, including one informing them that a call might be made. It is not possible to break down the figures by constituency or the time at which they were made. Some calls about pension credit have also been made by departmental staff outside the pension credit application line. Figures for these are not available.

The Pension Service uses a range of data to identify those who are potentially eligible for pension credit, including age, gender, marital status, receipt of housing benefit and council tax benefit and an affluence measure based on postcode. Information on the number of people who received a telephone call and went on to make a successful or unsuccessful application for pension credit is not available.

The Pension Service issued 807,000 letters about pension credit between 1 October 2004 and 11 March 2005.

Outbound telephone calls made by the pension credit application line, April 2004 to February 2005

Month	Calls in which the relevant pensioner was contacted	Calls not answered	Total calls made
April 2004	20,473	17,624	38,097
May 2004	30,423	29,797	60,220
June 2004	15,150	13,726	28,876
July 2004	27,087	26,122	53,209
August 2004	30,049	39,464	69,513
September 2004	21,640	27,909	49,549
October 2004	18,279	19,264	37,543
November 2004	26,770	29,423	56,193
December 2004	55,638	66,046	121,684
January 2005	58,950	62,190	121,140
February 2005	35,416	38,418	73,834
Total	339,875	369,983	709,858

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the most recent take-up levels of pension credit. [224099]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement by my hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 3 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 68WS.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the most recent take-up levels of pension credit are in each Inland Revenue district; and if he will make a statement. [224302]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. Information on numbers of households and individuals in receipt of pension credit in each Government Office region, constituency and local authority area at 31 December 2004 is contained in the most recent quarterly pension credit progress report, which was published on 3 February 2005. A copy of the report is in the Library.

State Pension Age

22. **Mr. Tom Harris:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's plans to encourage people to work beyond state pension age if they choose to do so. [224430]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of people working past State Pension age has been increasing and now stands at one million. In our March publication Opportunity Age—Meeting the challenges of ageing in the 21st century, we confirmed our aspiration of increasing the number of older people in employment by a million.

We are committed to giving people more choice about when and how they retire. For the first time ever, from this month we will offer people choosing to defer their State pension for a year or more the choice of either an enhanced weekly pension or a generous lump sum payment.

Pension Payments

25. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are using pension books to receive pension payments. [224433]

Mr. Pond: Order books have now ended. All recipients of state pension have been converted to direct payment, whether direct into a bank or building society

account or post office card account. The small number of customers that we cannot pay this way are being paid by cheque. No state pension payments after 28 February are due to be paid by order book, although order book foils can be cashed for up to three months after the date shown on the foil. Information on the number of people who retain order book foils yet to be cashed is not available.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in *(a)* Orkney, *(b)* Shetland, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* the UK were receiving pension payments using pension books in the week beginning 21 March. [224263]

Mr. Pond: Order books have ended. All recipients of state pension have been converted to direct payment, whether direct into a bank or building society account or Post Office card account, by the week beginning 7 March. The small number of customers that we cannot pay this way are being paid by cheque. No state pension payments after 28 February are due to be paid by order book, although order book foils can be cashed for up to three months after the date shown on the foil. Information on the number of people who retain order book foils yet to be cashed is not available.

Pensions

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people did not receive the full basic State Pension because of their contribution records in the latest year for which figures are available; and by what amount on average their pensions fell short of the basic state level. [217327]

Malcolm Wicks: As at 31 March 2004, 3,679,200 people in Great Britain received a basic State Pension at less than the full rate of £77.45 a week because of incomplete contribution records. On average the basic State Pension paid fell short of the full level of the basic State Pension by £27.54.

Where the basic State Pension is the only source of income, extra help is available in the form of pension credit.

Notes:
1. Numbers are taken from a 5 per cent, sample and are therefore subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred. Amounts are rounded to the Nearest penny.
3. A basic State Pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a Category A or Category B basic State Pension, either in their own right or, where applicable, on the basis of their late or former spouse's National Insurance contributions.
4. Numbers do not include people entitled to a basic State Pension which is then increased when they meet the conditions for a Category D Pension.
5. The calculation of the average amount of the shortfall excludes those receiving a basic State Pension of £77.45.

Source:
IAD Information centre 5 per cent, sample.

Benefit Claimants

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many men aged 50 to 64 years are on *(a)* unemployment benefits and *(b)* incapacity or other disability benefits. [224676]

Maria Eagle: As at 30 November 2004, there were 95,255 men aged between 50 and 64 claiming jobseekers allowance, 780,000 claiming incapacity benefits and 417,900 in receipt of disability living allowance.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people claimed *(a)* incapacity benefit and *(b)* disability allowance in Leicester, South in each year since 1997. [224282]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables.

Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disablement allowance (SDA) claimants in the Leicester South parliamentary constituency, at the dates shown

Number

As at November	*IB/SDA*	*IB*	*SDA*
1997	4,900	4,300	600
1998	4,700	4,200	600
1999	4,700	4,200	600
2000	4,900	4,400	500
2001	5,400	4,800	500
2002	5,500	5,000	[1]500
2003	5,300	4,900	MOO
2004	5,000	4,600	[1]500

[1] Are based on very few sample cases and are subject to a high degree of sampling variation.

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. 'Claimant' figures include all incapacity benefit, severe disability allowance and credits only cases.

Source:
Information Directorate, 5 percent. Samples.

Disability living allowance claimants in the Leicester South parliamentary constituency, at the dates shown

As at November	*Number*
1997	3,500
1998	3,700
1999	3,700
2000	3,900
2001	4,000
2002	4,000
2003	4,300
2004	4,400

Notes:
1. Numbers have been rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. Only disability living Allowance cases in payment are included.
3. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:
Information Directorate, 5 percent. Samples.

Benefit Payments

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what plans he has to suspend payments to claimants of benefits until they provide bank details; [224056]

(2) how many jobseeker's allowance claimants in *(a)* Sheffield and *(b)* the UK have had their benefits suspended until they have agreed to have their benefit paid into a bank or post office account. [224057]

Mr. Pond: No payment has been suspended in Sheffield or elsewhere for failure to provide account details and currently there are no plans to do so.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the role is of private sector companies in assisting benefit claimants in opening bank or post office accounts. [224058]

Mr. Pond: The Department is working with a number of private sector providers and not-for-profit organisations to help convert people from order books and cheques to direct payment into a bank, building society or Post Office card account. The Department regularly works with such organisations who are able to focus tailored help on customers who are disadvantaged or facing particular difficulties. In particular, we have asked them to support customers who may not have been reached by our customer conversion centre or who might be finding it difficult to open a suitable account. This is part of our commitment to increasing financial inclusion and giving customers all the help, information and support they need to open the account which best meets their needs and circumstances.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in receipt of *(a)* the state pension, *(b)* jobseeker's allowance, *(c)* income support, *(d)* disability living allowance, *(e)* attendance allowance, *(f)* child benefit and *(g)* carer's allowance are receiving their payments via the Department's cheque-based service. [224525]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

The information in the following table gives the number of benefit and pension accounts in receipt of the cheque method of payment as at 19 February 2005.

	Number accounts paid by cheque
Retirement pension	75,400
Pension credit	157,055
Jobseeker's allowance	105,590
Income support	169,900
Disability living allowance (DLA)	168,715
Attendance allowance (AA)	27,970
Carers allowance (CA)	0
Total	704,630

The figures refer to accounts not claimants, a person with multiple benefits will be counted more than once.

Child benefit figures are not included as they are the responsibility of Inland Revenue.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the last date was for benefit payments covered by the last pension book issued before they were withdrawn; [221763]

(2) what the latest date is on which the last benefit payment might be made from a pensioner's passbook; [221765]

(3) on what day the last pension book was issued. [221767]

Mr. Pond: The last pension order book was issued on 9 February 2005 and all order book production for The Pension Service ceased on 10 February. No payment due after 28 February will be paid by order book, although order book foils can be cashed for up to three months after the date shown on the foil. The last possible date for encashment of an order book foil is thus 31 May 2005.

Disabled People

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to implement the recommendations made in the report Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People. [224411]

Maria Eagle: This is an important report requiring action by a number of Departments. My Department is co-ordinating the overall implementation process. In particular we will be ensuring the involvement of disabled people and other relevant groups in this work, including the setting up of a national forum for disabled people. We have also set up the new Ministers Group—the first meeting is later today—and we will be working closely with other Departments to establish early pilots to test out aspects of the recommendations.

Guarantee and Savings Credits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* individuals and *(b)* households are in receipt of (i) guarantee credit only, (ii) savings credit only and (iii) both guarantee and savings credit. [221517]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is given in the table:

Recipients of pension credit by type, Great Britain, 31 December 2004

	Households	*Individuals*
All	2,653,175	3,222,700
Guarantee element only	767,985	948,070
Guarantee element and savings element combined	1,312,945	1,513,045
Savings element only	572,245	761,580

Notes:

1. Figures are based on 100 per cent. Generalised Matching Service (GMS) data. Data taken as at 10 December 2004 have been rated up to give month end figures.
2. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
3. Individual recipients may include a small number of partners under the age of 60.

Source:

Information Directorate, Department for Work and Pensions, 100 per cent. sample.

Incapacity Benefit

Barbara Follett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment his Department has made of the merits of extending mortgage assistance to those on incapacity benefit. [224432]

Maria Eagle: The Government believe that homeowners should take responsibility for ensuring that mortgage payments are made when they are unable to work.

Help with mortgage interest is already available to those on incapacity benefit, who are also entitled to income related benefits. We believe that this is the best way of ensuring assistance is targeted at those who need it most.

We have no plans to extend this assistance to non income-related benefits.

Jobcentres

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many job centres there are in the UK; and how many are to be closed as part of the Jobcentre roll-out programme and centralisation of benefit processing. [219299]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. David Willetts dated 4 April 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question about the number of offices we have and the number that will close due to the roll-out of the new service and the centralisation of benefit processing. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

When Jobcentre Plus was formed in 2002 we inherited the infrastructure of the former Employment Service and those parts of the Benefits Agency delivering services to people of working age. The estate comprised some 1,100 Jobcentres and 450 social security offices and was entirely unsuitable for delivering the new service and operating the new processes. Over a four year period we are introducing the new, integrated service across the country and we are acquiring, building and refurbishing premises to enable us to deliver the new service. Once the roll-out is completed nationwide the total number of outlets from which our services can be accessed is likely to be around 1000.

A full list of sites already closed or planned for future closure as part of the Jobcentre Plus rollout programme can be found in the Library. This list includes a number of sites which are closing through merging with co-located offices. While the majority of these sites will be disposed of in due course, a number will be retained by Jobcentre Plus to accommodate non-customer facing activity.

I should stress that this is a snapshot of our plans based on the best information available. The list of offices will inevitably change as we progress through rollout of the new, integrated service and continue to refine our plans for centralising benefit processing in Jobcentre Plus. For example, a significant number of the site closures are dependent on construction of new buildings or acquisition of new premises and these are often subject to delays and other issues.

We continue to review the plans for our network, and will ensure that local stakeholders are kept informed of progress and any changes to our plans.

I hope this is helpful.

New Deal

16. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the effect of the New Deal has been in Nottingham, North. [224424]

Jane Kennedy: The New Deal has had a major impact in my hon. Friend's constituency helping more than 3,400 people into work and helping to reduce the number of those long-term unemployed by 81 per cent. and long-term youth unemployment by 70 per cent.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* over 25s, *(b)* lone parents, *(c)* over 50s and *(d)* young people have participated in the New Deal in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK in each year since its inception. [223872]

Jane Kennedy: The information is in the table.

	NDYP		*ND25plus*		*NDLP*		*ND50plus EC starts*	*ND50plus (from April 2003)*
	Starts	*Jobs*	*Starts*	*Jobs*	*Starts*	*Jobs*		
Jarrow								
1998	590	160	160	20	20	0	—	—
1999	420	250	270	40	140	140	—	—
2000	280	240	240	50	170	190	50	—
2001	250	230	290	100	170	140	70	—
2002	250	180	240	130	190	120	90	—
2003	260	200	260	180	290	130	20	10
2004	230	210	160	130	460	160	—	0
South Tyneside								
1998	2,680	760	870	80	60	20	—	—
1999	1,750	1,050	1,330	220	460	400	—	—
2000	1,210	1,040	940	250	550	550	230	—
2001	1,090	920	1,060	380	670	510	320	—
2002	1,080	800	1,120	560	820	450	340	—
2003	1,120	880	980	690	1,080	540	90	210
2004	980	820	760	550	1,620	720	—	160
North East								
1998	16,030	3,810	6,310	450	440	130	—	—
1999	12,720	7,750	8,790	1,660	3,290	2,390	—	—
2000	9,410	7,710	4,340	1,600	3,210	3,030	1,450	—
2001	8,120	6,880	5,790	2,300	4,200	3,140	2,290	—
2002	7,440	5,970	5,480	3,090	5,730	3,650	2,160	—
2003	7,470	5,870	4,450	3,200	6,880	3,840	450	1,140
2004	6,510	5,450	3,280	2,550	10,620	4,660	—	950
Great Britain								
1998	211,570	54,340	77,700	6,640	9,380	2,680	—	—
1999	170,060	104,360	121,540	25,870	59,170	34,900	—	—

	NDYP		ND25plus		NDLP		ND50plus EC starts	ND50plus (from April 2003)
	Starts	Jobs	Starts	Jobs	Starts	Jobs		
2000	123,160	95,610	67,220	26,200	60,020	48,330	24,830	—
2001	105,940	78,470	80,380	31,500	70,030	48,470	35,080	—
2002	105,670	71,180	76,910	41,650	98,070	60,250	31,830	—
2003	110,750	73,150	71,950	41,770	113,710	56,710	6,300	17,720
2004	104,250	73,720	64,090	40,070	164,830	67,290	—	16,140

Notes:

1. The new deal for young people started in January 1998; new deal 25 plus started in July 1998; new deal for lone parents started in October 1998; new deal 50 plus started in April 2000.
2. New deal 50 plus EC starts information gives the number of starts to employment credit up to March 2003.
3. New deal 50 plus data are the number of people finding jobs from new deal 50 plus from April 2003. No starts information is available for new deal 50 plus from April 2003.
4. All data are to December 2004.
5. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10 and for this reason, components may not necessarily sum to totals.
6. South Tyneside information is given for the Jobcentre Plus district of Gateshead and South Tyneside.
7. Information is for Great Britain rather than the UK as the Department's new deals do not operate in Northern Ireland.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in York have been assisted into work through the new deal. [224427]

Maria Eagle: The new deal has been a huge success, so far helping over 1.2 million people into work, including more than 2,000 people in York.

Since 1997, in my hon. Friend's constituency, the new deal has helped to reduce long term adult unemployment by 88 per cent. and long term youth unemployment by 90 per cent.

Unemployment (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on unemployment in Wirral South. [224417]

Jane Kennedy: In the last year alone overall unemployment in Wirral South fell by 10 per cent. and since 1997 it has fallen by around two-thirds, with long-term unemployment falling by 92 per cent. There are currently 750 people unemployed in Wirral South, roughly 1.7 per cent. of the total working-age population of that area.

The improvements in the labour market in Wirral South and over the rest of the country over the last seven years have been principally due to our success in providing economic stability and sustained growth, as well as providing active help to unemployed people through programmes such as the new deal.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum claims are outstanding in the UK; and from which countries. [224334]

Mr. Browne: Information on asylum claims outstanding by nationality is unavailable and could be produced only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Information on the number of cases awaiting an initial decision or appeal outcome is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people are in custody serving sentences of more than four months imprisonment following conviction under section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act 2004; and in which prisons each is being held. [224531]

Paul Goggins: Information on the number of people in custody who are serving sentences of more than four months imprisonment following conviction under Section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004 is not available.

Between 29 September 2004 and 19 March 2005 148 people have been convicted under Section 2 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act 2004. All those convicted have received custodial sentences.

The figures provided are obtained from locally collated management information and may be subject to change.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Home Department took to inform *(a)* Parliament and *(b)* the public of the changes to the immigration rules in respect of ECAA switching cases which were applied by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (i) from August 2003 until 10 February 2004 and (ii) from 10 February 2004 until 30 April 2004. [218876]

Mr. Browne: No changes to the Immigration Rules in respect of ECAA switching cases were made during either period.

Begging

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of individuals successfully prosecuted for begging in each year since 1990 have re-offended; and if he will make a statement. [220680]

Paul Goggins: No data are readily available on reconviction rates for those convicted of begging.

Published reconviction rates are calculated using data from the Offenders Index. The Offenders Index only contains information on Standard List offences. Begging is not a Standard List offence.

Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what policies his Department has in place for supporting employees with cancer. [218581]

Fiona Mactaggart: Employees diagnosed as having cancer have access to support and advice from the Department's Welfare Services. This can cover both personal and work related matters. It can include home visits, discussions with family members and help in finding specialist support groups. Assistance can also be provided with planning for the financial implications of a long term illness or terminal illness.

The Department would normally seek Occupational Health advice at an early stage when the diagnosis, or the severity of the condition, becomes known. The Occupational Health provider will advise on the functional effects of the condition. For employees able to continue working, the Department provides support in the workplace by making reasonable adjustments to working hours, duties and working practices.

Employees who are on sick absence have a contractual entitlement to sick pay at a rate of full pay for six months and half pay for six months. After entitlement to contractual sick pay has been exhausted, an employee may be placed on sick pay at pension rate. This decision is taken on the advice of a medical officer in circumstances where it is envisaged the employee is likely to return to work within three months, or the ill-health retirement criteria are likely to be met. Entitlement is reviewed every three months.

The Department will also consider medical/ill health retirement in cases of poor prognosis, significant functional impairment or proximity to normal retirement age.

Catering Costs

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on *(a)* entertainment lunches involving civil servants and guests and *(b)* working lunches, in each year since 1997. [215046]

Fiona Mactaggart: Hospitality is classified as the provision of food and drink or entertainment to non-civil servants when it is not strictly necessary for the conduct of public business, but where to do so is nevertheless beneficial to the interests of the Department.

Working lunches and refreshments are offered as a normal courtesy to visitors or made available to facilitate the efficient management of meetings.

The total costs of hospitality and working lunches for the Home Office Department since 1997 are given in the table.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Hospitality	37,747	44,415	94,370	108,925	75,808	70,591	89,072
Working lunches	346,685	92,916	457,147	511,610	572,279	727,354	1,330,997
Total	386,429	139,329	553,516	622,535	650,088	799,947	1,422,072
Percentage total spend	0.006	0.002	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.008	0.012

The records for hospitality costs do not distinguish between civil servants and guests. The costs for refreshments and working lunches are combined and therefore separate figures cannot be extracted.

CCTV

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what schemes are available to provide financial assistance for the extension of closed circuit television in town centres. [223237]

Ms Blears: Previously, closed circuit television (CCTV) has been provided using a range of national and local funding streams. The principal fund has been the crime reduction programme from 1999 to 2003 which invested £170 million in CCTV schemes.

Currently, crime reduction funding is allocated directly to local crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) through the building safer communities fund and to basic command unit (BCU) commanders through the BCU fund. These funding streams finance a variety of interventions, including CCTV, to tackle local crime priorities. Funding allocations are local decisions and are the responsibility of individual CDRPs and BCUs.

C-FAR

Mr. Duncan Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will increase the proportion of funding for C-FAR derived from Criminal Justice Service sources; and if he will implement the concept of full cost recovery in support of C-FAR's work. [221748]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* To date the Home Office has given £570,000 and pledged £150,000 for 2005–06 to C-FAR. Given the decision taken by C-FAR's Trustees on 8 March to close the centre on 11 March 2005, the Home Office will not be providing further funding. The Home Office is committed to implementing the concept of full cost recovery for all the organisations that it funds.

Chartered Aircraft

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much money his Department has spent on chartering aircraft in each of the past five years. [213716]

Fiona Mactaggart: Travel by Ministers makes clear that special flights may be authorised when a scheduled service is not available, or when it is essential to travel

by air, but the requirements of official or parliamentary business or security considerations or urgency preclude the journey being made by a scheduled service. In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list published in 1999 covers the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 1999. Where RAF/private charter aircraft are used this is shown in the list. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas.

Copies of the lists are available in the Library. Information for 2004–05 will be published in due course.

For operational reasons the Home Office uses charter aircraft as a means of removing failed asylum seekers and other immigration offenders when there is no availability of seats on scheduled aircraft. They are also used for removals to destinations that carriers from the United Kingdom currently do not operate.

Charter flights have been used to remove failed asylum seekers since March 2001. The cost of charters since 2002 are given in the table:

	Expenditure £ million
2002–03	1,968,025
2003–04	1,226,972

Figures for 2001–02 are not available as they were not separated from other public expense removal costs.

Conviction Times

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time between the reporting of a crime and securing a conviction was in *(a)* 1998, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2004. [221532]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Deaths Abroad

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inquests have been held in the UK regarding violent or suspicious deaths abroad in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [224120]

Paul Goggins: Statistics on inquests held on those who die overseas are not collected centrally.

However, I can draw the hon. Member's attention to the figures quoted in "Death Certification and Investigation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland: The Report of a Fundamental Review 2003." [Cm 5831] This independent Review commissioned its own one-off research which concluded that, in the previous 12 months, about 550 deaths abroad were the subject of an inquest when the body was returned to the UK.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221112]

Fiona Mactaggart: No such directions have been issued by Home Office Ministers since 1997.

The Treasury, which has a wider policy responsibility for the financial accountability mechanisms under which such directions are issued, has not been notified of any directions by Ministers in Departments to their accounting officers beyond those already disclosed to Parliament in the following written answers:

The former Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Andrew Smith) on 23 October 2000, *Official Report*, column 73W and 8 May 2002, *Official Report*, column 253W, myself on 10 June 2002, *Official Report*, column 1037W, the Economic Secretary (John Healey) on 13 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 413W and 23 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 618W and the former Financial Secretary (Ruth Kelly) on 30 October 2003, *Official Report*, columns 319–20W and 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 841W.

The circumstances in which an accounting officer should seek a direction from a Minister before authorising expenditure are set out in paragraphs 15–18 of the Treasury document, The Responsibilities of an Accounting Officer (as updated in March 2004). This document is published as Annex 4.1 of the Treasury guidance, Government Accounting and is accessible at www.government-accounting.gov.uk

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of travel within the UK for the Department was in each year since 1997; and how much of this was spent on *(a)* hire cars, *(b)* helicopter hire, *(c)* hotel accommodation and *(d)* subsistence. [206467]

Fiona Mactaggart: Home Office rules provide for the reimbursement of extra expenses "necessarily" incurred in carrying out official duty and in certain other specified circumstances. The overriding principle is that: where no extra expense is incurred no reimbursement is due. Overall expenditure on travel and subsistence is controlled through devolved budgets that enable managers to keep under review both the need for official travel and the economy of the travel arrangements. Managers are required to satisfy themselves that, for instance, regular travel commitments or programmes cannot be curtailed or reorganised, that meetings involving costly travel are really necessary, that the venue is appropriate, that only the necessary numbers of staff attend; and consider the desirability of requiring their staff to declare their forward visit proposals for prior approval. Where staff undertake necessary official travel, managers are required to ensure that they do so by the most efficient and economic means, taking all costs into account.

Travel costs for the core Home Office have been held centrally only since 1996; totals as follows:

£

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Helicopter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Travel	3,898,126	3,270,766	3,187,174	4,245,879	6,348,417	8,732,248	12,406,053
Hire car	223,585	158,266	228,841	281,549	785,179	1,782,070	1,912,341
Subsistence	5,737,985	1,366,151	1,729,980	3,260,704	3,920,093	5,267,013	6,459,101
Total	9,861,693	4,797,181	5,147,994	7,790,132	11,055,690	15,783,333	20,779,498
Percentage of total spend	0.14%	0.06%	0.06%	0.09%	0.11%	0.15%	0.06%

The marked increases in travel costs since 2001 can largely be attributed to changes in strategy within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) where increased staff numbers and the need to travel as a result of new policy initiatives to improve IND performance and reductions in unauthorised entry to the UK. Other contributing factors have been related to providing advice to the organisers of the 2002 Football World Cup in Japan and Euro 2004 in Portugal and the creation of new units to support the police reform agenda.

Hotel accommodation costs and subsistence payments are recorded together against a general subsistence account on the General Ledger. Examination and extraction of hotel elements from T and S claims and the expenses payment system could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many overseas trips, and at what total cost, have been made by his Department in each year since 1997; and what the costs of *(a)* flights, *(b)* internal travel, *(c)* hotel accommodation and *(d)* subsistence were of each trip. [206654]

Fiona Mactaggart: All categories of overseas visit require prior authorisation through the normal line management chain and are required to accord with Cabinet Office guidelines and the Home Office Overseas Travel Guide. In approving an overseas visit careful regard is given to the objective of the visit in relation to the guidelines and in particular, the benefit that will accrue to the Department in relation to the cost.

The total cost of overseas travel for the Home Department since 1997 are given in the table.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Flights	168,342	192,583	314231	427627	517,073	381,706	415,106
Hotels	132,069	34,672	8,392	6,983	119,034	266,925	559,039
Subsistence	1,442,337	919,494	826,066	1,008,356	1,857,705	2,553,769	4,249,782
Travel	1,011,383	706,482	1,119,345	943,075	1,628,786	1,959,965	4,010,948
Total	2,756,128	1,855,229	2,270,033	2,388,041	4,124,599	5,164,367	9,236,878
Percentage total spend	0.04	0.024	0.029	0.025	0.04	0.05	0.08

The cost of overseas internal travel is not recorded separately and is incorporated within the travel totals given in the table. Similarly, the number of overseas journeys is not recorded separately within the claims calculation process; it would not be possible to extract these aspects of from the data provided without interrogating the paper claim records, this could be done only at disproportionate cost.

The marked increases in travel costs since 2001 can largely be attributed to changes in strategy within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate where increased staff numbers and the need to travel as a result of new policy initiatives to improve IND performance and reductions in unauthorised entry to the UK. Other contributing factors have been related to providing advice to the organisers of the 2002 Football World Cup in Japan and Euro 2004 in Portugal and the creation of new units to support the police reform agenda.

Information relating to overseas travel by Ministers is published on an annual basis. Information for the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 2004 is available in the Library of the House.

Information for the financial year 2004–05 will be published as soon as possible at the end of the current financial year.

Drug-related Arrests

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many arrests have been made for *(a)* possession and *(b)* supply of (i) cannabis and (ii) class A drugs in the last two years; [220848]

(2) how many arrests have been made for *(a)* possession and *(b)* supply of (i) cannabis and (ii) class A drugs in London in each month since January 2004. [220849]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not available centrally.

Information on arrests collected centrally is based on persons arrested for "notifiable" offences by main offence group only and therefore does not identify individual offences. The data are also only available by police force area and collected on a quarterly basis.

Drugs Crime (Leeds)

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crack houses have been closed down in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* Leeds West in the last 12 months; how many of these were part of Operation Crackdown; and if he will make a statement. [222244]

Caroline Flint: Data are not centrally collected on a city-by-city basis. The latest national information available on "crack house" closure orders relates to

Government Office regions for the period 20 January to end September 2004, when there were four reported uses of the "crack house" anti-social behaviour power in the Yorkshire and Humberside region.

West Yorkshire police are one of 33 forces who are participating in the national enforcement campaign Operation Crackdown. However information requested is not collated regionally or by force but 75 crack houses have been closed by Crackdown forces during the period 12 January to 7 March 2005.

EU Business Applications

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for the right of establishment in business under EU association agreements submitted by or on behalf of persons who had already arrived in the UK under other immigration categories were received between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004, broken down by nationality of the applicant; and how many applications were *(a)* granted, *(b)* refused, *(c)* withdrawn and *(d)* otherwise disposed of. [218873]

Mr. Browne: According to internal management information and accordingly provisional, between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004 there were 18,565 applications for the right of establishment in business under EC Association Agreements received by the Immigration and Nationality Directorate, submitted by or on behalf of persons who had already arrived in the UK under other immigration categories. The table shows this total figure broken down by nationality of the applicant and by the outcome of the case.

Nationality of applicant	*Total switching*[1] *cases received 1 June 2003 to 30 April 2004*	*Granted*	*Refused*	*Withdrawn by applicant*	*Other*[2]
Bulgaria	1,999	1,621	226	57	95
Czech Rep	143	113	3	21	6
Estonia	166	131	7	21	7
Hungary	79	65	1	13	0
Latvia	875	656	78	117	24
Lithuania	4,677	3,715	188	584	190
Poland	8,158	5,823	613	1,608	114
Romania	1,644	1,259	269	24	92
Slovakia	193	167	6	19	1
Slovenia	3	3	0	0	0
Turkey	628	398	61	15	154
Total	18,565	13,951	1,452	2,479	683

[1] The term switching refers to those applicants who were already in the UK in another immigration category, or without valid leave to enter or remain.
[2] Category of 'other' includes all outcomes possible on the General Casework Information Database apart from granted, refused and withdrawn by applicant. This includes applications received in the specified period against which no outcome is yet recorded, and applications received in the specified period against which an outcome was recorded after 30 September 2004.
Note:
Numbers of applications granted, refused, withdrawn by applicant or 'other' relate only to applications received by IND between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received reports of applications for the right of establishment in business under EU association agreements having been granted in error between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004. [218874]

Mr. Browne: None other than the report by Ken Sutton published on 17 June 2004, which confirmed that there was clear evidence that the ECAA category had been exploited and that applications were granted from some individuals who were unlikely to have been able to demonstrate that they could sustain themselves in business.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for the right of establishment in business under EU association agreements were refused between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004, broken down by *(a)* reason for refusal and *(b)* nationality of the applicant. [218875]

Mr. Browne: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 482W.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for the right of establishment in business under EU association agreements were submitted using standard-form business plans identical or materially similar to those submitted by other such applicants between 1 June 2003 and 30 April 2004; and how many were refused on these grounds *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by nationality of the applicant. [218877]

Mr. Browne: Information in the form requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

G8 Summit

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to provide financial support to police authorities which will be required to organise additional security for G8 summit events. [221695]

Ms Blears: Police authorities are normally expected to have reserves for exceptional events. They may apply for special grant to assist with additional costs of policing exceptional events like G8.

HMP/YOI Parc

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inmates at HMP and YOI Parc were *(a)* being held on remand and *(b)* awaiting sentence on the latest date for which figures are available. [224180]

Paul Goggins: As of 24 March 2005 there were 91 prisoners being held on remand or awaiting trial, and 44 prisoners awaiting sentence.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what separate provision is made for health care services for young offenders at HMP and YOI Parc. [224184]

Paul Goggins: There is no separate health care provision for young offenders at HMP and YOI Parc. When necessary, both adults and young offenders reside in the health care facility. In such circumstances independent approved regimes are operated so that separation is maintained.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places the Youth Justice Board has contracted to be available at HMP and YOI Parc; in each year for which figures are available; and what the average occupancy rate has been in each of those years. [224196]

Paul Goggins: The number of places the Youth Justice Board has contracted to be available at HMP and YOI Parc is as follows:

	Number
March 2002 to September 2004	28
October 2004 to present	36

The average monthly occupancy rate in each of the years during this period has been:

	Number
April 2002 to March 2003	19
April 2003 to March 2004	17
April 2004 to September 2004	20
October 2004 to February 2005	28

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on inpatient juvenile health care provision at HMP and YOI Parc; and how many of those detained have been moved elsewhere for treatment in each year for which figures are available. [224199]

Paul Goggins: The Youth Justice Board has invested in HMP and YOI Parc in order to enhance the care and accommodation that is offered to juveniles. Service improvements have included three discrete inpatient beds, together with a small day room, dedicated for use solely by juveniles. This facility opened in October 2004. In addition, since December 2004, a dedicated Juvenile Support Nurse has been in post and based within the Juvenile Unit. The Youth Justice Board has also funded a substance misuse manager and worker, in order to ensure implementation of the YJB's National Specification for Substance Misuse. As a direct result of the YJB's investment, there should be a significant reduction in transfers of juveniles from Parc as a result of health needs.

During 2004 three juveniles were moved elsewhere for treatment, two requiring admission as in-patients in outside hospitals. The remaining prisoner was transferred because of mental health issues.

Records are unavailable for preceding years.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many inquest reports the Prison Service has received since January 2003 following deaths in custody at HMP and YOI Parc; and how many reports are outstanding. [224179]

Paul Goggins: A total of nine inquests have taken place since January 2003 in respect of deaths in custody at HMP and YOI Parc. Six of these deaths occurred after January 2003. There are no inquests at present which remain outstanding.

Home Detention

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 393W, on home detention curfew, how many of the people released under the Home Detention Scheme have gone on to re-offend within *(a)* two months, *(b)* four months, *(c)* six months, *(d)* a year and *(e)* two years. [223585]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* Information on re-offending within the particular periods requested is not available.

Identity Theft

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps individuals can take to prevent identity theft. [224293]

Mr. Browne: The Home Office Identity Fraud Steering Committee, a collaboration of Government Departments and private sector organisations, has produced a website (www.identitytheft.org.uk) which offers advice on how individuals can protect their identity. This includes keeping personal information secure, keeping plastic cards safe and being careful when giving out card details, looking after important documents and destroying unwanted documents, and advice on use of passwords.

In the longer term, the introduction of ID cards issued on a more secure basis than current passports and driving licences will provide people with a highly effective way of protecting their identity from misuse.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* remedies and *(b)* penalties are available in the event of identity theft; and what steps are taken to restore misappropriated property used in identity theft to the owner. [224310]

Mr. Browne: It is not a criminal offence for a person simply to use another identity. However, false identities are often used to facilitate criminal activity such as deception, fraud, theft and money laundering. The Identity Cards Bill currently before Parliament includes

a new offence of being in possession or control of false identity documents, including a genuine document that relates to someone else, without reasonable excuse. The proposed maximum penalty for this offence is two years imprisonment. It will also be an offence for a person to possess these documents with the intention of using the document for establishing registrable facts about himself, or allowing or inducing another to use it for establishing, ascertaining or verifying registrable facts about himself. The proposed maximum penalty for this offence is 10 years imprisonment.

Subject to the needs of any criminal investigation and prosecution, the police will make any property that comes into their possession available to the rightful owner.

Iran

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 191W, on Iran, what action the Immigration and Nationality Directorate has taken to secure responses from the Iranian Government. [224304]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) continues to encourage the Iranian embassy to issue Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) at the earliest opportunity through regular reviews of all cases with the Consul. These vary in frequency between one week and 13 weeks dependant on the case and the quality of documentation that is submitted as proof of the subject's nationality and identity.

The purpose of each review with the Consul is to secure the issue of an ETD for a subject. The Iranian embassy requires the submission of specific evidence of nationality and identity including expired passports, birth certificates, identity cards and other original official Iranian documentation. Irrespective of the number of reviews that are held with the embassy, if the required documentation is not available, then it is virtually impossible to secure an ETD to effect a removal.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been made by his Department to the Iranian Government for passports or other travel documentation to facilitate the repatriation of failed asylum seekers in each of the last five years; and how many have been granted in each of those years. [224203]

Mr. Browne: Applications for travel documents are not annotated with a person's immigration status. Consequently it is not possible to differentiate between the number of applications submitted to the Iranian Government/Embassy to repatriate failed asylum seekers from those required to return other immigration offenders.

Prior to 2003, there were no applications made to the Iranian Government as removals could be effected by EU letter.

In 2003, 24 applications for travel documents were submitted and three were issued.

In 2004, 60 applications for travel documents were submitted and six were issued.

To date in 2005, five applications for travel documents have been made and three issued.

The above statistics are from internal management information and are therefore subject to change.

Knife Crime

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many knife attacks, including those which did not result in homicide, were reported in each year since 1995. [222650]

Ms Blears: The number of offences involving knives is not separated out in the recorded crime statistics. Therefore no information is available on knife offences causing serious or minor injury. The Homicide Index holds details on the number of homicides where the apparent method of killing was the use of a sharp instrument. The available information from 1995 to 2003–04 is given in the table.

Number of homicides[1] involving the use of a sharp instrument

	Number
1995	243
1996	197
1997	200
1997–98	202
1998–99	202
1999–2000	213
2000–01	214
2001–02	261
2002–03	268
2003–04	237

[1] As at 22 October 2004; these figures relate to the year in which the police initially recorded the offence as homicide and are subject to revision as cases are dealt with by the police and by the courts, or as further information becomes available.

Migrant Workers

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Department's records identify the top 10 employers of migrant labour. [219957]DES

Mr. Browne: No. The Home Office holds records that can identify the top 10 employers who have applied to take on individuals from outside of the European Economic Area under the work permit scheme and those who use the seasonal agricultural workers scheme. These do not, however, include those employers who employ people from overseas who have permission to work in the UK under other schemes.

Ministerial Private Office Telephone Numbers

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to inform the House authorities of the new telephone numbers for ministerial private offices in his Department; and if he will make a statement. [221472]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Notices have now been sent to all Members in both Houses.

Motor Vehicle Seizure

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Police Reform Act 2002 in regard to the seizure of motor vehicles. [221514]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* Section 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002, which came into effect in January 2003, gives the police a power to seize vehicles being driven off-road without authority or on-road inconsiderately or without due care and attention if they are at the same time causing alarm, distress or annoyance.

The police welcomed the new provision in principle. They have been gradually developing policies and practices to ensure its best use, and we are aware of a number of instances where it has been employed effectively. With the Association of Chief Police Officers and practitioners on the ground we have been looking at whether there is any need for further clarification of the power, guidance on its use or amendments to the secondary legislation governing its technical aspects.

Non-geographic Telephone Numbers

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2005 to Question 205820, what steps his Department has taken to cease entirely the use of non-geographic 0870 telephone numbers for *(a)* Core Home Office services and *(b)* the Prison Service; and what steps were taken in the recent renegotiation of contracts for telephone lines at the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to cease entirely the use of non-geographic 0870 telephone numbers. [223110]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The information requested is as follows:

(a) A review of the use of an 0870 number for the main Home Office public enquiry service is under way and is due to be completed in May 2005. Alternative options being considered include 0845, 0800, and a geographical number.

(b) Her Majesty's Prison Service have changed the 0870 number in use at Her Majesty's Prison Holloway to an 0800 number, but have no plans to discontinue the use of the 0870 number for their public enquiry service.

The renegotiation of the telephony contract for the Immigration and Nationality Enquiry Bureau (INEB) did not include changing the 0870 number. Currently a review of the operation of INEB is being conducted, and will consider whether continued use of the 0870 number is appropriate.

Oakington Detention Centre

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he proposes to take following the broadcasting of inappropriate and offensive language being used by staff at Oakington detention centre. [220787]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* As I announced on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 94WS, I have asked the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, Stephen Shaw, to carry out an independent inquiry into the allegations contained in the programme.

Parole

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what methods are used for tracking prisoners on parole; and if he will make a statement. [221470]

Paul Goggins: Before an offender is released from prison on parole licence, the local probation officer prepares a risk management plan to facilitate the resettlement of the offender into the community and to minimise the risk to the public.

The plan may contain conditions to constrain the activities of the offender, relating for example to employment restrictions, residence, treatment for addictions, a curfew, or exclusion from certain places. The probation officer will manage the components of the plan in conjunction with other agencies. If there are curfew or exclusion conditions, these can be electronically monitored by private contractors who will work closely with the probation officer.

In three areas of the country (Greater Manchester, West Midlands and Hampshire), management of the exclusion conditions can be enhanced by satellite tracking using global positioning by satellite (GPS) technology. This will provide the probation officer with evidence of any breach of the exclusion zones. This is a one year pilot which began in September 2004 and is being independently evaluated. A total of 94 offenders have been tracked in the pilot, and two of them have been subject to parole licence.

Police

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of translation services was for each police force in each of the last three years. [221561]

Ms Blears: This information is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Police Funding

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding has been allocated to the police in each year since 1997. [203140]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 7 December 2004]:* Government grant to support policing in England and Wales since 1997 is set out in the table.

£ million

	Home Office police grant	*National non-domestic rates*[1,2]	*Revenue support grant*[1,2]	*Total other grants*[3]	*Capital grants*[4]	*Total*
1997–98	3,473	1,035	1,516	-	170	6,194
1998–99	3,649	1,027	1,525	-	143	6,344
1999–2000	3,698	1,106	1,541	-	147	6,492
2000–01	3,823	1,201	1,486	73	143	6,726
2001–02[5]	3,955	1,214	1,596	229	221	7,215
2002–03	4,005	1,311	1,504	349	316	7,485

£ million

	Home Office police grant	National non-domestic rates[1,2]	Revenue support grant[1,2]	Total other grants[3]	Capital grants[4]	Total
2003–04	4,288	770	2,055	658	306	8,077
2004–05	4,380	744	2,222	708	261	8,315
2005–06	4,574	877	2,244	766	255	8,716

[1] Source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and National Assembly for Wales.
[2] Revenue Support Grant (RSG) includes SSA Reduction Grant and Central Support Protection grant. RSG and NNDR for the City of London Police is provided in respect of all its functions.
[3] Specific grants since 2000–01 for targeted programmes.
[4] Capital grants include Home Office police capital grant, supplementary credit approvals, Air Support, Premises Improvement Fund, Airwave capital and C3i. The figures included substantial capital for Airwave in 2001–02 (£74.3 million), 2002–03 (£101.2 million) and 2002–03 (£75.9 million). Totals up to 2001–02 include an element for major capital schemes allocated under the Priority Planning List (PPL) scheme.
[5] The grant figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are not directly comparable, owing to changes from 2002–03 in the method of funding the National Crime Squad and the National Criminal Intelligence Service.

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change there has been in the funding of Staffordshire police since 1997. [223239]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

£ million

	General Government grants[1]	Specific grants[2]	Capital grant[3]
1997–98	96.1	0	2.6
2005–06	113.3	9.1	2.0

[1] Includes Home Office principal police grant, ODPM Revenue Support Grant and redistributed business rates.
[2] Includes funding from the Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, Basic Command Unit funding, Community Support Officer funding, Neighbourhood Policing Fund, Special Priority Payments DNA Expansion Programme, capital provision (including Supplementary Credit Approvals) and Airwave.
[3] Capital grant in 1997–98 includes £1.5 million paid to Staffordshire Police Authority under the then arrangements to provide additional support for a limited number of major capital schemes each year. In addition, the Authority received Supplementary Credit Approvals of £1.6 million in 1997–98 and £1.2 million in 2005–06 for grant supported borrowing.

Police Information Technology Organisation

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to publish the McFarland Report on the performance and structure of the Police Information Technology Organisation. [223680]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The Review's report has been completed and is currently being considered by Ministers. A ministerial statement will be made to Parliament in due course. Copies of the final report will then be available in the Library.

Police Officers (Northumbria)

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there have been in *(a)* the South Tyneside Area Command and *(b)* Northumbria in each year since 1997. [222554]

Ms Blears: The latest figures on police strength by Basic Command Unit were published as supplementary data on the Home Office/Research Development and Statistics website.

The information requested is given in the table:

	Police officers	
As at 31 March	South Tyneside[1]	Northumbria
1997	—	3,677
1998	—	3,769
1999	—	3,840
2000	—	3,788
2001	—	3,857
2002	268	3,929
2003	[2]291	[2]4,018
2004	[2]303	[2]4,061

[1] Figures not available prior to 2002.
[2] Not comparable with earlier years' data—includes officers on career breaks and maternity/paternity leave.

Police Recruitment

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to increase diversity in the recruitment of police officers. [222964]

Ms Blears: We have established national recruitment standards with a view to minimising adverse impact on any group. In the Police Reform Act 2002 we removed the requirement for recruits to be citizens of the United Kingdom. We have amended fitness standards to reduce adverse impact on women applicants.

We have produced materials for forces to use in recruitment campaigns which promote diversity within the police service and we have supported projects in six forces to improve recruitment from ethnic minority communities.

In the White Paper "Building communities, beating crime" we announced additional measures including recruitment of people with operationally valuable language skills and recruitment at senior levels.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimates he has made of the total running costs of the Serious Organised Crime Agency over *(a)* the first year and *(b)* the first 10 years of operation. [218362]

Caroline Flint: The costs for the first year of the Serious Organised Crime Agency's (SOCA) operation will be met by transferring the provision which would have otherwise have been made for the National Criminal Intelligence Service and National Crime Squad under SR 2004. These organisations become part

of SOCA on 1 April 2006. In addition negotiations are currently taking place with Her Majesty's Customs and Excise as to the funds to accompany the posts to be transferred to SOCA from that Department. A total of approximately £1.6 million resource will be transferred from the United Kingdom Immigration Service to cover the posts currently based in the Immigration Service which will transfer to SOCA.

Additional transition costs to be met from the Home Office SR 2004 settlement have yet to be determined.

Subsequent funding will be decided under the SR 2006 bidding round.

Student Visas

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions officials in his Department had with *(a)* universities, *(b)* Ministers and officials in the Department for Education and Skills and *(c)* Ministers and officials in the Foreign Office prior to his announcement on 8 February of his plans to abolish the appeals service for international students who are refused visas. [224146]

Mr. Browne: 'Controlling our borders: Making migration work for Britain' the Government's five-year strategy for asylum and immigration, is the product of a review of the whole immigration and asylum system, including appeal rights and the appeals system. The strategy sets out proposals on appeals including the removal of appeal rights for those refused an entry clearance overseas for the purpose of study in the United Kingdom. This was agreed across Government, including the Department for Education and Skills and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, prior to its publication on 7 February.

There were no discussions with universities prior to the publication of the strategy about the decision to abolish appeals rights for students refused visas.

War Criminals

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the UK policy is on granting *(a)* residence permits, *(b)* asylum and *(c)* citizenship to alleged war criminals; and if he will make a statement. [224630]

Mr. Browne: The Government's policy that the UK should not provide a safe haven for alleged war criminals was set out in the 2002 White Paper, Secure Borders, Safe Haven. The Government are committed to making wider use of existing immigration and nationality powers to prevent suspected war criminals and those who may have committed crimes against humanity from entering the UK or from establishing themselves here. These powers include the ability to refuse leave to enter or remain on the grounds that the person's presence in the UK is not conducive to the public good, to refuse or deprive an individual of British citizenship and to exclude individuals from refugee protection if there are serious reasons for considering that they have committed war crimes or crimes against humanity.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Area Planning and Development Partnerships

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Area Planning and Development Partnerships of the Department of Education as defined by the Costello Working Party recommendations were established; who the members are of each partnership; and whether the Department of Education is meeting the implementation process timetable. [223740]

Mr. Gardiner: No such groups have been established. Collaboration among schools and between schools and further education colleges will secure access to the Entitlement Framework for all pupils and will be developed at local level. The arrangements to take this forward are expected to be included in forthcoming guidance to schools and managing authorities. The Government remain on course to implement new post-primary arrangements after the last transfer tests in 2008.

Assets Recovery Agency

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget for the Assets Recovery Agency (ARA) was for *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05; how many personnel are employed by the ARA; and what plans the Government have to change the ARA's budget for the 2005–06 financial year. [223190]

Mr. Pearson: The ARA budget for 2003–04 was £13 million (NI allocation: £2.071 million) and £15.5 million in 2004–05 (NI allocation: £2.326 million). The ARA has 163 staff in total and currently employs 30 personnel in its Belfast office who progress NI specific investigations.

The 2005–06 budget for ARA has been maintained at the 2004–05 level. Additional funds will arise out of 2004–05 end year flexibility, but this will not be confirmed until later in the year. The ARA is planning to increase the number of investigators and lawyers working on NI investigations.

Belfast (Renewal)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications have been received under the Neighbourhood Renewal Phase Two in *(a)* North Belfast, *(b)* Inner West Belfast and *(c)* Outer West Belfast; how many of these are being assessed; and how many have been granted. [224153]

Mr. Spellar: This information is set out in the table:

	North	*Inner West*	*Outer West*
Total number of applications received	77	119	46
Number being assessed	21	32	6
Number granted	2	1	0

Braille Books

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Braille books are available in schools and libraries managed by each Education and Library Board in Northern Ireland; and how much has been spent in each board in each of the last five years to provide books for readers suffering from sight loss. [223491]

Mr. Gardiner: Education and Library Boards assess and make provision for pupils with special educational needs on an individual basis.

The Western Education and Library Board has advised that one pupil has required books to be provided in Braille and the cost of Braille books for this pupil is £300. In addition a classroom assistant has prepared Braille materials for the pupil. Materials required for Braille preparation during the past five years have been as follows:

	£
Braille paper	730
Zytex paper (used for making raised diagrams)	700

Due to the diverse nature of the provision for pupils with sight loss the remaining Education and Library Boards cannot quantify funding levels, since provision is made from a range of funding streams.

The Education and Library Boards are also responsible for provision of both the Public Library Service and the School Library Service but do not purchase any Braille books, and none is held in stock. However Braille books can be obtained on request from the Royal National Institute for the Blind for users of the service.

Expenditure by each Education and Library Board on the provision of books and services for readers suffering from sight loss is detailed in the following table.

Total spend on books[1] for blind and visually impaired users in public libraries and in school libraries by ELB by year

£

	Public libraries	*School libraries*
BELB		
2000–01	11,635	[2]n/a
2001–02	11,053	[2]n/a
2002–03	141,580	[2]n/a
2003–04	86,560	[2]n/a
2004–05	31,106	[2]n/a
SELB		
2000–01	18,650	10,474
2001–02	17,970	7,028
2002–03	21,733	11,406
2003–04	41,069	10,786
2004–05	7,839	8,741
NEELB		
2000–01	39,097	2,045
2001–02	[3]36,177	2,791
2002–03	117,164	3,841
2003–04	78,967	1,742
2004–05	38,484	510

Total spend on books[1] for blind and visually impaired users in public libraries and in school libraries by ELB by year

£

	Public libraries	*School libraries*
SEELB		
2000–01	n/a	n/a
2001–02	n/a	n/a
2002–03	n/a	n/a
2003–04	154,205	5,962
2004–05	22,258	1,361
WELB		
2000–01	11,785	460
2001–02	22,497	158
2002–03	44,426	132
2003–04	143,075	2,065
2004–05	77,135	4,070

[1] Stock includes:
Books in large print
Books on tape/CD
RNIB talking books.
National Library for the Blind (Braille Subscriptions)
[2] Belfast Education and Library Board cannot exclusively identify expenditure on services for the blind and visually impaired in schools.
[3] Figure includes estimates.

BSE

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many confirmed cases of BSE were recorded in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [226960]

Mr. Pearson: The number of confirmed cases of BSE recorded in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years is detailed in the following table. The table provides a breakdown of the number of cases identified through normal statutory reporting of BSE suspects (passive surveillance) and those cases identified as a result of the surveillance testing programmes (active surveillance) in operation in Northern Ireland.

	Passive surveillance	*Active surveillance*	*Number of BSE cases*
2000	22	54	76
2001	29	40	69
2002	33	70	103
2003	11	51	62
2004	8	26	34
2005 (At 18 March 2005)	1	6	7

Compensation Payments

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public compensation has been paid in the last 30 years to families of *(a)* the regular Army, *(b)* full-time and part-time UDR and RIR, *(c)* RUC and full-time and part-time reserve, *(d)* the Northern Ireland Prison Service, *(e)* the Northern Ireland fire service and *(f)* the ambulance service who have been killed or injured by acts of terrorism. [223684]

Mr. Spellar: This is an operational responsibility of the Compensation Agency. The chief executive has

advised me that the information requested is not available and because of the normal file destruction policy a partial answer could be compiled only at a disproportionate cost.

Conservation

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for how many areas of special scientific interest (ASSI) in Northern Ireland conservation objectives have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in guidance issued by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in 2003 on Common Standards Monitoring for Sites of Special Scientific Interest and ASSIs; and when he expects conservation objectives to be completed for all ASSIs in Northern Ireland. [224078]

Angela Smith: Of the 220 ASSIs presently designated as of 24 March 2005, 214 sites already have conservation objectives. It is planned to complete conservation objectives for the remaining six sites in 2005–06.

Cross-border Bodies

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the administration costs of *(a)* the North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat and *(b)* each of the cross-border bodies have been in each year since their formation; and what the outturn against planned expenditure was in each of these years. [212327]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The details requested are set out in the following tables:

(a) North/South Ministerial Council Joint Secretariat Annual Administration costs[1]

	£
2000	740,502
2001	1,574,270
2002	1,039,693
2003	1,025,410
2004	1,059,278

[1] These figures include Northern and Southern contributions to administration costs.

Annual Administration Costs of Each Cross Border Body

£

(b) Body	*2000*[1]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[2]
Foyle, Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission	836,305	933,784	973,974	1,107,360	1,131,655
Waterways Ireland	3,692,063	5,843,392	6,450,134	9,638,986	10,385,374
The Trade and Business Development Body	537,988	961,286	1,349,746	1,530,941	1,631,431
Special EU Programmes Body	525,105	736,305	1,122,472	1,284,631	[3]—
The North/South Language Body[4]	1,389,299	1,516,584	1,780,976	2,061,449	2,322,893
The Food Safety Promotion Board	165,000	504,000	749,000	1,236,000	1,357,000
Tourism Ireland Limited	n/a	101,456	7,400,230	8,608,667	8,922,000

[1] This covers the period 2 December 1999 to 31 December 2000.
[2] The figures for 2004 are provisional as the accounts are still in preparation.
[3] The Special European Programmes Body draft Accounts for 2004 are still in preparation.
[4] The figures quoted for the North/South Language Body for the years 2001–04 are based on unaudited accounts.

(c) NSMC Joint Secretariat (North) Budget and Outturn[1]

£

	Budget	*Outturn*
2000–01	805,000	752,886
2001–02	820,000	782,705
2002–03	735,000	606,888
2003–04	642,000	582,125
2004–05	602,000	[2]—

[1] These figures are the Northern Ireland Budget and Outturn only.
[2] The outturn figure for 2004–05 is still in preparation.

Cross Border Bodies Budget and Outturn

£

(d) Body	*2000*[1]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[2]
Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission					
Budget	1,954,000	2,452,000	3,382,000	3,847,000	3,550,000
Outturn	1,359,000	1,604,000	1,807,000	1,921,000	2,350,000
Waterways Ireland					
Budget	10,780,000	18,820,000	21,990,000	22,610,000	31,710,000
Outturn	9,504,687	14,031,989	17,438,466	18,569,245	22,895,379
The Trade and Business Development Body					
Budget	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000
Outturn	1,842,000	2,768,000	5,199,000	6,145,000	6,629,000
Special EU Programmes Body					
Budget	2,000,000	2,308,000	1,750,000	2,020,000	2,195,000
Outturn	839,419	1,809,101	1,811,475	1,830,432	[3]—

Cross Border Bodies Budget and Outturn

£

(d) Body	*2000*[1]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*[2]
The North/South Language Body[4]					
Budget	8,180,243	11,717,150	12,282,700	13,294,790	15,062,500
Outturn	7,469,630	10,241,877	12,528,077	13,656,581	15,004,959
The Food Safety Promotion Board					
Budget	2,327,000	5,115,000	5,291,000	5,972,000	6,167,000
Outturn	1,742,000	2,662,000	3,969,000	5,600,000	5,950,000
Tourism Ireland Limited					
Budget	n/a	No budget set	7,864,000	8,453,000	9,058,000
Outturn	n/a	101,456	7,400,230	8,608,000	8,922,000

[1] This covers the period 2 December 1999 to 31 December 2000.
[2] The figures for 2004 are provisional as the accounts have yet to be finalised.
[3] The Special European Programmes Body draft Accounts for 2004 are still in preparation.
[4] The figures quoted for the North/South Language Body for the years 2001–04 are based on unaudited accounts.

Education (False Sexual Allegations)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what arrangements the South Eastern Education and Library Board made to educate a child at a private school as a consequence of a false sexual abuse allegation by the pupil against a teacher; whether a grant was paid to *(a)* the family and *(b)* a school; what the consequences were for the teacher who was falsely accused; whether the Department of Education or the Board have taken steps to rehabilitate the teacher; whether he will be paid compensation; and if he will make a statement. [221824]

Mr. Gardiner: In the case to which the hon. Member refers, the teacher concerned pleaded guilty to assault of a pupil but not, I understand, a sexual assault. I am told by the South Eastern Education Board that, having considered a range of options and looked at what was in the best interests of the child, the decision was taken to secure a place in a privately operated school. The Board is paying the fees for the pupil's attendance at the school.

While the teacher will not receive compensation, I can assure the hon. Member that his rehabilitation was a major consideration and that the Terms of Settlement of this dispute contain a section relating specifically to the teacher and his needs.

As a matter of principle I acknowledge the need to protect teachers from false allegations made against them. While we must of course listen to children and give primacy to their needs and welfare, the position of teachers also needs to be given due consideration in any investigative process. I am very much aware of the hugely damaging and lasting effect that false allegations can have on a teacher's professional and personal life. Our procedures must recognise teachers' rights to be heard, and to be protected against false allegations.

In the coming months my Department will be undertaking a review of the way precautionary suspensions currently operate, with the aim of issuing fresh guidance to schools.

Education and Library Boards

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* recurrent and *(b)* capital expenditure funding provided to each Northern Ireland education and library board was in each year since 1995. [220906]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table shows all the recurrent and capital allocations provided to the education and library boards for the period 1995–96 to 2003–04. The allocations for 2004–05 have not yet been finalised.

Education and library boards allocations (recurrent and capital) from 1995–96 to 2003–04

	BELB	*NEELB*	*SEELB*	*SELB*	*WELB*	*Total*
1995–96						
Recurrent	170,868	202,884	175,349	205,309	180,034	934,444
Capital	4,815	12,358	9,579	14,961	6,361	48,074
Total	175,683	215,242	184,928	220,270	186,395	982,518
1996–97						
Recurrent	176,095	207,222	184,904	211,821	186,893	966,935
Capital	4,925	12,088	8,265	12,032	6,811	44,121
Total	181,020	219,310	193,169	223,853	193,704	1,011,056
1997–98						
Recurrent	179,243	210,374	183,728	218,540	192,459	984,344
Capital	5,650	10,504	6,944	8,471	8,540	40,109
Total	184,893	220,878	190,672	227,011	200,999	1,024,453
1998–99						
Recurrent	159,914	197,666	175,633	206,127	176,868	916,208
Capital	7,431	8,686	6,783	6,478	9,127	38,505

Education and library boards allocations (recurrent and capital) from 1995–96 to 2003–04

	BELB	NEELB	SEELB	SELB	WELB	Total
Total	167,345	206,352	182,416	212,605	185,995	954,713
1999–2000						
Recurrent	165,735	198,925	179,215	209,365	180,247	933,487
Capital	3,698	5,939	8,187	5,037	6,639	29,500
Total	169,433	204,864	187,402	214,402	186,886	962,987
2000–01						
Recurrent	172,576	207,003	187,735	218,242	189,757	975,313
Capital	4,681	9,093	13,750	9,476	7,422	44,422
Total	177,257	216,096	201,485	227,718	197,179	1,019,735
2001–02						
Recurrent	185,796	220,648	201,331	231,605	219,994	1,059,374
Capital	5,254	10,454	18,524	10,663	7,109	52,004
Total	191,050	231,102	219,855	242,268	227,103	1,111,378
2002–03						
Recurrent	201,424	244,053	220,457	250,344	232,960	1,149,238
Capital	7,979	12,744	17,846	9,057	12,513	60,139
Total	209,403	256,797	238,303	259,401	245,473	1,209,377
2003–04						
Recurrent	210,424	263,083	230,915	269,160	256,394	1,229,976
Capital	12,483	13,925	14,270	11,589	13,336	65,603
Total	222,907	277,008	245,185	280,749	269,730	1,295,579

Equality Consultation

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland why the consultation on the Department of Education's equality scheme and equality impact assessment timetable does not appear on the Department's website. [223950]

Mr. Gardiner: The documents are available on the Departments website, under 'Current Consultations' and details of the consultation are also on the Consultation NI website.

Hard copies and alternative formats of the documents are available from the Department on request.

Housing Executive

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many properties the Northern Ireland Housing Executive owns in each parliamentary constituency in Belfast; how many are vacant in each case; and what different types of heating system are fitted in occupied Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in each parliamentary constituency in Belfast. [224225]

Mr. Spellar: The information is not available by constituency, however at 24 March 2005 the information by housing executive district office is as follows.

Housing executive district office	Occupied stock	Vacant stock[1]	Heating source: Oil	Gas	Electric	Room heater	Other
Belfast 1	2,200	8	317	1,057	427	393	6
Belfast 2	3,552	56	732	1,708	594	508	10
Belfast 3	3,301	4	714	1,912	160	499	16
Belfast 4	3,349	119	348	1,536	965	453	47
Belfast 5	3,617	109	474	1,940	406	774	23
Belfast 6	3,123	132	202	2,050	185	679	7
Belfast 7	4,076	31	517	2,536	517	459	47
Total	23,218	439	3,304	12,739	3,254	3,765	156

[1] Excludes properties scheduled for redevelopment.

Housing Executive Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which community organisations have received funding from the Housing Executive in each constituency in Northern Ireland in the last five years to meet *(a)* staff costs, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* capital costs. [224158]

Mr. Spellar: The information is shown in the following table. No funding was provided in respect of capital costs.

Constituency[1]	Group name	Staff costs	Administration costs
West Belfast	Greater Shankill	yes	—
	Lenadoon	yes	—
	Upper Springfield Resource Centre	yes	—

Constituency[1]	Group name	Staff costs	Administration costs
	West Belfast Partnership Board	—	yes
	Whiterock/Westrock	yes	—
	Tudor Renewal Residents Association	yes	yes
	Twaddell/Woodvale	yes	—
North Belfast	Ardoyne	yes	—
	Ligoniel Integrated Plan	yes	—
	Lower North Belfast Community Council	yes	—
	New Lodge Housing Forum	yes	—
	North Belfast Partnership Board	—	yes
South Belfast	Markets Development Association	yes	—
-	Greater Village Regeneration Trust	yes	yes
East Belfast	Mersey Street Area Residents Association	yes	—
Foyle	Bogside/Brandywell Community Housing Project	yes	yes
Strangford	Glen Ward Community Association	yes	—
Newry and Armagh	Newry and Mourne Community group	yes	—
	Newry Travellers	yes	—

[1] The constituency designation is based on the name of the group and/or the known area where it operates and compared with the names of the wards in that constituency.

Language Teaching

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils in the Belfast Education and Library Board area are given teaching support from the English as an Additional Language Support Unit; and what the annual budget is for this unit in the BELB area. [224172]

Mr. Gardiner: The numbers of children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are determined by the annual school census which took place in October 2004. At that date, the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) recorded 574 children with EAL.

Each of the five Education and Library Boards receive earmarked funding from the Department on a per capita basis in respect of EAL. The Department's total earmarked budget is £420,000 in 2005–06 and the BELB has been allocated £117,000 from this budget for EAL support services in the 2005–06 financial year which is an increase of £7,000 from 2004–05.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many pupils are taught through the Irish language schools sector in the Belfast Education and Library Board area; and what the Government spending on this sector was in the last year for which figures are available. [224173]

Mr. Gardiner: In 2004–05, there are 1,058 pupils taught in grant-aided Irish Medium primary schools, and 442 pupils taught in grant-aided Irish Medium post-primary schools in the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) area. In 2003–04, the respective figures were 995 and 406. Based on information contained in the Local Management of Schools Outturn Statement published by the BELB for the financial year 2003–04, a total of £4,011,407 was spent directly on Irish Medium Schools in the Belfast Board area.

Lir Integrated Primary School

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many representations he has received concerning the development proposal for Lir Integrated Primary School in Ballycastle. [223200]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education received two objections to the Development Proposal, one during the two-month consultation period and one shortly after the consultation period expired. 145 pre-printed postcards were also received from supporters of the proposal from across the Province, 135 were received during the two-month consultation period and 10 were received after the consultation period expired.

Means-tested Benefits (Strangford)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people of pensionable age who are living in *(a)* nursing and *(b)* residential homes in Strangford constituency qualify for means-tested benefits. [223723]

Mr. Spellar: The information requested is not available. The Social Security Agency and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety do not hold details of residents of nursing and residential homes and has not carried out exercises to assess their entitlement to means-tested benefits.

Offender Management

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps his Department is taking to implement the recommendations of the Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland Report and the Management of Sex Offenders in Northern Ireland, with particular reference to the management of violent offenders in the community; and if he will make a statement. [224170]

Mr. Spellar: The first thematic inspection by the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland provides a sound basis to further develop the procedures already in place for assessing and managing the risk posed by sex offenders. I wish therefore to give careful consideration to the recommendations of the report for which I have responsibility, including extending the arrangements to include violent offenders. I have asked officials to consult with colleagues who operate the offender management procedures, both here and in England and Wales, before reaching conclusions on the way forward.

Pension Credit

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of pension credit take-up levels in Northern Ireland; and what policies are in place to increase that rate. [224066]

Mr. Spellar: No estimate has been made of the number of pensioners who might be entitled to state pension credit.

A target has been set of promoting take-up of 98,500 by March 2006 and 104,000 by March 2008. By February 2005, 91,782 pensioner households were in receipt of pension credit.

Police Appointments

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 589W, on police appointments, how many of the *(a)* 816 non-Catholic candidates appointed to the police and *(b)* 408 suitably qualified candidates who were rejected because of the equal recruitment policy were Protestant. [224210]

Mr. Pearson *[pursuant to the reply, 21 March 2005, Official Report, c.589W]:* I am advised that of the stated 816 non-Catholic applicants appointed to the PSNI as trainee constables, 802 were perceived as being from a Protestant community background.

I am also advised that of the stated 408 suitably qualified applicants who were rejected because of the equal recruitment policy, 405 were perceived as being from a Protestant community background.

Polling Stations

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether it is his intention that all polling stations in the forthcoming local government elections on 5 May and at the next general election in Northern Ireland should be guarded by uniformed police officers. [223173]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland is committed to providing the appropriate level of support to the chief electoral officer in his management of the electoral process in Northern Ireland. This support will be based on individual threat assessments conducted on behalf of district commanders, with whom the operational decisions for deployments lie.

Pollution

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents of pollution were reported in Lough Neagh in 2004; and what the origins were of the incidents. [224091]

Angela Smith: From 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004, the Department of the Environment's Environment and Heritage Service Unit received 12 reports of pollution within a 50 metre radius of Lough Neagh. Of these, eight incidents were confirmed and all assessed as 'low severity' in that the incidents resulted in a localised environmental impact only. By origin, seven incidents were attributed to industry and one to the Department for Regional Development's Water Service.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many incidents of pollution were reported in the Six Mile Water river in 2004; and what the origins were of the incidents. [224092]

Angela Smith: The Department of the Environment's Environment and Heritage Service received 127 reports of pollution in the Six Mile Water river from 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004. Of these, 52 incidents were confirmed.

By origin, 27 incidents were attributed to industry, six to the Department for Regional Development's water service, three to farming, three to transport and 13 to 'other' sources (i.e. sources which are not any of these nor domestic). By severity, nine incidents were assessed as 'medium' in that the incidents would have had a more than localised impact and may for example have had a readily observable impact on the invertebrate life in the watercourse. The remaining 43 incidents were assessed as 'low' severity in that they would have resulted in a localised environmental impact only.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 588W, on marine pollution, what constituted the failure of the screening plant at Briggs Rock, Orlock. [224255]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Lady Hermon, dated 31 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question, pursuant to his Answer of 21 March, Official Report, column 588W, on marine pollution, about what constituted the failure of the screening plant at Briggs Rock, Orlock (224255). I have been asked to reply as the issue falls within my operational responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

The screening plant at Briggs Rock originally comprised two automatic rotating screens which removed most solids and materials from the sewage before the effluent liquor was discharged to sea. Over the past two to three years, due to difficulties in sourcing replacement parts, the screens became increasingly difficult to maintain and repair, and more expensive to operate. The condition of the screens continued to deteriorate and they were removed in late 2004. As an interim measure, pending the provisions of a new automatic screening plant, the screens were replaced by fabricated bar screens. These screens have to be cleaned manually twice per day and are not as effective as the automatic rotating screens.

Water Service regrets the pollution caused by the failure of this equipment and is currently taking forward a project to provide a new automatic screening plant. This is scheduled for completion by the end of this summer.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 588W, on marine pollution, if he will make a statement on action taken since 9 March to clean up the coastline. [224256]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Lady Hermon, dated 31 March 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question, pursuant to his Answer of 21 March, Official Report, column 588W, on marine pollution, if he will make a statement on action taken since 9 March to clean up the coastline (224256). I have been asked to reply as the issue falls within my operational responsibility as Chief Executive of Water Service.

Water Service has already met with North Down Borough Council to discuss the situation. A detailed inspection of the foreshore at Orlock Point has been undertaken and a clean-up operation commenced on 30 March 2005. Owing to the nature of the rocky coastline around Orlock Point, it is expected that it will take several days to complete.

Pending the provision of the new automatic screening plant at Briggs Rock, due for completion by the end of the summer at a cost of £150,000. Water Service will carry out regular inspections of the coastline around Orlock and take further clean-up action when necessary.

Post-primary Education

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the differences between post-primary integrated education and controlled secondary schools, with particular reference to the *(a)* curriculum, *(b)* ethos and *(c)* examination results. [224084]

Mr. Gardiner: The information is as follows:

(a) The requirements of the statutory curriculum are the same for all post-primary schools.

(b) The Department of Education does not have an overarching statement on ethos in relation to controlled secondary schools. The managing body of individual schools may, however, express this as a statement of values.

The Department requires schools transforming to integrated status to publish a Transformation Development Plan in which it is suggested that schools may wish to address the issue of ethos. In addition, all integrated schools have the option of signing up to a Statement of Principles prepared and published by the Northern Ireland council for Integrated Education.

(c) The performance in public examinations for all post-primary schools for the period 2001–04 is as follows:

Performance in public examinations by key indicators and management type, 2001–02 to 2003–04

Academic year	*Key indicator*	*Controlled non-grammar*	*Controlled grammar*	*Total controlled*	*Integrated non-grammar*
2003–04	Percentage of year 12 pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs (or equivalent) at Grades A*-C	35	96	52	47
	Percentage of those entered for A-levels achieving 2+ A Levels (or equivalent) at Grades A-E	82	98	93	83
2002–03	Percentage of year 12 pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs (or equivalent) at Grades A*-C	33	95	49	48
	Percentage of those entered for A-levels achieving 2+ A Levels (or equivalent) at Grades A-E	84	98	94	85
2001–02	Percentage of year 12 pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs (or equivalent) at Grades A*-C	34	95	50	47
	Percentage of those entered for A-levels achieving 2+ A Levels (or equivalent) at Grades A-E	83	99	94	76

Notes:
1. 'Integrated' schools include Controlled Integrated and Grant Maintained Integrated schools.

Source:
Summary of Annual Examination Results.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the likely size of the independently financed secondary school sector after the ending of academic selection between primary and secondary schools in the Province. [221768]

Mr. Gardiner: The size of the independent school sector in Northern Ireland is not expected to change as a result of the new arrangements for post-primary education.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland which *(a)* parents' groups, *(b)* principals of secondary and grammar schools and *(c)* principals of primary schools he has met since the publication of the Burns Report to discuss seleotion procedures for transfer between primary and secondary schools in the Province. [221770]

Mr. Gardiner: Prior to the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly, education matters were the responsibility of the devolved Administration. Since then, my predecessor Jane Kennedy and I met with representatives of the Governing Bodies Association on a number of occasions and with representatives of the Association of Headteachers in Secondary Schools and the Secondary Heads Association to discuss new arrangements for post primary education in Northern Ireland. No meetings between Ministers and parents' groups or principals of primary schools have been held.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost is of implementing the Costello Report in years *(a)* one, *(b)* two and *(c)* three after the ending of academic selection between primary and secondary schools in the Province. [221773]

Mr. Gardiner: As the new post-primary arrangements will largely be developed at local level, it is not yet possible to estimate the implementation costs in the

three years following the ending of academic selection. Over the next three years £24.7 million has been made available to support the preparation for, and the phased introduction of key elements of, the new arrangements in advance of the last transfer tests in 2008.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the proposals in the Costello Report on post-primary education in Northern Ireland were subject to an economic appraisal. [223270]

Mr. Gardiner: A key recommendation is that new arrangements will be developed at local level by schools and school managing authorities working together. As these emerge, individual proposals will be required to demonstrate value for money and those which involve capital expenditure will be subject to an economic appraisal in the normal way.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many and what percentage of those pupils *(a)* not entered and *(b)* eligible for the transfer test for post-primary schools were from disadvantaged backgrounds in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [223742]

Mr. Gardiner: Information on the background of individual pupils at primary schools/preparatory departments is not available. However, the following tables show the number of pupils eligible for the transfer test, and the number of these who were not entered, at grant-aided schools in each Free School Meal band.

	Number of Year 7 pupils who did not sit the test				
Free school meal (FSM) band	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was < 11 per cent.	1,481	1,727	1,856	1,865	1,943
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 11 to 20 per cent.	1,938	1,819	1,784	1,985	2,313
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 21 to 30 per cent.	1,853	1,737	1,779	1,634	1,822
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 31 to 40 per cent.	900	769	852	800	661
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 41 to 50 per cent.	667	590	594	598	653
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was > 51 per cent.	1,559	1,495	1,352	1,332	1,241

	Total number of Year 7 pupils				
Free school meal (FSM) band	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was < 11 per cent.	7,365	8,133	8,412	8,313	8,353
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 11 to 20 per cent.	5,599	5,609	5,512	6,028	6,004
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 21 to 30 per cent.	5,156	4,559	4,804	4,341	4,572
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 31 to 40 per cent.	2,882	2,446	2,385	2,137	1,712
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was 41—50 per cent.	1,538	1,324	1,289	1,446	1,393
Schools where the proportion of pupils entitled to FSM was > 51 per cent.	3,443	3,104	2,745	2,455	2,271

Pupil Numbers

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the most recent projections of pupil populations in Northern Ireland are for each year in the period 2005 to 2012, broken down by *(a)* school type and *(b)* education board area. [223212]

Mr. Gardiner: Projected pupil numbers at grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland are available for the period 2005–06 to 2010–11 and are as follows:

	2005–06	*2006–07*	*2007–08*	*2008–09*	*2009–10*	*2010–11*
Nursery schools	6,200	6,200	6,200	6,200	6,200	6,200
Primary schools/preparatory departments	169,000	166,800	165,300	162,300	159,800	157,600
Secondary (non-grammar) schools	87,900	85,700	83,200	81,900	80,700	79,500
Grammar schools (secondary departments)	63,300	63,100	63,100	63,000	62,900	62,900
Special schools	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800	4,800

The projected pupils numbers are only produced in respect of Northern Ireland as a whole. However, for education and library board areas, population projections for the relevant age-group i.e. those aged 3–17 (which include children not attending grant-aided schools) are as follows:

	2005	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*
Belfast	52,100	50,400	48,900	47,500	46,000	44,500	43,100	41,900
Western	66,800	65,800	64,800	64,000	63,200	62,600	62,200	61,800
North Eastern	84,500	83,800	83,100	82,400	81,800	81,200	80,700	80,200
South Eastern	81,700	80,800	79,800	78,700	77,500	76,300	75,400	74,500
Southern	81,600	80,900	80,300	79,600	78,900	78,400	78,100	77,900

School Admissions

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland why the Department of Education does not supply additional response booklets to parent groups, schools and politicians as part of the consultation process in Northern Ireland's admissions arrangements for post primary schools; which policy directs civil servants to refuse such requests; and when the policy came into effect. [223949]

Mr. Gardiner: It is important that those responding do so after carefully considering the content of the consultation document itself. Issuing copies of the "Response Booklet" in isolation could result in ill-informed comments and would not contribute to a fair and accurate reflection of opinion. The approach the Department is taking is established practice and is consistent with the approach used in other consultations.

This is an open consultation and anyone who wishes to respond can contact the Department by telephone, fax, e-mail or in writing and the Department will provide them with a copy of the consultation document and the "Response Booklet". Over 17,000 copies of the documents have been issued to date. The "Response Booklet" can also be downloaded from the Department's website.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average GCSE points score for post-primary integrated schools using academic selection as an admission criterion was in the periods immediately *(a)* before and *(b)* after the change to admission criteria was introduced. [223741]

Mr. Gardiner: Two post-primary integrated schools use academic selection as an admission criterion: Slemish College and Lagan College. Slemish College opened on 1 September 1996 and its pupils did not take GCSEs until 2000–01. GCSE point score information is unavailable for years prior to 1995–96.

Average GCSE point scores for the two schools are as follows:

	Slemish College	*Lagan College*
1995–96	n/a	33.0
1996–97	n/a	37.8
1997–98	n/a	35.6
1998–99	n/a	31.4
1999–2000	n/a	36.7
2000–01	30.1	34.3
2001–02	32.0	36.2
2002–03	32.4	37.6
2003–04	36.0	35.1

The change to admission criteria occurred on the following dates:

Lagan College—September 1996

Slemish College—September 2002.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many responses have been received by the Department of Education on the consultation on admissions criteria to post-primary schools, broken down by those received by *(a)* post, *(b)* electronic submission and *(c)* other means. [223752]

Mr. Gardiner: To date, the Department has received 159 responses to the consultation on new admissions arrangements for post-primary schools. Of these, 93 responses have been received by post and 66 responses have been submitted electronically.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many responses have been received by the Department of Education on the consultation on admissions criteria to post-primary schools rejecting the proposals on the basis that no provision has been made for academic selection as a criteria; and if he will make a statement. [223753]

Mr. Gardiner: We are still in the early stages of this consultation exercise. The closing date for responses is 30 June 2005. Analysis of responses has not started.

All responses will be given careful consideration before decisions are taken and a summary of responses will be produced following the consultation.

School Closures

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what school closures are planned in Northern Ireland for each year in the period 2005 to 2012, broken down by *(a)* school type and *(b)* education board area. [223223]

Mr. Gardiner: All proposals for school closures are subject to the formal Development Proposal process which ensures that all interested parties are consulted and have an opportunity to comment.

There are currently three schools which are the subject of Development Proposals, two of which if approved would close in 2005 (ie Antiville and St. Mary's), with Tullymacarette Primary School scheduled to close in 2007.

Name of school	*Type*	*Education and Library Board area*
Antiville Primary School	Controlled primary	North Eastern
Tullymacarette Primary School	Controlled primary	Southern
St. Mary's Primary School	Maintained primary	Western

No decisions have yet been taken on any of these proposals.

There are 29 other schools which have already been approved for amalgamations which will result in 12 replacement schools. Unless indicated to the contrary, these involve amalgamations into one new replacement school as follows:

Name of schools	*Type*	*Education and Library Board area*	*Estimated completion date*
St. John's Primary School/St. Catherine's Primary School/St. Gall's Primary School Belfast	Maintained primary	Belfast	2005
Clough Primary School/Downshire Primary School	Controlled primary	South Eastern	2005
Hillsborough Primary School/Newport Primary School	Controlled primary	South Eastern	2005

Name of schools	Type	Education and Library Board area	Estimated completion date
Dervaghroy Primary School/Sixmilecross Primary School/The Hutton Primary School	Controlled primary	Western	2005
All Saints Primary School/St. Mary's Primary School/St. Joseph's Primary School/St. Louis Primary School Ballymena	Amalgamation into two maintained primary schools	North Eastern	2006
Charley Primary School/Lambeg Primary School/Drumbo Primary School/Hillhall Primary School	Controlled primary	South Eastern	2006
Annaghmore Primary School/Tullyroan Primary School	Controlled primary	Southern	2006
Burnfoot Primary School/Dungiven Primary School/Largy Primary School	Controlled primary	Western	2006
Coranny Primary School/Cornagague Primary School	Maintained primary	Western	2006
Limegrove Special School, Limavady/Glasvey Special School, Ballykelly	Controlled special	Western	2006
St. Patrick's Boys' Academy/St. Patrick's Girls' Academy, Dungannon	Voluntary grammar	Southern	2008

School authorities are expected to plan for the future level of provision needed and further closures are likely to occur in the period to 2012 as relevant authorities bring forward Development Proposals for approval.

School Services

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on changes in services in schools to be provided in 2005–06 following his Department's recent budget discussions with the North Eastern Education and Library Board. [224082]

Mr. Gardiner: For 2005–06, I have made available some £954 million directly to schools, an increase of £79 million on the amount provided in 2004–05. More money is going into virtually every school at a time when pupil numbers are falling. Under the new common funding arrangements, schools across Northern Ireland are also having their budgets determined, for the first time, on a consistent and equitable basis.

I am conscious that the Education and Library Boards provide many important services directly to schools. Their centre budgets too have increased—by almost £20 million in overall terms and by almost £4 million in the case of the North Eastern Education and Library Board.

The children in our school system need to be at the centre of all that we do and I have made clear to all boards that I expect priority to be given to the needs of the classroom and to other key front-line services.

Smoking

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many responses he has received to his Department's consultation on smoking in enclosed public places in Northern Ireland as contained in question 5c of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety 20-year strategy, A Healthier Future; and how many of these responses were *(a)* in favour of a total ban, *(b)* against a total ban and *(c)* in favour of a partial ban. [223272]

Angela Smith: I will not be in a position to provide further information on the responses received until after the end of the consultation exercise.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he has taken to publicise his Department's consultation on smoking in enclosed public places in Northern Ireland as contained in question 5c of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety 20-year strategy, 'A Healthier Future'. [223273]

Angela Smith: The consultation document 'A Healthier Future' was launched on 21 December 2004, a press release issued and media interviews were undertaken. The document was issued to a wide range of organisations and individuals. A week long advertising campaign ran from 24 February 2005 to 2 March 2005 in the main local Northern Ireland newspapers. This provided the public with the opportunity to respond by either replying to the adverts or sending their views online on the Department's website.

Special EU Programmes Body

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Special EU Programmes Body set up under the Belfast Agreement is a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [223999]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Special EU Programmes Body is not a public authority for the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 806W.

Substitute Teachers

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost was of providing substitute teachers in Northern Ireland in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; and how much of that cost was due to industrial action relating to progression on the upper pay spine. [224083]

Mr. Gardiner: The total salary cost of providing substitute teachers in Northern Ireland (including employer costs in relation to superannuation and national insurance contributions) was as follows:

Financial year	£
2003–04	49,291,271.41
2004–05	51,656,414.26

Information regarding the reasons for the employment of substitute teachers is not readily available and could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

Teaching

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many students graduated in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years with teaching qualifications; [224155]

(2) how many people in Northern Ireland have gained teaching qualifications in each year since 1997. [223995]

Mr. Gardiner: The number of teacher training qualifications obtained from Northern Ireland higher education institutions in each year since 1997 are as follows:

Students gaining teacher training qualifications at NI higher education institutions 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Number of qualifications obtained
1996–97	753
1997–98	644
1998–99	649
1999–2000	635
2000–01	700
2001–02	716
2002–03	772
2003–04	779

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency

The Department publishes annual statistical bulletins on higher education qualifications which are available to download from: http://www.delni.gov.uk/index.cfm/area/information/page/SRHEQualifications

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new teaching posts were created in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland. [224156]

Mr. Gardiner: There is no set level of staffing for schools in the primary or post-primary sectors. Under local management of schools funding arrangements, it is a matter for Boards of Governors of individual schools to decide on the level of staffing in the school.

In terms of the overall supply and demand for teachers the Department uses a statistical demand model to balance the supply with the aggregate level of demands.

University Graduates

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people have graduated from university in Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [223994]

Mr. Gardiner: The number of higher education qualifications obtained from Northern Ireland higher education institutions in each year since 1997 are as follows:

Students gaining qualifications at NI higher education institutions 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Number of qualifications obtained
1996–97	11,982
1997–98	12,833
1998–99	11,625
1999–2000	11,321
2000–01	12,248
2001–02	13,076
2002–03	13,215
2003–04	13,860

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency

Please note that from 1998–99, the university of Ulster no longer conferred interim awards to students on linked postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma and masters courses.

The Department publishes annual statistical bulletins on higher education qualifications which are available to download from: http://www.delni.gov.uk/index. cfm/area/information/page/SRHEQualifications.

Women's Centres

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will ensure continued funding for women's centres in Northern Ireland. [224090]

Mr. Spellar: I am aware that many women's centres would have faced a financial crisis if the recent £1.1 million short-term funding that I announced on 16 March had not been provided. Women's Centres provide a range of local services in disadvantaged communities and continue to make a major contribution towards peace building and social cohesion. I am establishing a review group to consider the longer-term funding for the women's sector. This group will be led by the Department for Social Development and will report to me and recommend actions within the six-month period of this programme.

Women's Support Network

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what sources of funding his Department has offered to the Women's Support Network following the ending of funding under the Executive Programme Fund. [224154]

Mr. Spellar: The Women's Support Network received £24,613 funding from the Department for Social Development under the short-term Executive Programme Funds in the financial year 2003–04. Since that time the Women's Support Network has secured other public funding and it is currently in receipt of funding provided by OFMDFM, under the Peace II programme. This funding will end in December 2006.

On 16 March I announced that I will establish a review group to consider the longer-term funding for the women's sector. In the meantime I have made available short-term funding of £1.1 million for the sector. The Women's Support Network will be considered under this review.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 5 April 2005

TREASURY

Airport Passenger Duty

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect of Airport Passenger Duty on passenger numbers; and what assessment he has made of the merits of adjusting the level of such duty. [224018]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise analysis indicates that the price elasticity of demand for changes in Air Passenger Duty (APD) duty rates is low, and air travel has proven relatively unresponsive to changes in price. My right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced a freeze on air passenger duty for the year ahead in his recent Budget report. The Chancellor takes into account a range of social, economic and environmental considerations, including the effects of APD on passenger numbers, when setting levels of taxation.

Bereavement Grants

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 4 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1402W, on bereavement grants, whether occupational pension schemes are permitted to pay a non-taxable bereavement grant voluntarily on the death of a pensioner member aged over 75. [224677]

Mr. Timms: Under the current pension tax regime an occupational pension scheme can make a tax-free lump sum payment on a pensioner member's death of up to £2,500. There is no age limit on when this payment can be made.

From 6 April 2006, under the new simplified pension tax regime schemes can continue to pay lump sums on the death of a pensioner member unless the member is aged 75 or over when they die. In these cases survivors benefits must be paid in the form of income. Existing rights to a tax-free lump sum on death at age 75 or over on 6 April next year will be protected. Details are contained in the Inland Revenue Pensions Tax Simplification Technical Note that was published on 16 February 2004.

Censuses

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will instruct the Economic Secretary to the Treasury to provide substantive answers to Questions concerning decennial censuses after consulting the Registrar General; [224047]

(2) whether Treasury Ministers have used their powers under section 2(1) of the Census Act 1920 to control and direct the Registrar General since 1990; [224048]

(3) whether the necessary permission to retain the *(a)* 1981 and *(b)* 1991 census records for England and Wales in the Office for National Statistics once they are over 30-years-old has already been granted by the Lord Chancellor. [224049]

Mr. Timms: I am the Minister responsible for the population census. Day-to-day responsibility rests with the Registrar General, who is also the National Statistician.

All Parliamentary questions to the Chancellor of the Exchequer are answered substantively. It has been the practice of successive Administrations for many years to delegate questions concerning the census to the Registrar General for answer by letter. All such letter answers are printed in the *Official Report*.

The Registrar General undertakes his functions under section 2(1) of the Census Act 1920 and of any Census Order or Regulations made under the 1920 Act. His powers to carry out the census are subject to the control of, and in compliance with, any Ministerial direction by virtue of Section 2(2) of the 1920 Act. The Registrar General has regular meetings with the relevant Minister to discuss census-related issues. The Government's proposals for the 2001 Census were published in a White Paper ("The 2001 Census of Population", Cm 4253) in March 1999. Parliamentary authority for the 2001 Census was subsequently given by virtue of the Census Order 2000 (SI 2000/744), the Census Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/1473), the Census (Amendment) Order 2000 (SI 2000/3249), and the Census (Amendment) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/3351).

I understand that no application has yet been made by the Registrar General to the Lord Chancellor, under the provisions of section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958, for him to retain the records from the 1981 or 1991 Censuses once they are over 30-years-old.

Child Benefit

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what rationale underlies his policy of not means-testing for receipt of child benefit. [223923]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Child benefit is payable to every family in the UK in respect of each child. The Government believe it is right that society should recognise the importance of family life by providing financial support for every family with a dependent child.

Employment Rates

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assumptions of long-term employment rates for *(a)* men and *(b)* women underpin the Treasury's published figures on long-term fiscal trends. [224669]

John Healey: As required by the "Code for Fiscal Stability", the Treasury publishes illustrative long-term fiscal projections as part of the Economic and Fiscal Strategy Report (EFSR). The long-term

macroeconomic assumptions are stated in Annex A of the EFSR. Regarding long-term employment rates, Annex A of the 2005 EFSR states that:

> "By assumption, employment is driven entirely by demographic trends. Specifically, with the overall employment rate assumed to remain constant from 2009–10 onwards, changes in employment levels reflect changes in the working-age population" (Budget 2005, page 178).

No specific assumptions regarding the future evolution of male and female employment rates are made.

In addition to the illustrative long-term fiscal projections, the Treasury also publishes the Long-term Public Finance Report (LTPFR) alongside the pre-Budget report. The baseline results of the 2004 LTPFR are also based on the assumption of an unchanged total employment rate beyond the medium term. In addition, the 2004 LTPFR (pages 33–37) presents results based on an alternative approach to projecting employment trends.

Environmental Taxes

Mr. Watts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the impact of environmental taxes *(a)* on manufacturing industries' competitiveness and *(b)* energy prices. [224017]

John Healey: The Government assesses the impact of environmental taxes against a range of social, economic and environmental factors, including impacts on competitiveness and energy prices, in the annual Budget process. As part of this, the Government have published an independent evaluation by Cambridge Econometrics of the climate change levy. This considers the environmental impact of the levy as well as its impact on the economy and energy prices. Copies are available from the House of Commons Library or the Customs and Excise website.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Joint Committee (ECC-Switzerland) on the simplification of inspections and formalities (and working party) met; when and where these meetings took place; which UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217256]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

The EEC-Switzerland Facilitation of Controls and Formalities in Goods Transport Joint Committee meets annually in October. It met once under the Italian presidency, and once under the Dutch, both times in Brussels. The European Commission represented the European Community. No UK Government expert was present.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the EEC—European Free Trade Association Joint Committee and working parties met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217924]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

There is no Committee with such a title. However, the Joint Committee of the European Economic Area, which is responsible for the ongoing management of the EEA Agreement, met on the following dates during the Italian, Dutch and Irish presidencies: in 2003 on 11 July, 26 September, 7 November, and 5 December. In 2004 it met on 6 February, 19 March, 23 April, 4 June, 9 July, 24 September, 29 October, and 3 December.

The Joint Committee is assisted by four sub-committees. Subcommittee I met in 2003 on 1 July, 16 September, 14 October, and 25 November. In 2004 it met on 27 January, 2 March, 30 March, 11 May, 22 June, 14 September, 19 October, and 16 November. Subcommittee II met in 2003 on 2 July, 17 September, 15 October, and 26 November. In 2004 it met 29 January, 4 March, 1 April, 13 May, 24 June, 16 September, 21 October and 18 November. Subcommittee III met in 2003 on 4 July, 19 September, 17 October and 28 November. In 2004 it met on 29 January, 4 March, 1 April, 13 May, 24 June, 16 September, 21 October and 18 November. Subcommittee IV met in 2003 on 3 July, 16 September, 16 October and 27 November. In 2004 it met on 29 January, 4 March, 1 April, 13 May, 24 June, 16 September, 21 October and 18 November.

All meetings took place in Brussels. The European Commission represents the European Community—UK Government experts do not normally attend.

TRANSPORT

Air Travellers (Financial Protection)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with consumer organisations about the future of air traveller financial protection. [224613]

Charlotte Atkins: The Department has consulted widely with relevant stakeholders on the future financial protection of air travellers including the Air Transport Users' Council.

The Department, in conjunction with the Civil Aviation Authority, held two industry stakeholder meetings to inform interested parties, including the Air Transport Users' Council, of the approach being taken to the economic modelling being undertaken to assess the impact of a range of options for the future financial protection of air travellers.

East Midlands Airport

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with the *(a)* Civil Aviation Authority and *(b)* management of Nottingham East Midlands airport about the noise and air pollution effects of the two new flight paths over Leicestershire in and out of the airport. [224351]

Charlotte Atkins: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has primary responsibility for assessing airspace change proposals, in accordance with Directions and Guidance issued to them by the Secretary of State. Written details of the proposed new routes at Nottingham East Midlands airport (NEMA) were

supplied to the Department, along with a detailed environmental assessment, and representatives from the CAA attended meetings with me and with my predecessor on this matter. The management of NEMA also presented the proposals to a meeting of local Members of Parliament, convened by my predecessor.

Government Transport Adviser (Aviation)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what appointments procedure was followed for the appointment of Mr Rod Eddington as a transport adviser to the Government on aviation. [224163]

Charlotte Atkins: The Secretary of State for Transport and the Chancellor have appointed Rod Eddington to advise them on the longer-term impact of transport decisions on the UK's productivity, stability and growth.

Lighthouses

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what contracts his Department has for maintenance work to be undertaken by *(a)* the Trinity House Lighthouse Service, *(b)* the Northern Lighthouse Board and *(c)* the Irish Lights; and what the financial value is of each. [224602]

Mr. Jamieson: The General Lighthouse Authorities do not have any contracts to undertake maintenance work in the UK or Ireland for the Department for Transport.

Trinity House Lighthouse Service does, however, carry out residual statutory responsibilities for the Colonial Lighthouse Service on behalf of the Department.

M6 Toll Road

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to announce the results of his consultation on the proposed new M6 Toll Road between Birmingham and Manchester; and if he will make a statement. [224177]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government is considering the response to the consultation and will respond in due course.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency Budget

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency budget was for *(a)* coastguards, *(b)* ship inspectors, *(c)* depots and *(d)* emergency towing vessels in each year since it was established. [224603]

Mr. Jamieson: The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's expenditure is set out in the following table:

Percentage

	Coastguard	*Ship inspectors*	*Accommodation*	*Emergency towing vessels*
Resource accounts				
2003–04	13	6	6	10
2002–03	13	5	6	11
2001–02	13	5	6	7

Percentage

	Coastguard	*Ship inspectors*	*Accommodation*	*Emergency towing vessels*
Cash accounts				
2000–01	14	5	8	8
1999–2000	15	6	8	7
1998–99	13	7	7	5

The resource accounts figures include depreciation and capital charge which are not included within the cash accounts outturns.

New Transport Schemes

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what conditions his Department has set on the £1 billion offered to West Midlands local authorities for new transport schemes. [224734]

Charlotte Atkins: My colleague the Minister of State for Transport (Tony McNulty) wrote to the West Midlands Regional Assembly on 9 July 2003 setting out the Secretary of State's response to the West Midlands Area Multi-Modal Study. In that letter, the full text of which is available at http://www.go-wm.gov.uk/MultiModal/mms/wm, he set out the terms under which the Secretary of State would be prepared to consider making available up to £1 billion of capital funding for the West Midlands conurbation.

Operation Stack

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to replace Operation Stack on the M20; and if he will make a statement. [224453]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency is reviewing what improvements may be possible in the short and long term to reduce delays and disruption for travellers. These options include the modified use of Operation Stack, with and without contraflow working on the M20 London bound carriageway, and a possible lorry park for use as a holding area for HGVs waiting to travel to the continent.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of journeys affected by Operation Stack on the M20. [224457]

Mr. Jamieson: During 2004 Kent police activated Operation Stack on six occasions. Between 27 January and 29 March 2005 it has been necessary to implement Operation Stack on 17 occasions because of the difficulties with the docking facilities in Calais and the effects of industrial action in France.

Kent police do not hold detailed records that show how many vehicles have actually been affected by the implementation of Operation Stack. However, there are approximately 23,000 vehicles per day travelling on the M20 between Junctions 11 and 12 on the coastbound carriageway (Phase one of Operation Stack) and approximately 30,000 vehicles per day travelling between Junctions eight and nine on the coastbound (Phase two of Operation Stack). When Operation Stack

is implemented a large proportion of these vehicles would have to alter their route, change their travel plans and may experience a delay to their journey.

Transport Access (Disabled)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make it his policy to extend anti-discrimination legislation to make all public transport accessible to disabled people. [224539]

Charlotte Atkins: The Government are committed to an accessible public transport system in which disabled people have the same opportunities to travel as other members of society. We have already introduced regulations under part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to make all new trains, buses and coaches accessible and have announced our proposals for taxis. However, although associated infrastructure is covered, transport services are currently exempt from part 3 of the DDA which covers access to goods, services and facilities. The Government consider that to be an untenable position.

Measures have been included in the Disability Discrimination Bill currently being considered by Parliament to allow for the removal of that exemption through regulations. We have completed consultation on draft regulations which would cover public transport—trains (including light rail, underground and trams), buses, coaches, taxis and private hire—vehicle hire, breakdown services and vehicles used in leisure and tourism transport services. Subject to the passage of the Bill, we intend to lift the exemption for those services in December 2006.

Transport Knowledge Partnership

Dr. Moonie: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions his Department has had with the Department for International Development on the setting up of the Transport Knowledge Partnership; and if he will make a statement. [224104]

Mr. McNulty: The Department for Transport has not had discussions with the Department for International Development (DFID) on this issue. The global Transport Knowledge Partnership is an international initiative to increase the capacity of developing countries to share and apply knowledge and information for sustainable transport. DFID supports the initiative and has committed up to £2 million to it over a period of four years.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Middle East

18. **Helen Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is encouraging the EU to take to further the middle east peace process. [224401]

Mr. Rammell: We continue to work closely with the EU and other Quartet members on middle east peace process issues. The Commission and other EU partners attended the London Meeting on 1 March, and have been active in work to follow up that meeting. We will continue to support the work of the Commission, along with the World Bank and US, in their efforts to assist the Palestinian Authority implement its programme of reforms.

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the transfer of Palestinian towns to the control of the Palestinian authorities. [224406]

Mr. Rammell: The transfer of five West Bank cities to Palestinian Authority control is progressing as agreed at Sharm al-Sheikh. The handover of Jericho took place on 16 March, and that of Tulkarem on 21 March. We welcome the transfers and the improved security cooperation between the Israelis and Palestinians.

23. **Martin Linton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli Prime Minister concerning the expansion of settlements on the West Bank. [224407]

Mr. Rammell: We have frequently made clear to the Israeli Government our view that settlements are illegal under international law. The roadmap requires that Israel freeze settlement expansion and dismantle outposts erected since March 2001. My noble Friend Baroness Symons made representations on this issue to the Israeli ambassador on 23 March.

Darfur

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact of the continuing conflict in Darfur on the North-South Sudanese peace deal. [224408]

Mr. Mullin: Full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) is vital for peace in the whole of Sudan, including Darfur. However, the full benefits of a peace dividend for Sudan, including progress on debt relief, will not be realised until the conflict in Darfur is resolved. We are therefore pressing the parties in Darfur to negotiate a political settlement, consistent with the CPA.

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to persuade the Government of Sudan to allow access to conflict-affected populations in Darfur by non-governmental organisations and human rights organisations. [224346]

Mr. Mullin: We regularly discuss with both the Government of Sudan and the rebels the importance of access for all non-governmental organisations throughout Darfur. Our Ambassador raised this matter with the Government on 21 March and I discussed this with the Secretary General of the Sudanese Liberation Movement on 22 March. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary secured access for human rights groups, including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, in August 2004. Lack of security is the key factor hampering access throughout Darfur. We have made it clear to the Government and the rebels that they must abide by their commitments under Abuja humanitarian and security protocols and improve the situation in Darfur.

Anti-Semitism

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on Government-funded monitoring of anti-Semitic incitement in *(a)* the Middle East and *(b)* Eastern Europe. [224122]

Mr. Rammell: The UK is committed to tackling discrimination and intolerance, including anti-Semitism. Incitement against any community may result in an increase in racial, religious or national tension.

As part of its efforts to combat incitement, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is funding a project with the NGO index on censorship and BBC monitoring, to monitor incidents where the media has been either inciting conflict or raising tension, including on anti-Semitic grounds. The project, which began in 2004 and is expected to run for four years, focuses on four regions, including Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

The outputs of the monitoring can serve as early warning of increasing tensions in a given region; and to highlight areas where action is needed by Governments or civil society to tackle hate speech and incitement.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made regarding anti-Semitic incitement to the Governments of *(a)* Iran, *(b)* Lebanon, *(c)* Syria and *(d)* Egypt. [224127]

Mr. Rammell: We remain deeply concerned at continuing anti-Israel and anti-Semitic rhetoric from senior figures in the Iranian regime. Senior UK officials discussed this most recently with representatives of Iran's Supreme National Security Council on 2 February 2005. We have also pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to address international concerns about Iran's links to groups undermining the Middle East Peace Process through violence.

We have raised the issue of anti-Semitism with the Lebanese, Syrian and Egyptian authorities in the past, but have not had occasion to do so recently.

Botswana

Donald Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the high commission in Gaborone has made to the Botswanan authorities concerning the threatened deportation of Professor Ken Good; and if he will make a statement on *(a)* academic freedom and *(b)* respect for human rights in Botswana. [218980]

Mr. Mullin: Professor Good is an Australian national; as such, consular assistance is being provided by the Australian high commission in Pretoria. It is not our practice to offer consular assistance to foreign nationals.

We have made clear to the authorities in Botswana, through our high commission in Gaborone, the importance that we attach to academic freedom and respect for human rights.

Correspondence

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood of 21 February concerning refusal of a visit visa to Miss Sinclair Deona Marie, Case Ref KGN 64392. [223855]

Mr. Mullin: A reply to my right hon. Friend will be sent shortly. I apologise for the delay.

Cote d'Ivoire

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the UN and *(b)* France regarding (i) the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire and (ii) the long-term strength of UN and French peacekeeping forces stationed there. [224486]

Mr. Mullin: The UN Security Council discussed the situation in Côte d'Ivoire on 28 March, including the UN Secretary-General's proposal to reinforce the UN mission there. Council members are now discussing the renewal of the mandates of the UN and French forces in Côte d'Ivoire. We remain in close touch with our French counterparts in Paris, New York and Abidjan and with the UN Secretariat in New York about the security situation and the future mandates of the UN and French forces.

Cotonou Agreement

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the proposed inclusion of weapons of mass destruction clauses in the Cotonou agreements between the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific states. [223943]

Mr. MacShane: The Cotonou Agreement covers many aspects of the EU's relationship with the ACP group—trade, aid and political dialogue. The EU has agreed that such mixed agreements should reflect our common interest in non-proliferation of WMD as an issue of political dialogue. The EU has told the African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP) that

> "financial and technical assistance in the area of counter proliferation of WMD will be financed from instruments other than those intended for the financing of ACP-EC cooperation"

i.e. not from the European Development Fund or other EC thematic development lines.

Cyprus

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many properties built on occupied and misappropriated Greek Cypriot owned land in the northern part of the island of Cyprus have been purchased by citizens of the United Kingdom. [224357]

Mr. MacShane: The Government does not have access to that information. It is a matter for private individuals, acting upon appropriately qualified legal advice.

However, I welcome this opportunity to give further publicity to the relevant advice on our website (www.fco.gov.uk), to the effect that:

"Before purchasing property anywhere in Cyprus you are strongly advised to seek independent qualified legal advice.

Property issues are closely linked to the political situation. The non-recognition of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' and the possibility of a future political settlement in Cyprus could have significant practical or financial implications for those considering buying property in the north. There is also a risk that purchasers would face legal proceedings in the courts of the Republic of Cyprus. Separately, there are specific rules for foreigners purchasing property in the north and you should ensure you are fully aware of these."

Departmental Structures

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 215W, on departmental structures, how many staff there are in the Presidency Unit within the Europe Directorate; and what the unit's *(a)* programme budget and *(b)* staffing budget is in 2005–06. [224316]

Mr. MacShane: The Presidency Team in the European Directorate currently consists of 12 members of staff. A thirteenth is being recruited to reach our full complement to meet projected staffing requirements for the duration of the Presidency. Staffing for the unit is being covered through re-prioritisation but is costed at £438,692 for financial year 2005–06.

Although budget allocations are yet to be finalised, the budget for programme spend is currently projected to be £6,732,000 in 2005–06.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 216W, on departmental structures, what the *(a)* remit, *(b)* programme budget and *(c)* staffing budget for 2005–06 are of (i) the EU Economic Reform and Analysis Unit, (ii) the Agenda 2007 Unit, (iii) the International Trade Team and (iv) the EU Forward Planning Unit. [224317]

Mr. MacShane: The Economic Reform and Agenda 2007 Units are principally charged with winning support among our EU partners for UK views on, respectively, European economic reform and the EU's future financing negotiations (Agenda 2007). These two units and the Forward Planning Unit are also responsible, between them, for the UK's bilateral relations with Ireland and with the five new EU member states from central Europe. The Forward Planning Unit is, in addition, responsible for relations with the EU institutions. The International Trade Team's principal task is winning support among EU and World Trade Organisation partners for the UK's international trade policy objectives. All four units work closely with other Government Departments.

Staffing levels in the different units vary as staff arrive and depart and they are moved to priority work. But the current staffing budgets for the units, based on average grade costs, are:

£

	Staffing budgets
EU Economic Reform and Analysis Unit	191,000
Agenda 2007 Unit	195,000
International Trade Team	186,000
EU Forward Planning Unit	159,000

None of the units currently has a free-standing programme budget.

EU Presidency

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 592W, on the EU presidency, what public-facing activities the Government plan to undertake in relation to the UK presidency of the EU. [224635]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are committed to informing and involving the public on the Government's policies and issues relating to the UK presidency of the EU.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office plan to be involved in a range of public communication activities during the presidency including the presidency website, regional advertising, leaflets, public discussions and media relations. These activities are currently in the planning stages but all UK presidency events will be listed on the official website.

Other Government Departments are responsible for organising their own communication activities relating to their policies during the presidency.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 592W, on the EU presidency, if he will make a statement on the types of public information that the Government intend to provide in relation to the UK presidency of the EU. [224636]

Mr. MacShane: The Government are committed to providing public information during our presidency. We plan to provide information relating to the presidency and its priorities through the official website (including documents, statements and speeches), as well as more proactive communication such as advertising, leaflets and media relations.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 592W, on the EU presidency, which team within his Department's Europe Directorate will be responsible for the budget for provision of public information on the UK presidency of the EU. [224637]

Mr. MacShane: A dedicated resource unit within the presidency team of the EU Directorate at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has been set up with responsibility for managing the FCO's presidency budget.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 592W, on the EU presidency, if he will break down the costs of the UK presidency of the EU by activity. [224638]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply of 21 March in which I said that final figures are not yet available for 2005–06. However, using provisional allocations where necessary, spending over the 18-month planning period and the 6-month operational period of the presidency currently breaks down as follows:

£

	Spending
Official meetings (including the Gymnich and European councils)	5.91 million
Administration (including human resources and training)	3.85 million
Official presidency website	388,000
Public information and communication	350,000
Total provisional budget	10.56 million

There may be some variation in final spending patterns.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 592W, on the EU presidency, what the budget was for public-facing activities for the previous UK presidency of the EU. [224639]

Mr. MacShane: Expenditure for public-facing activities for the previous UK presidency of the EU in 1998 is recorded as being £521,359.35.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what factors informed his choice for the question in the referendum on the EU Constitution. [214335]

Mr. MacShane: The question was drafted bearing in mind the Electoral Commission's published guidelines, which are designed to ensure that a question is intelligible. The Electoral Commission's published views on the noble Lord, Lord Blackwell's Private Member's Bill of July 2004 were also taken into account. The wording of the question was agreed collectively at ministerial level.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect, when compared with existing rules, of the new qualified majority voting rules contained within the EU Constitutional Treaty on the ability of the UK Government to prevent EU legislation being passed. [224270]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not believe the new voting arrangements in the EU Constitutional Treaty represent a significant change in the UK or other member states' powers. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Commentary on the Treaty (Cm 6459) provides a detailed analysis in the changes in voting rules which would be introduced by the EU Constitutional Treaty if it were to come into force. In addition, the treaty would give national parliaments a direct say in the EU's law-making procedures for the first time.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of the changes to the qualified majority voting rules of the EU within the Constitutional Treaty in terms of Coleman's measure of the power to block legislation. [224272]

Mr. MacShane: None. The implications of the new voting rules were fully and properly assessed with regard to UK interests, including the UK interest in the effective operation of the EU.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is his policy that failure by *(a)* the UK, *(b)* France and *(c)* the Netherlands to ratify the Constitution for Europe should lead to a presumption that that State (i) would and (ii) should withdraw from the European Union. [224273]

Mr. MacShane: No. That will depend on each member state.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Central Office of Information regarding public information on the Constitution for Europe. [224313]

Mr. MacShane: In line with normal government practice, the Central Office of Information has been commissioned by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to work with them on their on-going communications work on the EU and the proposed EU Constitutional Treaty.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 219W, on the European Constitution, what the *(a)* civil service grades and *(b)* job description are of the 14 members of the EU Constitution team within his Department's Europe Directorate. [224314]

Mr. MacShane: Further to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Luton North (Mr. Hopkins) on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 220W, following normal recruitment procedures there are now 15 staff in the EU Constitution Team. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office grades are:

1 × D7; 2 × D6; 1 × C5; 4 × C4; 3 × B3; 2 × A2; 2 × Al.

The team consists of a Team Leader, a Policy and Communications Manager, a Bill Manager, an officer responsible for communications strategy, three officers responsible for communications, publications and policy, an officer responsible for the EU Bill, an officer responsible for Parliament, an officer responsible for regional visits and media and an officer responsible for polling. There are four support officers at the Band A grade.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 219W, on the European Constitution, how he intends to

estimate public demand for distribution of the text of the EU Constitutional Treaty; and what assessment he has made of the cost of such a distribution. [224315]

Mr. MacShane: The text of the EU Constitutional Treaty and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Commentary on the Treaty are available free at www.europe.gov.uk. The full text and commentary have also been made available to all central libraries in the UK, and are available to members of the public on request from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. No assessment has yet been made of demand for further distribution and related costs.

Joyce Quin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts regarding the progress being made in EU national Parliaments towards ratification of the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe. [224402]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I continue to have informal discussions with his EU counterparts on the progress being made in EU national Parliaments towards ratification of the EU constitutional treaty.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what forthcoming publications relating to the EU constitution are planned by his Department. [224634]

Mr. MacShane: Decisions have not yet been made on forthcoming publications on the EU constitutional treaty. Current publications relating to the treaty include the Guide to the EU and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Commentary on the Treaty and are available at www.europe.gov.uk.

European Council

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the European Council has taken decisions by majority vote since 1997. [224640]

Mr. MacShane: No.

Free Press

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policy is on the promotion of a free press overseas. [224687]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) continues to work both bilaterally and with our international partners to promote freedom of expression. We do this through lobbying on individual cases and wider human rights issues, and through projects supported through the Global Opportunities Fund.

The FCO's Freedom of Expression Panel, which I chair, includes representatives of NGOs, academic experts and legal and media professionals. It meets regularly to provide expert advice and guidance to the FCO. The panel has sub-groups working on hate speech; safety and risk management for media professionals; public sector broadcasting laws and imprisoned journalists/writers. Further details of FCO work on this subject can be found in the FCO's Annual Report on Human Rights 2004 (Command Paper Cm 6364), a copy of which is available in the Library of the House, and which can be found on the FCO website, www.fco.gov.uk.

Galileo Navigation System

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the United States Administration regarding the European Union's Galileo navigation system. [223951]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has had no discussions with the US Administration regarding Galileo. However officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and other Government Departments are regularly in touch with their US counterparts on Galileo—contacts were particularly frequent in the run-up to the EU-US Agreement on Galileo of June last year. The Department for Transport is the lead Government Department for Galileo.

Iran

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on relations with Iran. [224404]

Mr. Rammell: Our policy towards Iran remains one of constructive, but critical and conditional, engagement. The European Union has made clear that the development of its relations with Iran is possible only on the basis of action by Iran to address political concerns, in areas such as its nuclear programme, human rights record, approach to terrorism, and attitude to the middle east peace process.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what account was taken of Article 64 of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the appointment of the Iraqi Special Tribunal. [220813]

Mr. Rammell: Article 64 of the Fourth Geneva Convention would not apply to the establishment of the Iraq Special Tribunal (IST) or any appointment of the IST because it was established by the Iraqi Governing Council and not by an Occupying Power. It is part of the Iraqi criminal justice system and comprises of Iraqi judges.

Irish Lights

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has received from the Northern Ireland Office regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [224598]

Mr. MacShane: None.

Israel

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has

had with the Israeli authorities on the plans of the Israeli Government to build more homes on the West Bank. [224051]

Mr. Rammell: We have made frequent representations to the Israeli government expressing our concern over continued settlement activity. We have made clear our view that settlements are illegal under international law. The Roadmap requires that Israel freeze all settlement expansion and dismantle outposts erected since March 2001. Most recently my right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met the Israeli Ambassador in London on 23 March. Baroness Symons expressed our concern at Israel's plans to build 3,500 more homes between the West Bank settlement of Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem.

Middle East

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment his Department has made of the political impact on *(a)* Jordan, *(b)* Syria, *(c)* Israel, *(d)* Palestine and *(e)* Iran of the recent conflict in Iraq. [223942]

Mr. Rammell: We closely monitor the political situation in the Middle East. The fall of Saddam Hussein's regime removed the threat he posed to Iraq's neighbours.

For Syria, the conflict gave rise to the movement of numbers of Iraqis across Syria's borders. There is evidence that some Syrian extremists have travelled to Iraq to take part in the insurgency. Syria appears to be the principal route for insurgents entering Iraq and continues to support former Iraqi regime elements who are based in Syria. We have repeatedly raised our concerns about these issues with the Syrian Government, and will continue to do so.

For Iran, the removal of Saddam's Government has created an opportunity to re-establish Iran/Iraq relations on a more positive footing. A stable and prosperous Iraq is in the best interests of Iran as well as the wider region. We have encouraged Iran to play a constructive role and to support Iraqi efforts to preserve security. We have made clear our concern at the alleged links between elements of the Iranian regime and armed groups in Iraq who have sought to undermine the rule of law.

For Jordan, the conflict gave rise to the movement of numbers of Iraqis across Jordan's borders. Since the conflict ended, Jordan has provided political support and practical assistance to Iraq.

The conflict has had less direct effect on Israel and Palestine, although a source of funds for some Palestinian groups has dried up with the removal of Saddam Hussein. In recent months the Israeli and Palestinian focus has been directed internally towards the Palestinian elections and disengagement.

Successful elections were held in Iraq on 30 January. The formation of a democratically elected Iraqi Government should have a further positive impact on stability in the region.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what programmes his Department is undertaking to promote political reform in the Middle East. [224128]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's main programme tool for supporting reform in the Middle East is the Engaging with the Islamic World programme under the Global Opportunities Fund. It currently supports 44 programmes in the Middle East and North Africa region. From this financial year we are doubling the programme's budget to £8.5 million. We also have a number of other programmes, such as the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, sponsored themed visits and scholarships, which contribute to our policy of supporting regionally-led reform.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the work of the EU on *(a)* governmental transparency and *(b)* anti-corruption mechanisms in the Middle East; and if he will make a statement. [224628]

Mr. MacShane: My Department has made no specific assessment of the work of the EU on governmental transparency and anti-corruption mechanisms in the Middle East. But the UK's national contribution to the 10-year Review of the Barcelona Process argues that the EU and Mediterranean Partner countries should set long-term governance targets in order, among other things, to promote greater transparency in policy making and to counter corruption across the EuroMed region. We believe that such targets should be incorporated into the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans with Mediterranean Partner countries. And we will continue to press the EU to incorporate the principles of the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East as it develops its relations with other countries in the region.

Mr. Nick Baker

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information his Department has received concerning the state of health of Mr. Nick Baker who is in prison in Japan; and what discussions *(a)* he and *(b)* his officials have had with Japanese officials concerning Mr. Baker's case. [224449]

Mr. Mullin: Our embassy in Japan and the Consular Directorate in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) are monitoring Mr. Baker's case closely, including his state of health. Embassy officials have discussed health issues with Mr. Baker during consular visits and raised them with Japanese officials where necessary. For reasons of consular confidentiality we cannot reveal detailed information about Mr. Baker's health.

The FCO is also monitoring Mr. Baker's appeal against his conviction, which is continuing in the Japanese courts. Embassy officials raise Mr Baker's case with the Japanese authorities whenever appropriate.

The FCO remains in touch with Mr. Baker and his family and will inform them of any developments in his case.

Nuclear Proliferation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the report Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle: Expert Group Report, submitted to the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, INFCIRC/640, 22 February; and whether he plans to adopt its recommendations in United Kingdom submissions to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May in New York. [224003]

Mr. MacShane: The report represents a preliminary assessment of the options for strengthening the proliferation resistance of the civil nuclear fuel cycle, while assuring supply of fuel for peaceful civil nuclear purposes: We believe it is a valuable contribution to the debate. We will, as the report recommends, be investigating the practicality, feasibility and usefulness of the approaches it sets out. We will continue to take an active part in the debate.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the oral answer of 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 805, on Iran, which part of Article 2 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty allows the United Kingdom to hold nuclear weapons. [224044]

Mr. MacShane: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, in answer to my hon. Friend's oral question of 1 March, stated that the United Kingdom was allowed to hold nuclear weapons under Article 2 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and that non-nuclear weapon states were defined as such by Article IV of the Treaty. The correct position on the definitions of the articles and our obligations under the treaty articles is set out in my reply to my hon. Friend on 15 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 222–23W.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the United Kingdom has made representations to any non-nuclear weapons states in respect of the development or operation of *(a)* spent nuclear fuel reprocessing plants, *(b)* uranium enrichment plants and *(c)* separated plutonium stores. [224045]

Mr. MacShane: The UK, as a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), upholds the inalienable right of non-nuclear weapon states to the peaceful use of nuclear energy under Article IV of the Treaty, in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. The UK also seeks to uphold, and is committed to, all other Articles of the Treaty. It actively participates in and promotes, in the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and other relevant for a such as the G8, compliance with the international nuclear non-proliferation obligations set out in the NPT and other international instruments.

Syria/Lebanon

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of whether Syria's recent troop deployment is compliant with United Nations Security Council resolution 1559; and if he will make a statement. [224125]

Mr. Rammell: The ongoing redeployment of Syrian troops to the Beka'a Valley and withdrawal of some to Syria is a first step in the implementation of UNSCR 1559. Among other terms, the resolution requires all Syrian forces, including intelligence and security personnel, to withdraw from Lebanon. The Government notes the undertaking made by Syrian Foreign Minister Shara'a's letters of 29 March 2005 to the UN Secretary General and the President of the UN Security Council to withdraw all Syrian troops from Lebanon by May.

Uranium Enrichment Facilities

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the possibility of limiting uranium enrichment and reprocessing plants to countries that already have the facilities. [223320]

Mr. MacShane: The Government is committed to ensuring that sensitive nuclear items, such as enrichment and reprocessing plants, which have clear proliferation potential, are not exported to states that may seek to use them for weapons purposes.

Recognising this, the UK is committed to strengthening the Nuclear Suppliers Group Guidelines, which control the export of such equipment, with a series of tough criteria that a recipient state must adhere to in order to receive such transfers. This will provide suppliers of nuclear items with adequate assurances that transferred items will not be used for non-peaceful purposes. The criteria are relevant whether or not the recipient state is in possession of equipment and reprocessing facilities.

Western Sahara

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with the *(a)* UN, *(b)* Polisaro Front and *(c)* Government of Morocco on holding a referendum on the future of the Western Sahara. [224597]

Mr. Rammell: UK officials hold regular discussions with the parties to the Western Sahara dispute and UN officials. These focus on ensuring that the UN process leads to a fair and lasting solution to this dispute that provides the people of the Western Sahara with an opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination.

Written Ministerial Statements

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has concluded his discussions with ministerial colleagues on the provision of written ministerial statements prior to and following all Council of Ministers' meetings to provide details of the meeting's agenda and its outcomes; and if he will make a statement. [224109]

Mr. MacShane: After consultation with ministerial colleagues, I made proposals to provide written ministerial statements prior to and following all Council of Ministers meetings to the chairs of the Commons European Scrutiny and Lords EU Select Committees. The proposals were generally well-received.

I am now in the process of reporting back the Committees' views to ministerial colleagues. I will announce any new initiative for reporting on Council of Ministers meetings by way of a written ministerial statement.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter dated 16 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to John Gilburn. [224361]

Mr. Caborn: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 3 April.

Digital Switchover

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance the Department plans to give to those on low incomes to obtain the necessary equipment in advance of digital switchover. [224098]

Estelle Morris: As the Charter Review Green Paper makes clear, the vast majority of citizens will need only a source of good information to help them through switchover. However, we are working with the BBC and others to assess the scope of measures required to ensure the interests of the most vulnerable customers are protected.

Licensing

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the application of the provisions of the Licensing Act 2003 to alcohol wholesalers who rent their business space. [224368]

Mr. Caborn: Under the 2003 Act, sales of alcohol which are made to traders for the purposes of their trade, including another wholesaler, or to holders of club premises certificates, premises licences or personal licences, or premises users who have given temporary event notices for the purpose of making sales authorised by these permissions or notices, are not licensable. However a sale, not in the class above, made to a member of the public, even if in wholesale quantities, will become a licensable activity under the 2003 Act when it is fully operational. A premises licence would therefore be required for the premises where the alcohol is stored prior to despatch if any of the alcohol is to be dispatched to the public, whether or not the business space was rented. In addition under the 2003 Act no supply of alcohol, in retail or wholesale quantities to the public, may be made unless it is made or authorised by a person who holds a personal licence.

UK Sport

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many other public and Government advisory appointments are held by the new Chair of UK Sport. [223695]

Tessa Jowell *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Sue Campbell has since 2000 been a specialist adviser to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as a part-time unremunerated appointment. She holds no other public appointments.

Yorkshire Tourism Board

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much has been granted to the Yorkshire Tourism Board in each year since 1996. [224593]

Mr. Caborn: In 2004–05 Yorkshire Forward provided funding to the Yorkshire Tourist Board of £503,258 to cover its core operational costs.

In 2003–04 the final figure for core operational costs was £685,466.

In addition to core funding, Yorkshire Forward provided funding to the Yorkshire Tourist Board of £217,437 in 2003–04 and £2,360,161 in 2004–05. This was for a range of services including marketing, e-tourism and data.

For the previous years figures I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 21 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 823W.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Antisocial Behaviour Orders (North Yorkshire)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Solicitor-General what recent discussions she has had with the Crown Prosecution Service on breaches of antisocial behaviour orders in North Yorkshire. [224193]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Member to the oral answer I gave on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 999.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effect of the actions and policies of the Law Officers' Department on Blackpool, South constituency since *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2001. [215749]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government has embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained at a constituency level but I can provide information on Lancashire as a whole. The introduction of the statutory charging scheme in June 2004 has already brought benefits in reducing the number of cases which fall out of the system after charge. The figures have fallen from 23.4 per cent. in 2002–03 to 17.2 per cent. in 2004–05 to date.

A Witness Care Unit has been established at Blackpool in furtherance of the No Witness No Justice initiative. This is already having an impact on the number of ineffective trials, particularly in the Crown court.

Lancashire has one of 14 specialist antisocial behaviour prosecutors in the country. The CPS work closely with other agencies to address antisocial behaviour and 37 orders on conviction were granted in Lancashire between November 2004 and February 2005.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Burnley constituency, the effects on Burnley of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [214701]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government has embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained at a constituency level but I can provide information on Lancashire as a whole. The introduction of the statutory charging scheme in June 2004 has already brought benefits in reducing the number of cases which fall out of the system after charge. The figures have fallen from 23.4 per cent. in 2002–03 to 17.2 per cent. in 2004–05 to date.

Three new witness care units have been established in Lancashire, one of which is situated in Burnley. These units are already making a contribution towards the reduction in the percentage of ineffective trials, particularly in the Crown court.

Lancashire has one of 14 specialist antisocial behaviour prosecutors in the country. The CPS work closely with other agencies to address antisocial behaviour and 37 orders on conviction were granted in Lancashire between November 2004 and February 2005. Burnley is one of two new action areas within Lancashire and the specialist prosecutor will be establishing close working relationships with the relevant crime and disorder reduction partnerships, and with Burnley council's community safety department to determine how the CPS can contribute more to reducing antisocial behaviour in the area.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Folkestone and Hythe constituency, the effects on Folkestone and Hythe of the Law Officers' Department policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216027]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government have embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained on a constituency level. For Kent as a whole the statutory charging scheme was introduced in May 2004. This has had a significant impact on the number of cases which fall out of the criminal justice system after charge with an improvement from 18.3 per cent. in 2002–03 to 15.4 per cent. in 2004–05 to date.

Within Kent there are nine Witness Care Units, the introduction of which should have an impact on the numbers of ineffective trials in both the magistrates courts and the Crown court.

Kent has one of 14 specialist antisocial behaviour prosecutors. The prosecutor contributes substantially to inter-agency working and 21 Orders on conviction were granted in Kent between November 2004 and February 2005.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Kingston upon Hull North constituency, the effects on Kingston upon Hull North of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [211806]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government has embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained at constituency level, but within the Humberside area, the introduction of statutory charging in August 2004 has already had an impact, reducing the level of cases which fall out of the system after charge. The current figures for the year to date are 13.3 per cent. as against 17.9 per cent. in 2002–03.

The CPS is also working with other agencies in this area to tackle antisocial behaviour. Between November 2004 and February 2005 16 antisocial behaviour orders on conviction have been granted in Humberside.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Maidenhead constituency, the effects on Maidenhead of the Law Officers' Department policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216028]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government have embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained on a constituency level, but within Thames Valley the statutory charging scheme was adopted in September 2004. This has already had an impact on the number of cases which fall out of the system after charge with an improvement from 29.9 per cent. in 2002–03 to 25.7 per cent. in the current year to date.

Departmental Policies (Preseli Pembrokeshire)

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Preseli Pembrokeshire constituency, the effects on Preseli Pembrokeshire of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [211317]

The Solicitor-General: Since 1997 the Government has embarked on a programme of reform in the criminal justice system to deliver justice for all by convicting and punishing the guilty and helping them to stop offending, while protecting the innocent.

Statistics are not maintained at a constituency level, but within the Dyfed Powys area, the introduction of a statutory charging scheme has already had an impact on the number of cases falling out of the criminal justice system after charge. There has been a reduction from 21.2 per cent. to 17.3 per cent. since 2002–03.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Coastal Action Zone

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment has been made of the impact of the Coastal Action Zone initiative in East Lincolnshire; and if he will make a statement. [224489]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Lord Rooker was involved in the formal launch of the Coastal Action Zone (CAZ) at Whitehall in December 2004.

I understand that since then the CAZ members have been considering priorities and potential activities. Officials from the Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM) are involved in these discussions. It is very much early days. No impact assessment has been made by the Government but GOEM continue to follow developments with interest.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223430]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Member for East Ham (Mr. Timms) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many regulations have been repealed by his Department since 1st October 2004. [224617]

Yvette Cooper: 33 Regulations or Orders classified as general have been wholly revoked and five have been partially revoked.

Firefighters' Pensions

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many divorced spouses given a share of a retired firefighter's pension in each of the last three years did not receive it because they were under the qualifying pension age; and how much this saved the pension fund in immediate payments in each year. [224239]

Mr. Raynsford: The firefighters' pensions scheme is administered by individual Fire and Rescue Authorities, so this information is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Firelink Radio System

John Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to announce a decision on the selection of a contractor for the Firelink radio system. [224237]

Mr. Raynsford: The announcement is expected in June 2005.

John Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how long after receipt of the best and final offer submission from the bidding contractors he would expect to wait before making a decision on the selection of a contractor for the Firelink radio system. [224238]

Mr. Raynsford: Upon receipt the best and final offer submissions will be evaluated with a final decision expected in June 2005.

Housing

Mr. Steen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many acres of vacant, dormant, unused and under-utilised land are owned by his Department; and if he will estimate the number of homes that could be built on the land if it was made available. [219681]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has six unused sites which total 1.8 acres. Of these:

One site (0.07 acre) is subject to a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is therefore not available for development.

One site (0.038 acre) is considered too small to have development potential.

Two sites (total 0.42 acre) which are close to each other are surrounded on three sides by roads and motorways. The local authority position is that the land forms a special landscaped area and that development would not be appropriate.

Two sites (total 1.25 acres) are on either side of a motorway. These have development potential and this is being explored.

There has been no estimate made of the number of homes that could be built on these sites.

This answer does not include information pertaining to Government Offices, who carry out functions on behalf of 10 Government Departments.

Local Authority Pension Schemes

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the latest estimate is of the deficit or surplus in each local authority pension scheme. [224674]

Phil Hope: As at 31 March 2001, the most recent date for which the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has full actuarial valuation data for the Local Government Pension Scheme, pension funds in England and Wales held assets some £6.3 billion less than their liabilities. The results of the actuarial valuation carried out for each local authority pension fund as at 31 March 2004 are not yet available.

Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications for *(a)* Traveller migration to the UK, *(b)* demand for

Traveller sites and *(c)* unauthorised encampments of the introduction of changes in the law of trespass in the Irish Republic. [223936]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's bi-annual Count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in England, and the annual count of Traveller families in the Republic of Ireland carried out by the Irish Government, do not indicate that there has been a significant population shift since the introduction of the legislative changes in the Republic, which took effect in 2002.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether she will publish the data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of her Department; and if she will make a statement. [222585]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills does not currently publish accident data.

Autism

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what provisions her Department makes to assist children with autism in schools. [224088]

Margaret Hodge: It is for individual schools to decide how best to make provision for children with autism. The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice advises schools and local education authorities (LEAs) that children's needs should be assessed individually and that provision should address the particular needs of the individual child. It gives advice to schools on making provision for children with SEN, including those with autism.

The Department for Education and Skills, together with the Department of Health, has issued good practice guidance on making provision for children with autistic spectrum disorders which aims to raise awareness of autism. Nine of the 11 SEN regional partnerships have working groups focusing on improving provision for children with autism in their areas, using the good practice guidance. The regional partnerships have also been producing other autism guidance, including guidance on delivering the curriculum for children with autism in secondary schools, a transition toolkit for children with autism moving from primary to secondary school, and guidance for learning support assistants.

Over recent years many LEAs have used available funding to support in-service training on autism. As part of the Government's SEN strategy, published last year, the Department is working with the Teacher Training Agency to develop proposals for improving training in relation to SEN, including autism. An inclusion development programme is also being developed to strengthen the evidence base about what works in educating children with autism and build a consensus about how to implement good practice most effectively.

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children with autism there were in schools in Norfolk in each month since January 2002, broken down by *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools. [224096]

Margaret Hodge: Information on pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and their primary need was collected in the Annual Schools' Census for the first time in January 2004 for pupils at School Action Plus and those with a statement of SEN. In Norfolk local education authority maintained primary schools reported having approximately 310 pupils and maintained secondary schools reported 130 pupils whose primary need was autistic spectrum disorder.

The purpose of the data collection is to inform policy and planning, to study trends and to monitor the outcomes of initiatives and interventions on pupils with different types of SEN, not to classify individuals, or assigning children by type of need. We are aware that some schools had difficulty in identifying a child's primary need and where appropriate their secondary need. Also professionals from education and health fields may classify some children differently; and the levels of identification of SEN are varied between local authorities.

Children's Commissioner

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role the Children's Commissioner for England will play in improving children's health services; and what information sources will be available to the Commissioner to assess children's health services. [223559]

Margaret Hodge: The Children's Commissioner's remit is as set out in the Children Act 2004. He will promote awareness of the views and interests of children and young people; working as an independent champion, with a strategic role which gives him wide scope and influence in advancing their interests. As part of this function, he may choose to consider or research any matter, relating to the interests of children, including the improvement of children's health services. He also has an inquiry function which means that when he considers that the case of an individual child raises questions of relevance to children generally, he may hold an inquiry into that case.

He is independent of Government and if he chooses to deal with health services, it will be up to him how he exercises this duty and what arrangements he will make. As in all his work, whether the Commissioner holds an inquiry or considers an issue, he will exercise impartiality at all times.

The Government look forward to supporting the Children's Commissioner whenever they can to aid him in his work. We will make available to him any information that we are permitted to, in order to help him discharge his functions. This will include anything related to health services.

Computer Learning (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer-learning centres have been established in Crosby. [223944]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information has been supplied by Ufi who took over responsibility for administration and development of Capital Modernisation Fund (CMF) funded UK online centres in April 2003.

There are two UK online centres in Crosby and third on the border between Waterloo and Crosby. See details as follows:

College Road Library
College Road
Crosby
Merseyside
L23 3DP
0151 924 5287
11 UK online workstations

Crosby Connect Learning Centre
Crosby Library and Civic Hall
Crosby Road North
Waterloo
Merseyside
L22 0LQ
0151 257 6408
10 UK online workstations

3TC—Merseyside Third Sector
Technology Centre
16 Crosby Road North
Waterloo
Merseyside
L22 0NY
0151 285 4010
18 UK online workstations (plus 38 additional workstations not funded by CMF)

Construction Industry (Training)

Mr. Hurst: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people were undergoing training in the construction industry in each year from 1975 to 2004. [223896]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information cannot be provided as the cost of gathering the information is disproportionate. However if the hon. Member wishes to write to me I may be able to provide information about specific types of training over some or all of the period in question.

Correspondence

Sir George Young: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for North-West Hampshire of 9 February, on an alleged breach of the Civil Service Code. [224095]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* A reply was sent to the right hon. Member on 31 March.

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many EU *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives covering matters within the responsibility of her Department have been repealed since 1 April 2004. [224574]

Derek Twigg: No EU regulations or directives covering matters within the responsibility of the Department for Education and Skills have been repealed since 1 April 2004.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many regulations have been repealed by her Department since 1 April 2004. [224575]

Derek Twigg: 15 regulations have been repealed by the Department for Education and Skills since 1 April 2004.

Disabled Students

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps her Department is taking to support access to mainstream inclusive education for disabled people. [224540]

Margaret Hodge: The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 amended the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to cover the provision of education. The 2001 Act required local authorities (LAs) and schools not to discriminate against disabled people in their access to education for reasons relating to their disability. It also required LAs and schools to plan to increase progressively, and over time, access to schools by disabled pupils and prospective pupils.

The Government's SEN Strategy: "Removing Barriers to achievement" is providing support to help schools and LAs implement these duties through the development of guidance and practical tools. These tools explain how they can make reasonable adjustments to their policies and practice to prevent discrimination, and how they can review and revise their accessibility strategies and plans.

The Department is also making available £300 million through the Schools Access Initiative between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2006 to cover the first accessibility planning period. This funding is intended to support projects to improve the accessibility of mainstream schools to disabled pupils. It is for LAs to decide the schools at which projects are to be undertaken. We are encouraging schools and LAs to consider access as part of all capital building plans, including through the Building Schools for the Future programme and the recently announced 15 year capital investment programme for Primary Schools.

Education Business Links

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much Learning and Skills Council funding is planned for education business links for 2005–06; and how much was made available in 2004–05. [223666]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funding to support education business links activities is a matter for the LSC. Mark Haysom, the LSC's chief executive, will write to my hon. Friend, and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Families (Grants)

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what grants have been made in the 2005–06 financial year under the Safeguarding Children and Supporting Families grants; to which organisations; and if she will list unsuccessful applications. [222322]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested has been placed in the House Libraries.

Food Provision

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department issues general guidance and advice to local authorities in respect of *(a)* meals on wheels and *(b)* other public provision of food. [223953]

Dr. Ladyman: I have been asked to reply.

The Department does not issue guidance or general advice to local authorities in respect of meals on wheels. This is a matter for local decision and commissioning, taking into account local circumstances and demography.

The Department has just launched the food in schools toolkit to provide guidance and support for schools and those working with schools, including local education authorities (LEAs), in implementing a 'whole school approach' to healthy eating and drinking. In addition, the Department issues guidance to LEA maintained schools on implementing the school fruit and vegetable scheme. Funding for the scheme for 2005–06 is £46 million.

The welfare food scheme (WFS) currently provides tokens for either seven pints of liquid cow's milk or 900 grams of infant formula per week to pregnant women and children under five years old in families on qualifying benefits. "Healthy Start" will replace the existing WFS and will be phased in from summer 2005. We expect that "Healthy Start" expenditure should continue at a similar level to the WFS. The budget is demand-led and current welfare food expenditure is approximately £140 million per annum.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will extend nutrition education and training in food preparation and cooking units to all sector skills councils. [224013]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Improve, the sector skills council for the food and drink industry have responsibility for the national occupational standards related to food preparation. Sector skills councils will address skills issues in the food and cooking industry where this is relevant to their sector. A number of sector skills councils with interests in food and drink manufacture, the crop industry, storage, retail, food preparation, hospitality and other related areas are already working together and have formed the Food Chain Group to address areas of common interest and to share good practice.

Further Education (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students at *(a)* Shrewsbury Sixth Form College and *(b)* Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology paid tuition fees in each year since 1997. [223176]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Immigration and Asylum Skills Body

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when the skills advisory body announced as part of the Home Office strategy for asylum and immigration in Controlling our Borders: making migration work for Britain, is expected to be set up; whether it will have statutory Scottish representation; and if he will make a statement. [223540]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: We will work closely with the Home Office, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Skills for Business Network to set up the new Skills Advisory Body in the course of this year. We are not proposing to place the new body on a statutory footing. It will have Scottish representation.

Looked After Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she has taken to improve the line of accountability of social services departments placing looked after children out of area since the passage of the Children Act 2004. [222068]

Margaret Hodge: Children's services authorities are in the process of appointing the directors of children's services (DCS) and lead members for children's services required under the Children Act 2004. About 60 authorities report that they have a DCS in place or have appointed one; almost as many have designated a lead member. The director and lead member will improve children's services authority accountability for the placement of all looked after children by being, respectively, professionally and politically responsible on behalf of the authority for the safety and welfare of such children.

Although all members of the authority have a shared responsibility for corporate parenting, the lead member will take the lead in ensuring that looked after children have their interests protected, their opportunities maximised, their educational achievement enhanced and their care shaped to meet their needs. Draft statutory guidance, on which we have consulted and which will be published shortly, states explicitly that the lead member should take the local political lead in all corporate parenting issues. The 2004 Act also introduces a new duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children.

The Department is currently conducting a review of local authority practice in placing looked after children in other local authority areas, with a view to both reducing their dependence on such placements and improving support for children who are placed out of

authority. In the meantime, we have written to local authorities to remind them of the importance of ensuring that looked after children are placed out-of-authority only where their assessed needs clearly justify it, and to review their current practice to ensure that they are meeting their existing statutory responsibilities; taking steps to prevent, wherever possible, children being placed away from home (e.g. by developing an adequate supply of good quality local foster and residential care places); and securing good outcomes for children who are placed out-of-authority.

We have also asked the Commission for Social Care Inspection to offer advice on how best they can monitor and assess local authority practice in this area.

National Literacy Strategy

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will describe the synthetic phonics programme in the National Literacy Strategy. [224328]

Derek Twigg: The National Literacy Strategy, now the Primary National Strategy, places a clear and early emphasis on synthetic phonics instruction, reinforced by complementary reading strategies such as context, grammatical knowledge and word recognition. This is in line with the best available international research.

We have produced structured teaching materials for teachers on synthetic phonics entitled "Progression in Phonics" published in 1999, and "Playing with Sounds": a supplement to "Progression in Phonics" published in 2004. Copies of these have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

The approach to the teaching of synthetic phonics advocated by the Primary National Strategy is that children should be taught as quickly as possible to identify, segment and blend phonemes in speech and writing, and that this should be taught directly, and not left to inference or invention. We recommend that synthetic phonics should be taught as a separate set of skills and knowledge within the broader structure of the literacy hour.

The Playing with Sounds programme is designed to support the learning and teaching of synthetic phonics for children from the ages of three to six. It begins with developing children's awareness and discrimination of sounds and supports their progression through segmentation and blending, to an ability to read and spell regular polysyllabic words. The pace at which children are introduced to phonic knowledge through the Playing with Sounds programme is quicker than that set out in the original National Literacy Strategy framework and supports the achievement of the foundation stage early learning goals.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many cues to word recognition are recommended in the Searchlight approach within the National Literacy Strategy; and if she will describe each of these cues. [224329]

Derek Twigg: The National Literacy Strategy is based on the best international research available and supports the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. It advocates a model of teaching reading which has come to be known by the "Searchlights" metaphor. The model characterises reading as the ability to coordinate and orchestrate four basic cues. These are:

Fast automatic phonic decoding

The recognition of word and word parts

Predictions from knowledge of syntax to make sense of strings of words

Predictions from context to aid comprehension.

The Searchlight model is designed to enable the reader to cross-refer between cues, which support each other. The ability to use this range of cues together makes it less critical if one of them fails on any given occasion. However, we promote phonics as the first and foremost strategy that children employ as they encounter new words.

Phonic decoding and instant recognition of high frequency irregular words are the cues employed at the level of word recognition; grammatical knowledge and understanding of context operate at the level of phrases, sentences and text as a whole. Therefore both aspects of the reading process, decoding and comprehension, are represented in the approach and complement each other.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the names are of the officials in her Department responsible for advising her on her response to the Clackmannanshire longitudinal study into the teaching of reading. [224330]

Derek Twigg: Officials in the School Standards Group are responsible for advising the Secretary of State on all aspects of the teaching and learning of literacy in schools. Further details can be obtained from the Civil Service Year Book and the DfES website. In addition, through the National Strategies, we draw on the expertise of a number of practitioners and academics who are constantly responding to and keeping abreast of the latest research. In this capacity Dr. Kevan Collins, Director of the Primary National Strategy, has provided advice to Ministers and officials on the implications of the Clackmannanshire study.

Over time our approach to phonics, which is the subject of the Clackmannanshire study, has been informed by a wide range of experts in the field. In 2003 we convened a seminar of all the leading researchers and practitioners working on phonics issues. The findings of this seminar were independently reviewed and used to inform the development of our most recent guidance on phonics "Playing with Sounds: A supplement to Progression in Phonics".

National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the successful bidders in the 2005 to 2008 round of the National Voluntary Youth Organisation grant scheme, broken down by amount of grant. [224289]

Margaret Hodge: The successful bidders in the 2005–08 NVYO grant scheme are detailed in the following table, together with the amounts awarded for the three-year duration of the scheme.

Name of organisation	£ NVYO grant—three-year total
Academy of Youth, University of the First Age (UFA)	279,443
AFASIC	107,604
African and Caribbean Evangelical Alliance (ACEA)	150,000
Baptist Union of Great Britain	317,866
Barnardo's	97,852
Boys' Brigade	211,142
Brathay Hall Trust	286,167
The British Diabetic Association (Diabetes UK)	131,316
British Red Cross	452,474
British Youth Council	486,430
Centrepoint	174,006
Changemakers Foundation	280,088
Children's Express	146,716
Children's Society	179,802
Church of England Board of Education	421,905
Churches Together In Britain and Ireland (Spectrum)	167,475
Churches Together in England	156,951
Commonwealth Youth Exchange Council	150,000
Community Matters	174,423
The Crusaders	294,258
DEAFAX	150,000
Development Education Association	150,815
Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Award for Young People—Continyou	204,158
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	348,277
Eating Disorders Association (EDA)	47,509
Endeavour Training	688,825
Fairbridge	247,478
Focus	231,888
Girlguiding UK	100,841
Girls' Brigade	174,233
Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets	97,260
Groundwork	208,736
Hope UK	231,830
Inspire Trust	190,904
International Voluntary Service	120,446
In-volve	169,857
Jewish Lads' and Girls' Brigade	340,038
The Leaveners	15,000
Maccabi GB	196,290
Mencap	191,831
Message Trust and Project Caleb	168,201
Methodist Church (MAYC)	251,848
Minorities of Europe	155,303
Muslim Youth Helpline	150,000
NACRO	88,790
National Association of Clubs for Young People	779,641
National Association of Youth Theatres	333,105
National Community Boats Association	123,990
National Deaf Children's Society	179,145
National Federation Young Farmers Clubs	396,000
The National Trust	290,447
National Youth Theatre of GB	280,218
NCVYS	1,108,402
NYA (on behalf of Youth Bank)	215,452
ONE20 trading as Timebank	150,000
Outward Bound Trust	248,487
Peacemaker	184,088
The Prince's Trust	150,000
The Princess Royal Trust for Carers	101,330
Rainer	150,000
Raleigh International	166,509
Rathbone	495,659
Reformed Synagogues of GB (Reform Judaism)	150,060
RSPB	40,982
Rural Youth Network	235,556
Scout Association	309,453
Sense	89,358
Shelter	223,881
Skill	440,706
Student Action for Refugees (STAR)	151,442
Tall Ships Trust	224,404
Time for God	149,963

Name of organisation	£ NVYO grant—three-year total
Trident Trust—Brathay Hall	297,726
UJIA Makor	150,000
UK Youth	694,690
UNICEF UK	306,978
United Reformed Church	150,000
Weston Spirit	193,299
Wildlife Trust	150,000
YMCA	457,789
Youth Access	608,122
Youth Access and Leap Confronting Conflict	150,000
Youth Action Network	150,000
Youth for Christ	235,461
Youth Music Theatre UK	202,193
YWCA England and Wales	486,144

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what criteria were used to assess bids for inclusion in the National Voluntary Youth Organisation grant scheme. [224290]

Margaret Hodge: The criteria by which all decisions on the 160 applications for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) grant scheme were made were explicit in both the application forms and guidance notes, to assist organisations through the application process.

The guidance notes clearly stated that applications should make a strong contribution to the achievement of the outcomes for young people set out in Every Child Matters.

The Department looked for bids that (this was in paragraph 13.2 of the guidance):

- were clearly focused on the outcomes identified in the guidance
- were for activities in line with those identified in the grant criteria
- identified clear and robust outcome indicators that were relevant to the outcomes the bid proposes to deliver
- clearly explained the national significance of the activity being proposed
- were realistic and deliverable

Older Students

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many over 60-year-olds are studying in further education institutes in England. [224335]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is published in the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) statistical first release (SFR), Further Education, Work Based Learning for Young People and Adult and Community Learning—Learner Numbers in England: 2003–04, available on the LSC website: http://www.lsc.gov.uk/National/Partners/Data/Statistics/LearnerStatistics/LearnerNumbers/StatisticalFirstRelease200304.htm

In 2003–04, there were 387,000 learners aged 60 and over in LSC funded further education. This is more than two and a half times greater than the number in 1997–98.

Return-to-work Skills

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Crosby have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [223939]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information has been supplied by Ufi who took over responsibility for administration and development of Capital Modernisation Fund (CMF) funded UK online centres in April 2003.

Ufi is unable to provide the actual number of female users for individual CMF funded UK online centres in the Crosby area (College Road Library, Crosby Connect Learning Centre and 3TC—Merseyside Third Sector Technology Centre) as data at this level is not gathered for individual UK online centres.

However, 52 per cent. of users of UK online centres nationally are women, on average 112 people per quarter use each of the CMF centres, hence on average 58 women per quarter use each CMF centre.

This data is taken from the quarterly report of CMF centres for the quarter ending December 2004. It should be noted that this data only covers CMF centres and only those that still return data (this is about one third of CMF centres). The percentage of users figure and the average number of users figure have been fairly consistent over the last 12 months.

School Meals

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations she has received regarding Jamie Oliver's Feed Me Better campaign; what plans she has to implement the recommendations of the campaign; and if she will make a statement. [223634]

Derek Twigg: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has met with Jamie Oliver to hear about his work in Greenwich, and to inform him of our own work to improve school meals. The Department for Education and Skills has had a large number of letters, e-mails and telephone calls relating to Jamie Oliver's Feed Me Better campaign.

On 30 March the Secretary of State announced a package that will transform school meals in local education authority maintained schools in England. The elements of the package include:

Over the next three years, from September 2005, £220 million of new grants to schools and local education authorities to raise the quality of school meals. The LEA grants will be targeted in part to help primary schools spend a minimum of 50p on ingredients and secondary schools, 60p;

Higher priority to providing new or upgraded kitchen facilities, through our existing programmes to rebuild and refurbish schools. Government are already committed to investing £5.5 billion in 2005–06 rising to £6.3 billion in 2007–08 to improve secondary school buildings, and at least £1.8 billion to improve primary schools in 2007/08;

£60 million to fund the new School Food Trust, with £45 million of this coming from the Big Lottery Fund. The Trust will provide independent support and advice about school meal improvements to schools and parents and will be working with the Lottery on a range of healthy eating programmes based around schools;

Toughening up minimum school lunch nutritional standards to reduce sugar, salt and fat intakes and increase consumption of fruit and vegetables and essential nutrients;

Extending school lunch standards to other food available on school premises, including vending machines and tuck shops;

Producing new guidance to help schools and local education authorities draw up catering contracts that source healthy school meals' services and healthy food in vending machines, tuck shops and breakfast clubs;

A range of qualifications for school catering staff.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research her Department has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect of the content of school meals on rates of obesity in children. [223635]

Derek Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills has not commissioned research or evaluated the effect of the content of school meals on rates of obesity in children.

Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advice she *(a)* has given and *(b)* plans to give to schools on (i) additives in school meals and (ii) vending machines selling food in schools; and if she will make a statement. [224059]

Derek Twigg: The Secretary of State has not given advice to schools on additives in school meals. Subject to meeting the requirements of mandatory school lunch standards, local education authorities are responsible for deciding whether lunches should be free from additives. This responsibility is transferred to the governing body of schools that have a budget for school lunches delegated to them.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is currently carrying out research into the impact of artificial colourings and preservatives on children's behaviour. This Department works closely with FSA and will carefully consider the results of their research, due for publication in March 2007.

DfES and DH have today issued guidance on healthy practice in school vending through the Food in Schools programme. Details can be found on the Food in Schools' website at: www.foodinschools.org/

There is separate guidance on commercial sponsorship, Commercial activities in schools: best practice principles, which was published in 2001 by DfES in conjunction with the Incorporated Society of British Advertisers (ISBA) and the Consumers' Association. The principal aim of this publication, aimed at parents, teachers, school governing bodies, LEAs and businesses was to encourage consideration by all parties of a range of issues and to ensure that commercial objectives are consistent with genuine educational benefits. The guidance is to be updated after consultation over the next few months.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the percentage of school meals provided free at the point of delivery is in

(a) England and *(b)* Hull; what percentage of pupils in primary schools eat school meals in (i) England and (ii) Hull; and if she will make a statement. [224652]

Derek Twigg: The available information is shown in the table. Information on pupils taking school meals is not collected centrally.

Maintained nursery, primary and secondary schools[1]: School meal arrangements[2,3]
England and City of Kingston Upon Hull local education authority (LEA), January 2004

	Maintained nursery and primary		Maintained secondary	
	England	Kingston Upon Hull LEA	England	Kingston Upon Hull LEA
Number on roll	4,293,180	23,760	3,326,800	16,220
Number of pupils taking free school meals[4]	608,760	4,740	351,380	2,620
Percentage of pupils taking free school meals	14.2	19.9	10.6	16.2
Number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	741,150	6,150	477,290	3,840
Percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	17.3	25.9	14.3	23.7

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Includes dually registered pupils and boarding pupils.
[3] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.
[4] Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals that had a free meal on the Census day.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Pupils are recorded as being eligible for free school meals if a claim has been made by them or on their behalf by parents and either the relevant authority has confirmed their eligibility or the school or LEA have seen the necessary documentation. Eligibility requires the parent (or pupil) to be in receipt of either income support, or income-based jobseekers allowance, or support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or Child Tax credit but not working tax credit and have an annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) that does not exceed for 2003–04 Tax Year £13,480.

Section 512 of the Education Act 1996 (EA96), amended by section 201 of the Education Act 2002, places a duty on local education authorities to provide free school lunches to eligible pupils. (A similar duty is transferred to the governing body of any school that has had the budget for school lunches delegated to them).

Children, whose parents receive the following support payments, are entitled to a free school lunch:

Income-support (IS);

Income-based jobseekers allowance (IBJSA);

Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;

Child tax credit, provided they are not entitled to working tax credit and have an annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue, that does not exceed 13,480 (2004–05).

Children who receive IS or IBJSA in their own right are also entitled to free school lunches.

For information on Wales I refer the right hon. Member to the Welsh Assembly.

Special Educational Needs

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on Government policy on children with special educational needs. [224192]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 998W.

Special Schools

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many special schools have closed in *(a)* Coventry and *(b)* England since 1997. [224089]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Since 1997 281 special schools[1] have closed in England. There were no special school closures[2] in Coventry during this period.

[1] Special schools include: Other independent special schools, community special schools, non-maintained special schools, foundation special schools and independent schools approved for SEN pupils.

[2] The figures include special schools that closed as a result of the amalgamation or merger of two or more schools.

Sure Start

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps she is taking to ensure that the involvement of parents in children's centres builds on the experience of parents' involvement in Sure Start. [221413]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* We are building on the successful experience of parents' involvement in Sure Start local programmes in a number of ways. Written guidance for local authorities and delivery partners emphasises the importance of parental involvement in the planning and implementation of children's centres. Parental involvement must be discussed with local authorities in planning discussions. A new Framework for Inspection of Children's Services will ensure that inspections assess how services involve children and parents. We are developing a mechanism for assessing the extent to which parents are involved in the design and delivery of children's centres services. And we will implement this when a greater number of parents have a children's centre planned in their area.

Surplus Stock Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether her Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220957]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Department for Education and Skills has not sold surplus stock on the eBay auction website in each year since 2000–01.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of whether the public service agreement target to halt the year-on-year rise in obesity among children aged under 11 years by 2010 will be met. [219272]

Derek Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Health on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1101–102W.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent assessment she has made of whether the public service agreement target to ensure that 80 per cent. of children aged under 16 years who have been in care for 2.5 or more years will have been living in the same placement for at least two years, or are placed for adoption, will be met by 2008. [219273]

Margaret Hodge: This PSA target was only set in SR 2004. It is a new and challenging target that requires a strong focus on both care planning and placement stability. We are taking forward our delivery plan for this target and will report on progress made through our regular statistical bulletin.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the welfare of battery hens; and if she will make a statement. [224226]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The Government are currently considering a recently published scientific report by the Animal Health and Welfare Panel of the European Food Standards Authority (EFSA). The report considers the welfare aspects of various systems for keeping laying hens and takes into account pathological, zootechnical, physiological and ethological aspects of the various systems. This will form the basis of an EU Commission report, due to be published in the autumn.

Avian Flu

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely impact on *(a)* UK production of poultry, *(b)* local employment at UK turkey factories, *(c)* health of UK-produced poultry and *(d)* public health in the UK of avian influenza introduced into the UK through turkeys imported from (i) Thailand, (ii) Brazil and (iii) other countries; and what plans she has to limit the level of turkey imports. [221180]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Contingency Plan for Avian Influenza sets out the policies that would be implemented to control an outbreak of avian flu, and includes arrangements for protecting those who have to deal with an outbreak of avian flu in this country. This plan will be implemented whatever the source of the disease. The arrangements contribute to protecting public health for which the responsibility lies with the Department of Health.

Defra has not undertaken assessments of impacts on industry (production or employment) related to hypothetical outbreaks of disease.

We are not aware of any outbreaks of HPAI in Brazil and therefore consider that there is currently no risk of introducing the disease from that country. We continue to actively monitor the animal health status of countries which export animals or animal products to the EU. When Defra is officially notified of a new disease incident in an EU member state, a country on the border of the EU or one of the UK's third country trading partners, we carry out a qualitative risk analysis. Risk assessments for avian influenza have been completed and are available at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/monitoring/riskassess.htm>

Of those countries in South East Asia that are affected by outbreaks of HPAI, only Thailand was eligible to export poultry meat including turkey meat to the EU prior to their outbreaks. As soon as Defra was notified of the outbreak in Thailand, safeguard measures were put in place to ban imports of fresh poultry meat. Cooked poultry meat that has not been heat treated to at least 70C has also been banned. Imports of live poultry from the affected countries are not permitted.

All poultry meat imported into the EU from third countries must enter at designated border inspection posts where it is subject to veterinary inspections to ensure import conditions are met.

There have been no outbreaks of either avian influenza or Newcastle disease in the UK for seven years. The Defra Veterinary Laboratories Agency produces a quarterly report on avian surveillance which is published on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/vla/science/science-end-survrep-qtly.htm

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many exercises have been undertaken by *(a)* her Department and *(b)* the State Veterinary Service to determine policy to combat an outbreak of avian influenza. [222979]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department held a tabletop exercise in June 2003 to explore the policy and operational issues arising from an outbreak of avian influenza and to develop its contingency plans.

The State Veterinary Service has subsequently held five exercises to test its operational plans for an avian influenza outbreak.

Additionally, a major national-scale exercise is currently being planned by the SVS on behalf of the department for spring 2006.

Badger Culling

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what funds

she has made available for badger culling in *(a)* the UK and *(b)* Gloucestershire; and if she will make a statement. [218461]

Mr. Bradshaw: Total funds made available for the randomised badger culling trial and associated epidemiological research in Great Britain is given in the table.

	£ million
1998–99	3.0
1999–2000	4.6
2000–01	6.6
2001–02	6.0
2002–03	6.6
2003–04	7.3
2004–05	[1]7.1

[1] Forecast

An accurate breakdown of funding on a county level is not readily available.

Bovine Passports

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what reports she has received on practice in EU member states in applying the EU regulatory framework when drawing up policy on issuing bovine passports following late applications. [222772]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra officials wrote to the Agricultural Attaches in 15 member states in September 2004 requesting specific information on their procedures for enforcing the deadline for registering calf births. We have discussed the findings with industry representatives.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tuberculosis outbreaks in cattle were recorded in England and Wales in 2004; and whether a similar number of outbreaks has been recorded in any of the last 30 years. [214130]

Mr. Bradshaw: There were 3,233[1] new bovine tuberculosis (TB) incidents recorded in England and Wales in 2004. In comparison, there were 3,138[1] new incidents in 2003, and 3,230[1] in 2002.

Numbers of new TB incidents between 1975 and 2001 were at the level of 1,700 per year or below.

[1] Provisional data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database between 8–15 February 2005. Subject to change as more data becomes available.

Note:

In 2001, the TB testing and control programme was largely suspended due to the foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak. When testing resumed in 2002, resources were concentrated on herds with overdue TB tests which would have had a longer period in which to contract the disease. Also the proportion of high risk herds tested immediately after the FMD outbreak was greater than that prior to the outbreak. As a result, data for 2001 and 2002 is not comparable with other years.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate her Department has made of the costs of carrying out a comprehensive culling programme of badgers infected with bovine tuberculosis. [214137]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has conducted a preliminary study which integrates scientific models developed at the Central Science Laboratory and Reading University to establish the overall costs and benefits of various badger culling options. Further work is needed on the model before we can draw conclusions on policy options. As scientific information is generated from the RBCT and other studies (e.g. Republic of Ireland Four Area Trial), it will be used to inform the assumptions used in the model and so reduce the uncertainty surrounding the results. The model will help inform policy decisions and areas for future research. It is at present not possible to reliably identify infected badgers except by post-mortem examination and laboratory culture.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will assess whether there is a link between an increase in human TB and the spread of bovine TB among cattle. [224679]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no link between increase in human tuberculosis (TB) and the spread of bovine TB among cattle in the United Kingdom (UK). Human TB is most often caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (which is usually acquired from another human) and not by *Mycobacterium bovis*, the cause of bovine TB, which nowadays is rarely transmitted to man.

Between 20 and 50 (typically 40) people have been diagnosed with bovine TB in the UK annually since 1990, representing 1 per cent. to 1.5 per cent. of culture-confirmed cases of TB in humans. Their geographical distribution does not mirror that of bovine TB in the cattle population. Most cases are attributed to (i) reactivation of old infection contracted prior to widespread pasteurisation of milk, or (ii) infection contracted abroad.

CAP Payments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* the National Farmers' Union and *(b)* other farmers' organisations on the publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requirements of records of moneys paid under the Common Agricultural Policy. [224053]

Alun Michael: Officials mentioned the possibility of disclosure briefly to representatives of the National Farmers Union and the Tenant Farmers Association in December 2004.

Lord Whitty raised the possibility publicly with farming representatives and others attending the Oxford farming conference on 4 January 2005. He subsequently discussed the issue with the NFU later that month. The Rural Payments Agency wrote to its Industry Forum on 15 February seeking formal views on the publication of information. The Industry Forum includes representatives from the British Meat Producers Association, Country Land and Business Association, Dairy UK, Food and Drink Federation,

Grain and Feed Trade Association, Livestock Auctioneers Association, National Farmers Union, Tenant Farmers Association, Agricultural Industries Confederation and National Sheep Association.

Officials subsequently met representatives of the National Farmers' Union and the Food and Drink Federation on 8 and 15 March 2005. Several telephone calls between officials and representatives from these and other organisations also took place during February and March.

Departmental Land Purchases

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to her Department was of purchasing land and buildings in the Kirkbride airfield area in Cumbria. [224615]

Alun Michael: Kirkbride airfield was purchased in November 2001 at a cost of £650,000.

Environmental Crime

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance she intends to issue to local authorities on the prosecution of environment crimes under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill; what assessment she has made of the likely impact on the courts of applications under the reverse burden of proof provisions of the Bill; and what assessment she has made of the likely impact on funding requirements. [223510]

Alun Michael: Defra will produce comprehensive guidance on the powers that will be available to local authorities once the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill comes into effect, including the prosecution of offences for which there is provision for a defence to be shown. We do not expect the impact on the courts to be significant, especially given that the overall effect of the Bill is to simplify the legislation, to extend the options available to enforcement bodies and to introduce a limited number of new offences following extensive consultation.

Environmental Stewardship Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to respond to farmers who have applied to the Rural Payments Agency for environmental stewardship scheme support, but who have yet to be included on the Rural Land Registry or have maps returned. [220272]

Alun Michael: Farmers are obliged to register land they intend to use as part of a claim to the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). Such registrations extend the process established under the Integrated Agricultural Control System, through which more than £1.7 million land parcels were registered. Demand for land registrations is unprecedented, with requests from farmers intending to apply for SPS and those seeking to enter into agreements for the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. In the past six months the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has received nearly 25,000 registrations, when it normally expects to receive around 9,000 requests annually. The RPA has increased processing capacity but there is inevitably a current backlog of claims awaiting completion. At the current rate of progress most registrations will be processed by the end of June but some requests, particularly those received close to the 16 May deadline for submitting an SPS application ,might not be processed until August. The RPA is giving priority to those registrations that affect an outstanding scheme payment. Once the current round of applications has been dealt with, it is expected that the situation will stabilise and subsequent applications will be dealt with more quickly.

Fallen Stock

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to public funds was of establishing the National Fallen Stock Company; and what budget has been allocated for maintenance costs. [223913]

Mr. Bradshaw: Just over £1 million has been made available by Defra for setting up the Company and establishing the arrangements for the administration of the Scheme. It is intended that future Company and administration costs will be financed through the moneys raised via the registration fees for farmers subscribing to the National Fallen Stock Scheme. The setting of a budget for maintenance costs is a matter for the Company Board.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment has been made of the effect of the ban on on-farm burials of fallen stock on carrion-dependent fowl. [223914]

Mr. Bradshaw: No such assessment has been made. However, we understand that the RSPB is content with the existing arrangement of the feeding of Category 2 and 3 material (i.e. butchers' waste) to wild necrophagous birds and that a derogation to permit the use of ruminant fallen stock as feed material is not, therefore, necessary. Accordingly, the UK has exercised the derogation that permits member states to authorise the feeding of animal by-products which do not contain SRM to birds of prey.

Even when burial was permitted carcases were required to be buried in such a way that carnivorous animals (including necrophagous birds) could not gain access to them. Therefore the effect of the ban on burial is minimal as carcases should not have been left uncovered where birds could have gained access to them.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of *(a)* the availability of and *(b)* response times for services for the collection of fallen stock in England and Wales. [223915]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has not made such an assessment. However, the National Fallen Stock Company has analysed the coverage provided by the National Fallen Stock Scheme and concluded there is a reasonable choice of collection services available to farmers in most areas. The Company has said that under most circumstances it would expect carcases to be collected within 48 hours following notification and

since the Scheme began the Company has only received just over 200 complaints about delays in collection out of around 60,000 pick ups nationally.

However, within this encouraging assessment, the Company has acknowledged that there are particular problems with service provision in North Wales and some other localised areas including the Isle of Wight where the only Scheme collector has left the Scheme. The Company is taking action to address these difficulties with the co-operation of the fallen stock collection industry and other relevant parties.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost to public funds has been of subsidies paid by the National Fallen Stock Company for the collection of fallen stock. [224000]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government contribution to collection costs under the National Fallen Stock Scheme for the UK as a whole from 22 November 2004 to date is just over £0.4 million.

Defra has committed £5 million in year one, £3 million in year two and £2 million in year three. There is equivalent funding from the Devolved Administrations, which, along with the Defra contribution, will amount to £10 million in the first year for the UK as a whole.

Fisheries

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many dead harbour porpoises have been stranded on the coasts of Cornwall, Devon and Dorset in each of the past five years; and what the cause of these deaths was. [222863]

Mr. Bradshaw: From 1 January 2000 until 17 March 2005 a total of 352 harbour porpoises were stranded on the coasts of Cornwall, Devon and Dorset. Table 1 gives a breakdown for each county. The number of carcases reported is always higher than the number which are suitable for or actually go to post mortem. I have provided a breakdown for each county for each year, and the causes of death where post mortems were carried out can be found in tables 2 to 4.

Strandings data is obtained under the Defra-funded Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme, carried out by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Institute of Zoology and Scottish Agricultural College.

Table 1: Total number of stranded harbour porpoise for 2000—up to 17 March 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Cornwall	20	25	68	40	114	13
Devon	8	13	5	11	21	9
Dorset	2	2	1	1	0	0
Total	30	40	74	52	135	22

Table 2: Results of post mortems for harbour porpoise stranded in Cornwall

Cause of death	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bycatch	3	3	12	3	26	1
Dystocia or stillborn	0	0	0	0	1	0
Gastropathy and/or enteropathy	1	0	0	0	0	0
Live stranding	0	1	0	0	0	0
Not established	0	2	4	3	2	1
Others	0	0	0	1	0	0
Physical trauma	0	2	0	2	0	1
Physical trauma (Bottlenose dolphin kills)	0	1	0	0	1	0
Pneumonia, parasitic	0	2	2	1	0	1
Pneumonia, parasitic and bacterial	0	1	0	0	0	0
Pneumonia, parasitic and mycotic	0	1	0	0	0	0
Starvation (neonate)	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total	4	13	18	10	31	4

Table 3: results of post mortems for harbour porpoise stranded in Devon

Cause of death	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bycatch	1	3	3	1	0	1
Gastropathy and/or enteropathy	0	0	0	0	1	0
Live stranding	0	0	0	0	1	0
Not established	1	0	0	0	0	0
Physical trauma	0	2	0	0	0	0
Physical trauma (Bottlenose dolphin kills)	0	0	0	0	2	0
Pneumonia, parasitic	1	2	0	0	0	0
Pneumonia, parasitic and bacterial	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	7	3	1	4	1

Table 4: Results of post mortems for harbour porpoise stranded in Dorset

Cause of death	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Bycatch	0	1	1	0	0	0
Physical trauma	1	0	0	0	0	0
Physical trauma (Bottlenose dolphin kills)	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	1	2	1	0	0	0

Foot and Mouth

Mrs. Browning: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions took place between her Department and Northumberland county council to ensure that all material relating to the index case of foot and mouth disease at Burnside farm, Heddon on the Wall was submitted to the Anderson Inquiry. [214256]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 4 February 2005]:* There was contact between my Department and Northumberland county council on the prosecution of Mr. Waugh, but there is no record of any such discussions concerning the submission of evidence to the Anderson Inquiry. The Origins of FMD paper, prepared by the then Chief Veterinary Officer, which was submitted to the Anderson Inquiry, contained comprehensive information on the index case.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many premises were assigned during the UK foot and mouth epidemic in 2004 to the *(a)* infected premises, *(b)* dangerous contact—3 km cull, *(c)* dangerous contact—contiguous cull, *(d)* dangerous contact—other, *(e)* slaughter on suspicion and *(f)* voluntary firebreak cull category; how many premises in each category were subject to laboratory testing; how many positives were identified in each category by such testing; how much compensation was paid for the value of the animals that were slaughtered at premises in each category; what the cost was of cleansing and disinfection at premises in each category; and how many animals were slaughtered at premises in each category, broken down by species. [224565]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for East Surrey (Mr. Ainsworth) on 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 838W, for the details requested at *(a)* to *(f)* , in particular at Tables (ii) and (iv). However, we are unable to identify the information separately for the voluntary firebreak cull.

Compensation paid for the value of animals in each category is a follows:

(a) £482,625,076

(b) £68,677,197

(c) and *(d)* £527,477,519 (Defra is unable to distinguish between dangerous contact—contiguous cull and dangerous contact—other)

(e) £24,639,178

The information required on the cost of cleansing and disinfecting at premises in each category is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Livestock Prices

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes took place in the average sale prices at markets of *(a)* sheep and *(b)* cattle between February and October 2001. [223859]

Alun Michael: Average sale prices at markets for *(a)* sheep and *(b)* cattle are available for part of February 2001 before the markets need to close down due to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease. No prices are available between March and October 2001, as the livestock markets remained closed until February 2002.

The following tables give average sheep and cattle prices for February 2001.

Cattle prices for February 2001

Type/breed		*1st quality*		*2nd quality*	
		Average price £ per head	*Number sold*	*Average price £ per head*	*Number sold*
Rearing calves:					
Friesian/Holstein	Bulls	29.06	655	11.76	1356
	Heifers	71.05	20	28	34
Other dairy breeds	Bulls	56.75	12	13.23	30
	Heifers	42	2	11	18
Hereford	Bulls	77.43	169	38.07	287
Hereford cross	Heifers	24.2	107	10.73	244
Charolais cross	Bulls	142.15	263	91.22	258
Charolais cross	Heifers	37.49	177	17.66	270
Limousin	Bulls	127	435	64.91	734
Limousin cross	Heifers	41.12	220	15.17	635
Simmental	Bulls	137.95	317	86.49	460
Simmental cross	Heifers	40.5	194	18.26	376
Belgian blue cross	Bulls	139.96	371	88.8	435
Belgian blue	Heifers	52.14	239	24.56	433
Other continental	Bulls	103.75	44	65.69	42
Other continental cross		24.8	20	13.98	48
Other beef	Bulls	76.06	129	28.7	220
Other beef cross	Heifers	30.42	26	11.78	192
Store Cattle:					
Friesian Holstein yearlings	Steers	258.06	155	176.89	202
	Heifers	—	—	76.44	9
18 months old	Steers	300.58	144	239.2	102
	Heifers	368.11	19	268.89	19
2 years old	Steers	367.71	122	303.22	68
	Heifers	364.67	18	300.4	5

		Cattle prices for February 2001			
		1st quality		2nd quality	
Type/breed		Average price £ per head	Number sold	Average price £ per head	Number sold
Other dairy breeds:					
Yearlings	Steers	352	5	57.2	5
	Heifers	285	1	170	1
18 months old	Steers	381	2	375.75	4
	Heifers	287	2	190	6
2 years old	Steers	515	1	395	1
	Heifers	408	2	210	2
Hereford/Hereford cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	277.22	204	234.38	52
	Heifers	172.75	67	133.4	40
18 months old	Steers	364.05	92	336.25	116
	Heifers	276.02	94	204.52	50
2 years old	Steers	421.89	70	330.84	38
	Heifers	321.1	30	193.27	11
Charolais/Charolais cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	400.78	437	337	211
	Heifers	262.36	420	192.48	231
18 months old	Steers	486.73	683	387.67	362
	Heifers	382	533	300.65	309
2 years old	Steers	516.06	325	436.3	100
	Heifers	395.15	105	332.33	24
Limousin/Limousin cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	415.75	653	349.95	441
	Heifers	314.31	569	232.2	653
18 months old	Steers	489.01	877	422.68	489
	Heifers	401.43	654	313.59	452
2 years old	Steers	538.56	314	439.99	83
	Heifers	418.4	168	333.67	81
Simmental/Simmental cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	332.19	249	287.97	197
	Heifers	204.58	175	165.6	131
18 months old	Steers	456.23	370	390.58	269
	Heifers	343.74	315	281.59	194
2 years old	Steers	490.23	256	407.32	144
	Heifers	375.45	64	333.63	70
Belgian blue/Belgian blue cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	374.34	95	262.8	91
	Heifers	284.3	84	249.99	113
18 months old	Steers	454.6	119	357.53	47
	Heifers	370.79	71	331.57	60
2 years old	Steers	457.63	59	429.67	15
	Heifers	400.74	50	295	8
Other Continental/other Continental cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	401.49	180	346.33	108
	Heifers	297.88	147	217.78	137
18 months old	Steers	491.96	189	393.92	171
	Heifers	406.97	165	326.74	114
2 years old	Steers	471.88	50	390.22	37
	Heifers	426.9	10	336	10
Other beef/other beef cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	322	100	232.87	46
	Heifers	202.45	77	126.25	60
18 months old	Steers	408.56	128	322.68	73
	Heifers	280.05	56	238.35	26
2 years old	Steers	464.26	39	400.95	44
	Heifers	349.61	23	267.83	12
Other beef/other beef cross:					
Yearlings	Steers	267.33	15	228	1
	Heifers	120.13	16	70.36	11
18 months old	Steers	374.69	26	271.28	32
	Heifers	207.89	19	182	8
2 years old	Steers	473	19	333.5	4
	Heifers	317.33	3	282	1

Cattle prices for February 2001

Type/breed	*1st quality*		*2nd quality*	
	Average price £ per head	*Number sold*	*Average price £ per head*	*Number sold*
Barreners (£ per head):				
Barreners Dairy	—	—	—	—
Barreners Beef	—	—	—	—
Dairy Breeds	—	—	—	—
Beef Breeds	—	—	—	—
Dairy cattle—Friesan/Holstein				
Cows in milk	684.79	327	545.51	250
Cows in calf	608.17	12	382.5	6
1st calving cows in milk	682.31	448	560.68	358
Down calving heifers	529.95	37	405.52	25
Other dairy breeds:				
Cows in Milk	511.25	4	380	2
Cows in Calf	—	—	330	1
1st calving cows in milk	493.33	3	210	1
Down calving heifers	—	—	—	—

Sheep prices for February 2001

	1st quality		*2nd quality*	
	Average £ price per head	*Number sold*	*Average price per head*	*Number sold*
Store sheep				
Hoggs, Hoggets and Tegs	39.88	7875	25.61	8536
Lambs	27.19	151	17.65	129

Source:
Defra

Marine Pollution (Sewerby)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action *(a)* has been taken in the past two years and *(b)* is being taken to prevent bacterial discharge into the sea at Sewerby near Bridlington; and if she will make a statement. [224115]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Since 2003 investigations have been under way into the impact of the discharge made by Munton's plc into the short sea outfall pipe at Sewerby. These have shown that there are no discharges of human sewage into the outfall, which is owned by the East Riding of Yorkshire council. The indicator organisms found in the discharge are present in the raw materials (grain) brought to the site and the malting process carried out there provides the humid, dark conditions which encourage multiplication.

Following discussions between the company, the Environment Agency and the council, it has been agreed that additional treatment, by way of a reed bed system, should be provided to reduce bacterial concentrations and provide storage to balance flows. Discharge of effluent would also be limited to when there is sufficient dilution at the outlet to prevent visual nuisance.

Meat and Dairy Imports

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which countries are refusing to allow British beef to be imported; and for what reasons. [216567]

Mr. Bradshaw: Following is a list of 84 countries which we understand still impose a ban on the import of British beef. The situation in a further 27 countries has still to be confirmed. In addition there is continuing dialogue between the EU and Egypt on recently revised Egyptian import conditions. The reasons cited for the bans are animal and public health related.

However, we consider that these bans are not justified in the light of science and the BSE controls applied in the UK. Currently, beef exports can only take place under the stringent conditions of the Date-based Export Scheme, which complies fully with EU and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) rules and guidance.

We are currently working with the European Commission for recognition that, like most other EU member states, the UK is now a moderate (rather than high) risk country according to current OIE rules. We are also working with the Commission with a view to lifting the ban on the export of beef from UK cattle born after July 1996 as soon as possible after the over-30-month rule is replaced by testing and these cattle can be sold for human consumption in the UK.

Bans:

Albania
Algeria
Angola
Argentina
Armenia
Australia
Azerbaijan
Bahamas
Bahrain
Barbados
Belarus
Bolivia
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Brazil
Brunei
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso

Cameroon
Canada
Cayman Islands
Central African Republic
Chad
Chile
China
Colombia
Congo (Democratic Republic of)
Congo Brazzaville
Cote d'Ivoire
Croatia
Cuba
Dominican republic
Ecuador
El Salvador
Equatorial Guinea
Gabon
Grenada
Guatemala
Guyana
India
Indonesia
Japan
Jordan
Kenya
Korea (South)
Kuwait
Kyrgyzstan
Libya
Macau
Malaysia
Mexico
Monaco
Montserrat
Morocco
Nicaragua
Nigeria
Oman
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Qatar
Rwanda
Samoa
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
South Africa
Sri Lanka
Switzerland
Syria
Taiwan
Thailand
Togo
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
USA
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Venezuela
Vietnam
Yemen
Zambia

To be confirmed:

Afghanistan
Benin
British Virgin Islands
Cape Verde
Comoros
Eritrea
French Polynesia
Georgia
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Haiti
Iraq
Jamaica
Liberia
Maldives
Mali
Mauritania
Mayotte
Moldova
Niger
Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands
San Marino
Sao Tome and Principe
Somalia
South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands
St. Helena Dependencies
Yugoslavia

Dr. Strang: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the Government's policy is on the European Commission's proposal to increase to 275,000 tonnes the import into the EU of boneless poultry meat from non-EU countries. [220992]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 10 March 2005]:* There are no restrictions on the quantity of imports into the European Union of poultry meat.

We are aware that the EU Commission has considered the possibility of a reduced rate import tariff quota for 275,000 tonnes of poultry meat as part of the proposed free trade agreement with the Mercosur countries of South America (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) but no such offer has yet been formally made.

The Government have raised with the Commission the points that have been made by the poultry industry, including the point that, as a result of higher EU welfare standards, it is not competing on a level playing-field with countries such as Brazil. We continue to press for recognition of increased animal welfare costs as a

legitimate issue in the context of the World Trade Organisation's current round of trade liberalisation negotiations (the Doha Development Agenda).

Multiple Retailers

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has had with the Office of Fair Trading regarding the code of conduct for multiple retailers on the treatment of primary producers; and if she will make a statement. [223234]

Alun Michael: Responsibility for the Supermarkets' code of practice rests with the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). However, as Defra is sponsor Department for the farming and food industries we have discussed the subject of the code with the OFT as and when the need has arisen.

The OFT has recently published the findings of an audit of the code, together with a paper that considers the implications of those findings and invites comments and evidence on a number of issues arising from them. These documents can be found on the OFT's website at http://www.oft.gov.uk/News/Press+releases/2005/52-05.htm. We encourage all those who have views on the issues in question to respond to the OFT's invitation to comment.

The OFT's paper also makes reference to a proposal for a new voluntary code, known as the Buyers Charter, that is being developed by the National Farmers Union (NFU) in consultation with other industry bodies. We welcome this initiative and have encouraged all sections of the food chain, whether they be retailers, processors or manufacturers, to work positively with the NFU to develop the proposal.

Sewers/Drains

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on her proposals to transfer ownership of private sewers and lateral drains from property owners to local water companies; [224365]

(2) what arrangements are being made for the transfer of ownership of sewers and drains; and whether necessary repairs will be carried out before that transfer. [224367]

Mr. Morley: The Government published a response to their consultation—Review of Existing Private Sewers and Drains in England and Wales—in October 2004. 81 per cent. of respondents favoured a change of ownership, and of these, 90 per cent. held the view that sewerage undertakers should take over responsibility. The Government acknowledged the strength of support for this solution and undertook to look into it in more depth.

The Department also recently held a seminar with stakeholders to look at sustainable options for a potential transfer. Further information on the seminar is available on the Department's website.

The Government intend to publish a decision paper this summer, but do not rule out the need to consult further on the scope and form of a potential transfer.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of the condition of sewers; and what the impact on household water bills is estimated to be of carrying out necessary repairs. [224366]

Mr. Morley: The Director General of Water Services sets price limits for the water and sewerage companies in England and Wales. He published his decisions on 2 December 2004. In arriving at his decisions he assessed the state of Companies' sewers to be 'stable'.

'Future water and sewerage charges 2005–10: Final determinations', which is available from the Library of the House of Commons, sets out for each water and sewerage company Ofwat's assessment of what contribution capital maintenance will make to the changes in each company's bills over the period 2005–10. However it is for each company to make decisions on what proportion of customers' bills they will spend on maintaining their sewers.

Ofwat reviewed each company's proposals to maintain all of its water and sewerage assets and concluded that, within a total of £8.4 billion, the companies would need to invest around £1.0 billion to maintain their sewerage infrastructure over the period 2005–10. This is a 17 per cent. increase on what Ofwat estimates the companies will have spent on sewerage infrastructure in the period 2000–05.

TB (Badgers)

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will introduce field trials of devices for detecting biological warfare agents used on the battlefield to detect levels of TB in badgers in the west country. [224236]

Mr. Bradshaw: The application of portable laboratories developed by the Ministry of Defence for detection of biological warfare agents, to detect bovine tuberculosis (TB) in badgers in the field is not yet at the stage appropriate for field evaluation.

This technology is based on the polymerase chain reaction (PCR). Research using conventional laboratory-based PCR has shown that the technique is not yet able to perform as well as conventional bacterial culture in the detection of *Mycobacterium bovis (M. bovis)* in diseased animals.

A collaboration between the Veterinary Laboratories Agency and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory at Porton Down is evaluating a prototype portable machine for diseases other than bovine TB (Bovine Diarrhoea Virus and Foot and Mouth Disease). There are plans to evaluate it for use in detecting *M. bovis* in the field in the future.

Defra is currently assessing research applications for projects that will conduct a review of all current PCR assays available for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* complex identification and assess their cost benefit analysis for incorporation into routine TB testing.

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what strains of bovine TB in infected livestock have been isolated; and whether the same strains have been isolated in badgers killed in road traffic accidents. [224717]

Mr. Bradshaw: Strains of *Mycobacterium bovis (M. bovis)* isolated from cattle or badgers infected by bovine tuberculosis are routinely determined by spoligotyping.

A total of 705 isolates of *M. bovis* from badgers killed in road traffic accidents have been typed by this method since November 1988, resulting in identification of 17 different strains. Of 25,120 isolates of *M. bovis* from cattle typed since November 1988, 46 strains have been found.

16 of the *M. bovis* strains have been found in both badgers and cattle. These accounted for 99.9 per cent. of badger isolates and 99.3 per cent. of cattle isolates.

TB Tests

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers she has to enforce tuberculosis tests on dairy farmers; and how many times these powers have been used in the last three years. [220766]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The bovine tuberculosis testing regime is executed by officers of Defra in England. Prosecutions for non-compliance are brought by local authorities as the body responsible for enforcement. If the person responsible for the animal fails to co-operate to enable his animals to be tested the appropriate officer may take all necessary steps to enable the test to be done.

There have been no prosecutions by local authorities during the last three years to enforce tuberculosis tests on dairy farmers. Where, for whatever reason, tuberculosis tests are not carried out on time, the Department and the local authority endeavour to resolve the matter without recourse to the Courts.

Waste Management

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of responses received to the Waste Management (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 (Agricultural waste regulations consultations); and what plans she has to publish her conclusions. [224681]

Mr. Morley: I announced on 9 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 106WS, that the Government had published a draft of the Regulations for consultation. The consultation paper confirmed that the exercise is being carried out in compliance with the Cabinet Office's "Code of Practice on Consultation" which is available at:

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/consultation/index.asp

The consultation's closing date was 18 March 2005 and we are now considering the responses which have been received. The next step will be the publication of a summary of those responses and our analysis of them. Criterion 4 of the Code of Practice provides that this summary should be published, as far as possible, within three months of the consultation's closing date.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research has been carried out to investigate possible links between emissions from landfill and hazardous waste sites and health problems, with particular reference to birth defects; and if she will make a statement. [221625]

Mr. Morley: Last year my Department published an independent review of environmental and health effects of waste management. This brought together the available evidence on the health and environmental effects of different waste management facilities for treating municipal solid waste and similar wastes. It is available on the Defra website at: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/research/health/index.htm. Later this year there will be a follow up study to extend the review to cover non-municipal waste management processes.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Social Work

Mr. Amess: To ask the Minister for Women if she will make a statement on female employment in social care. [223419]

Ms Hewitt: As at 30 September 2003, women represented over 80 per cent. of the total whole-time equivalent employees in social service departments. On a headcount basis, women accounted for 230,700 employees in a directly employed council workforce of 277,000. There are another estimated 650,000 social care workers employed in the private and voluntary sectors, mostly in residential and domiciliary provision, and it is estimated that around 90 per cent. of that workforce is female.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223434]

Mr. Miliband: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary (Mr. Timms) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Referendums

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what plans the Commission has made to investigate complaints about illegal donations or spending connected with the referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe that are made during *(a)* the regulated period and *(b)* the referendum period. [224683]

Mr. Viggers: By virtue of section 145 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), the Electoral Commission has the general function of monitoring compliance with the restrictions and other

requirements imposed by or by virtue of Part VII of PPERA in relation to referendums to which the Act applies.

The Commission informs me that it has in operation robust processes and procedures to undertake investigations into potential breaches of the regulatory requirements of the Act. It will apply these in relation to any referendum on the Treaty establishing a constitution for Europe as it would to any other referendum to which the provisions of Part VII of PPERA apply.

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission whether it is the Commission's assessment that it has adequate powers to prevent illegal donations or spending connected with the referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe during *(a)* the regulated period and *(b)* the referendum period. [224684]

Mr. Viggers: Although by virtue of section 145 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA), the Electoral Commission has the general function of monitoring compliance with the restrictions and other requirements imposed by or by virtue of Part VII of PPERA in relation to referendums to which the Act applies, this does not give the Commission power to intervene to prevent either donations or spending in connection with such referendums, including any referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe.

However, the Commission informs me that it has in operation robust processes and procedures to undertake investigations into alleged breaches of the regulatory requirements of PPERA, including those relating to referendums.

Kate Hoey: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what discussions regarding donations and expenditure the Commission plans to have with organisations that are permitted participants in the referendum on the EU Constitution which are funded by institutions of the European Union. [224685]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission informs me that it will provide guidance for all organisations expressing interest in registering as permitted participants in any referendum on the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe and further guidance for those which actually register.

In addition, the Commission intends to hold briefing sessions throughout the country to advise potential permitted participants in such a referendum on the relevant statutory requirements of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act 2000, including those relating to donations and expenditure.

As I informed the hon. Member on 7 March 2005, *Official* Report, columns 1666–67W, The Electoral Commission has already indicated that it does not regard the European Commission as falling into any of the categories of organisation that are allowed to make donations to permitted participants in a referendum on the EU Constitution.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Fish Purchases

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission how many fish have been bought by the Refreshment Department in each year since 1997, broken down by species. [224008]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: I have written to the hon. Member.

DEFENCE

Arms Supplies

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department makes of the use in other countries of arms that have been supplied by UK manufacturers. [209549]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

The Government undertake monitoring in the recipient country of arms supplied by UK manufacturers when we believe that this would genuinely help to minimise the risk of diversion and where such monitoring is practical. In addition, UK overseas posts have standing instructions to report any misuse of UK-origin defence equipment. Evidence of misuse would be taken into account when the Government assesses any subsequent licence applications for the end-user. We may also, if appropriate, revoke related licences, and consider whether to prosecute if the Government believed that a criminal offence had been committed.

Army Discipline

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers and *(c)* private soldiers have been disciplined following the outcome of (i) an Army board decision, (ii) a divisional level decision and (iii) a unit level decision since 1997. [201830]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints considered under Army redress procedures have been made by *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers, *(c)* private soldiers and *(d)* untrained private soldiers since 1997. [201837]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not hold complete records dating back to 1997. However, during the period January 1999 to December 2004, our records indicate that 369 officers, 833 non-commissioned officers and 154 private soldiers applied for redress of complaint.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to the letter dated 23 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Alan Green. [224360]

Mr. Hoon: I replied to the right hon. Member on 24 March.

Deaths in Service

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps were taken by his Department to ensure that the next of kin of Sergeant Paul Connolly were informed prior to the public announcement of his death in Iraq on 26 December 2004. [224480]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It is Ministry of Defence policy to release the names of deceased personnel after the Next of Kin and nominated Emergency Contacts (if different) have been notified: the Next of Kin and/or the Emergency Contacts may request a further delay to enable them to inform other family members. Wherever possible, such a request will be honoured. Sergeant Connolly's nominated Emergency Contact was informed on 27 December; the formal public announcement of his death followed on 30 December.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has received from his United States counterpart in respect of the number of Iraqi citizens being detained by the United States military authorities in Iraq in connection with alleged offences connected with weapons of mass destruction. [216005]

Mr. Hoon: I do not routinely receive information from other coalition partners regarding the details of those being detained by them, nor information about the specific offences for which individuals are being detained/interned.

Mr. Sayeed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which soldiers who have served and been injured in the recent Iraqi conflict live in the constituency of Mid Bedfordshire. [210785]

Mr. Ingram: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Naval Studies

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the terms of reference of the *(a)* Maritime Conference Study, *(b)* Submarine Acquisition Modernisation Study and *(c)* Surface Ship Support Study are; and when he expects each to conclude its work. [222438]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answers I gave on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 572W, to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan), on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 127W to the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames), and 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1996W, to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan).

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will provide a substantive answer to the question, ref. 209882, from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan. [216229]

Mr. Hoon: I replied to the hon. Member on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 256W.

RAF Menwith Hill

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what mechanism the US authorities pay his Department's Police Agency for policing activities at RAF Menwith Hill. [223681]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The United States authorities pay for the Ministry of Defence Police Agency against bills raised on the Agency's behalf by the MOD Liaison Office at RAF Mildenhall. These bills are raised on a weekly basis and in arrears. At the end of each month, Mildenhall transfer the income from payments made by the US to the MOD Police Agency. Bills are based on the salaries of Agency personnel, both police and civilian, deployed to Menwith Hill and any other costs that are appropriate in accordance with the 1989 Memorandum of Understanding between the United States European Command (EUCOM), represented by the Headquarters Third Air Force, and the United Kingdom MOD concerning the role and responsibilities of MOD police deployed at bases occupied by United States Forces in the UK.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220959]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to Key Target 1 of the Key Targets Table in the Ministry of Defence's Disposal Services Agency (DSA)'s Annual Report and Accounts that were laid before the House for each of those years respectively. The 2003–04 report, laid before the House on 15 July 2004, can be viewed on the DSA's website www.edisposals.com. The figures include receipts from sales undertaken by the DSA on behalf of its main customer—the MOD—and other Government Departments and other customers. The DSA has sole authority to act to dispose of all MOD surplus equipments bar land and property and nuclear material.

Gross accrued receipts from the sale of surplus land and property are disclosed in the Defence estates accounts that were laid before the House for each of the years 2000–01 to 2003–04. Copies are available in the Library of the House.

Both the DSA's Annual Report and Accounts and the Defence estate accounts in respect of 2004–05 are due to be laid before the House in advance of the summer recess.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220956]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Ministry of Defence's Disposal Services Agency (DSA) has sole authority to act to dispose of surplus equipment. The majority of equipments are sold through the DSA's network of contractors, with whom it has marketing agreements, who have the freedom to market and sell as they choose so as to optimise returns

for the taxpayer. These contractors have occasionally used the eBay website in the last few years but records are not held centrally. The DSA has not used eBay directly.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for her Department is for 2011–12. [223440]

Ms Hewitt: Under the Spending Review process, budget allocations are given for the three years ahead. Following Spending Review 2004 we therefore have detailed spending plans in place for 2005–06, 2006–07, and 2007–08. The Spending Review process does not provide for the setting of budgets more than three years ahead.

Economic Partnership Agreements

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her written ministerial statement of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 62–3W, on economic partnership agreements, on what basis her Department arrived at the period of 20 years given unconditionally to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to open their markets to trade with the EU, following implementation of any given EU Economic Partnership Agreement; and whether she plans to make this period fully reciprocal. [224079]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* In recommending a transition period of 20 years, the Government took into consideration the views of the ACP countries, the ACP submission in the current WTO negotiations on Article 24 of the GATT, which suggested a minimum of 18 years for developing countries, and the transition period agreed in other recent regional trade agreements. The Government believe that each ACP regional group should make its own decisions on the timing, pace, sequencing, and product coverage of market opening in line with individual countries' national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. Regional groups should have the flexibility to move towards more open markets along a non-linear path if necessary.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her written ministerial statement of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 62–3WS, on economic partnership agreements, whether she has earmarked specific UK funds to be made available via the EU to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to enable them to benefit from trade reforms. [224137]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The UK cannot specifically earmark funds provided through the EU for the ACP. However the UK, through DFID's development assistance programmes, is continuing to make available funds for EPA policy research and capacity building for the ACP regional group secretariats and negotiators. This is intended to help the ACP structure EPAs in their development interests and assist them to get the best deal from the negotiations.

Equipment Leasing

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the equipment leasing arrangements entered into by her Department in each of the last two years; and what the cost was to public funds in each case. [202383]

Ms Hewitt: The total cost to the Department and its Executive Agencies of hiring office equipment under operating leases for the last two years was:

£ million

	Cost of hiring office equipment
2003–04	1.6
2002–03	1.1

In addition, the Department has an off-balance sheet PFI contract for the provision to it of a wide range of information systems and services, including infrastructure management, IT development, business process re-engineering, consultancy advice and technology refresh. This is treated as an operating lease under the PFI guidance issued by HM Treasury. The total payments under this contract in 2003–04 amounted to £37 million. In 2002–03 this total was £35 million. It is not possible to split this total into payments for the use of equipment as opposed to payments for services.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee on the implementation of projects promoting co-operation and commercial relations between the European Union and the industrialised countries of North America, the Far East and Australasia met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [217836]

Mr. Alexander: The Committee has met four times (on each occasion in Brussels) since it was established in July 2002 (under the Spanish presidency); January 2003 (Greek presidency); January 2004 (Irish presidency); and October 2004 (Dutch presidency). Officials from UK Trade and Investment attended each meeting with the exception of meeting during the Irish presidency.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for the Adaptation to Technical Progress of Directives on the Removal of Technical Barriers to Trade in the Sector of Cosmetics met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [217911]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Policy on cosmetic products under Council Directive 76/768/EE is discussed and agreed by the Standing Committee on Cosmetic Products which meets in Brussels four or five times a year. Representatives from the DTI always attend the Committee meetings.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when consultation on changes to the anti-bribery and corruption procedures at the Export Credits Guarantee Department will be launched; and when it is expected to end. [223713]

Mr. Alexander: The Export Credits Guarantee Department launched a consultation on the changes to its anti-bribery and corruption procedures introduced in December 2004 on 18 March 2005. Details of this can be found on its website at www.ecgd.gov.uk.

The consultation will close on 18 June 2005.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the costs to be paid by her Department to the plaintiffs, the Corner House in respect of her Department's settlement of the case relating to consultation on Export Credits Guarantee Department forms. [223714]

Mr. Alexander: No claim for any particular sum has yet been submitted by the Comer House. As a result no reliable estimate can yet be formulated.

Gaelic Language

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's policy is on the use of the Gaelic language; and what plans her Department has to prepare and implement a Gaelic language scheme. [217097]

Ms Hewitt: Marketing communication materials are translated into Gaelic and other minority or foreign languages according to objectives and target audience requirements.

Large Print Versions

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, if she will require the Insolvency Agency to make available to the public on request large print versions of standard documentation' and if she will make a statement. [223978]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Insolvency Service is fully aware of its responsibilities to its users in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Where it is possible to do so the Insolvency Service will accommodate requests made by the public for large print versions of any standard leaflets or documentation.

Minimum Wage

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in the Chorley constituency have benefited from the national minimum wage since its introduction. [212095]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Chorley due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 120,000 people in the North West of England stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999. It is estimated that around 160,000 people in the North West of England stood to benefit from the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics' central estimate of low pay; the 2004 estimate is based on data from the annual survey of hours and Earnings.

Minimum Wage (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have benefited from the minimum wage in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* Lancashire and *(c)* Chorley since its introduction. [216236]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The DTI estimates that around 120,000 people in the North West of England stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999. It is estimated that around 160,000 people in the North West of England stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics' central estimate of low pay; the 2004 estimate is based on data from the annual survey of hours and earnings.

(b) Reliable figures cannot be produced for Lancashire due to small sample size.

(c) Reliable figures cannot be produced for Chorley due to small sample size.

National Minimum Wage

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her estimate is of the number of people in the *(a)* London region and *(b)* Leyton and Wanstead constituency who have benefited from the most recent rise in the national minimum wage. [208773]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The DTI estimates that around 90,000 people in London have benefited from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based this estimate on the April 2004 annual survey of hours and earnings.

(b) Reliable figures cannot be produced for Leyton and Wanstead due to small sample size.

Mr. Fisher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her estimate is of the number of people in Stoke-on-Trent who have benefited from the most recent rise in the national minimum wage. [209897]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Stoke-on-Trent Central due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the West Midlands stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum rage. The DTI has based this estimate on the April 2004 annual survey of hours and earnings.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* monetary and *(b)* percentage increase has been of each uprating of the national minimum wage since its introduction. [214027]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following tables present the monetary and percentage increase of each uprating of the national minimum wage since its introduction.

Monetary and percentage increases in the adult [1]national minimum wage (NMW) rate

	Adult hourly NMW rate (£)	*Increase in adult hourly NMW rate (£)*	*Percentage increase in adult hourly NMW rate*
1999	3.60	—	—
2000	3.70	0.10	2.8
2001	4.10	0.40	10.8
2002	4.20	0.10	2.4
2003	4.50	0.30	7.1
2004	4.85	0.35	7.8

[1] The adult rate applies to workers aged 22 or above

Monetary and percentage increases in the youth[1] (development) national minimum wage (NMW) rate

	Youth hourly NMW rate (£)	*Increase in youth hourly NMW rate (£)*	*Percentage increase in youth hourly NMW rate*
1999	3.00	—	—
2000	3.20	0.20	6.7
2001	3.50	0.30	9.4
2002	3.60	0.10	2.9
2003	3.80	0.25	6.9
2004	4.10	0.25	6.5

[1] The youth development rate applies to workers aged 18–21

Mr. Salter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in Reading, West constituency have benefited from the national minimum wage since its introduction. [215817]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Reading, West due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 110,000 people in the South East of England stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999. It is also estimated that around 110,000 people in the South East of England stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics' central estimate of low pay; the 2004 estimate is based on data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

National Minimum Wage (Edinburgh)

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in Edinburgh North and Leith constituency have benefited from the national minimum wage since its introduction. [211571]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Edinburgh North and Leith due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 90,000 people in Scotland stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999. It is estimated that around 130,000 people in Scotland stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics' central estimate of low pay; the 2004 estimate is based on data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

National Minimum Wage (Hull)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people in the Kingston upon Hull North constituency have benefited from the national minimum wage since its introduction. [211799]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Reliable figures cannot be produced for Kingston upon Hull due to small sample size.

The DTI estimates that around 100,000 people in Yorkshire and the Humber stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in October 1999. It is estimated that around 130,000 people in Yorkshire and the Humber stood to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage. The DTI has based the October 1999 estimate on the Office for National Statistics' central estimate of low pay; the 2004 estimate is based on data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

Newspaper Distribution

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will publish the economic modelling and analysis used by *(a)* the Office of Fair Trading and *(b)* her Department to assess the impact of proposed changes to the UK supply chain for newspapers and magazines. [224349]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) plans to publish its draft advisory opinion on the compatibility with competition law of distribution agreements for newspapers and magazines very soon. The draft advisory opinion will provide a fuller explanation of how the OFT reached the conclusions it announced in its 23 February press release. There has been no separate consideration of this matter by the Government.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact on small independent retailers of proposed changes to the UK supply chain for newspapers and magazines. [224350]

Mr. Sutcliffe: None. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has undertaken an informal consideration of the compatibility with competition law of distribution agreements for newspapers and magazines. In carrying out this work, I understand OFT received and took into account representations from all sides of the newspaper and magazine supply chain. I am aware that representatives of retailers—notably the National Federation of Retail Newsagents—have publicly welcomed the OFT's provisional findings which were announced on 23 February.

Postal Services

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to improve parcel post services to Orkney and Shetland. [224624]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 4 April 2005]*: The parcels delivery market is a fully liberalised and competitive market, and many parcel operators offer a range of services to Orkney and Shetland.

Royal Mail provides the universal service for parcels—the standard three to five day delivery service—which provides for the delivery of parcels weighing up to 20 kg at a uniform price anywhere in the United Kingdom.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and I have been assured by Royal Mail that improving quality of service is the company's top priority.

Press Officers

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many press officers are employed in the Department. [206518]

Ms Hewitt: The number of press officers employed in the Department of Trade and Industry is 18.

Public Information

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* printed public information and *(b)* other public information is made available by her Department. [215323]

Ms Hewitt: A list of in print publication together with public information covering various topics is available via my Department's website at www.dti.gov.uk.

Regional Development Agency (North-east)

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much investment the regional development agency for the north-east of England has spent in Hartlepool in each year since it was formed. [215126]

Jacqui Smith: I have been advised by One NorthEast, the regional development agency for the north-east of England, that targeted spend in Hartlepool since the agency was created has been as follows:

	Funding (£)
1999–2000	5,002,000
2000–01	8,302,048
2001–02	8,483,361
2002–03	9,875,538
2003–04	7,489,115
2004–05	[1]6,154,707

[1] Forecast spend

Expenditure includes the single regeneration budget, single programme and also land and property expenditure relating to the acquisition and development of Queens Meadow.

In addition Hartlepool residents and businesses will have benefited from the agency's regional programmes which are aimed at increasing the economic prosperity of the north-east of England. These programmes cannot always be directly attributable to specific localities.

Examples of One NorthEast's activities in Hartlepool have included improvements to disadvantage housing estates of West View, King Oswy and Central Estate, investment in the Headland and docks, and in the Oakesway Industrial Estate. Further development is planned in Victoria Harbour and the headland area.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* planned capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223428]

Mr. Lammy: Resource and capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) budgets up to 2007–08 are set out by department in annex C of Budget 2005. DEL budgets beyond 2007–08 will, as normal, be determined in future Spending Reviews.

Royal Marriage

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will bring forward proposals to amend section 2 of the Regency Act 1937 to clarify the application of the Act to the future HRH Duchess of Cornwall, consequent upon her husband ascending to the throne. [222469]

Mr. Leslie: No.

WORK AND PENSIONS

"Are you over 50?"

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of *(a)* designing, *(b)* writing, *(c)* printing and *(d)* distributing the booklet "Are you over 50?", reissued in April 2004. [223908]

Jane Kennedy: The information about the costs associated with the revised English and Welsh versions of "Are you Over 50?" April 2004 is in the table.

£

	Cost
Design	1,920.00
Writing	Nil
Printing	172,350.00
Distribution (including storage costs)	48,541.00

Benefit Payment Methods

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make it his Department's policy to give benefit claimants information about all the payment options available, including the Post Office Card Account method, when they apply for benefits. [224085]

Mr. Pond: It is already the Department's policy to give benefit claimants information about all the payment options available, including the Post Office Card account, when they apply for benefits. This enables them to make an informed decision about which account best meets their individual needs.

British United Shoe Machinery

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money in the Financial Assistance Scheme will be provided to pensioners of

British United Shoe Machinery Limited; and what the average annual payment under the scheme paid to these pensioners will be. [224551]

Malcolm Wicks: Estimates cannot be made of the cost of assistance for members of individual schemes until we have received more detailed information; including information on what the scheme pension age is for individual members, their distance from scheme pension age as at 14 May 2004, and their individual losses in the schemes.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what discussions *(a)* he, *(b)* Ministers in his Department and their predecessors and *(c)* departmental officials have had with (i) Sir Ronald Cohen, (ii) other directors and senior managers of British United Shoe Machinery (BUSM) Limited and (iii) pension fund managers or trustees of BUSM since 1 June 1997 about the collapse of the BUSM pension fund. [224552]

Malcolm Wicks: We are not aware of any such discussions taking place with Sir Ronald Cohen, directors or senior mangers of BUSM or managers or trustees of the BUSM pension scheme about the collapse of the BUSM pension fund. However, we are aware of the very difficult situation faced by members of the BUSM pension scheme, and sympathise with their position. I have held many meetings with members of pension schemes that are winding up, including their constituency MPs and Trade Union representatives.

The Government have introduced a number of measures to strengthen scheme member protection in the Pensions Act 2004. These include the introduction of the Pension Protection Fund (PPF), a new pensions regulator and the Financial Assistance Scheme. I can confirm that the BUSM pension scheme is on the indicative list of schemes potentially eligible for the Financial Assistance Scheme.

Mr. Garnier: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will commission an inquiry into the collapse of the British United Shoe Machinery pension fund. [224553]

Malcolm Wicks: There are no plans to commission such an inquiry into the scheme.

The Pensions Ombudsman is an independent statutory commissioner and can investigate complaints of injustice resulting from maladministration and disputes of fact or law by the trustees or managers of a scheme, or by an employer on a pensions matter.

The body responsible for monitoring occupational pension schemes' compliance with statutory duties and functions is the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (Opra). A scheme's auditor and actuary have a statutory duty to report breaches of the law to Opra, which will then investigate any allegations.

New Deal

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Crosby have gained work through the new deal programme. [223881]

Mr. Pond: A total of 350 lone parents in Crosby have gained a job through the new deal for lone parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through the other new deal programmes are not available.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Crosby have participated in *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [223938]

Mr. Pond: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. We have successfully rolled out Work Focused Interviews to provide lone parents with the opportunity to discuss work options and find out about the help available to them. From 12 April 2004 we have enhanced the New Deal for Partners to offer partners taking part in the programme the same level of support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. We are rolling out Work Focused Interviews for Partners offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

From October 2004 we have piloted a number of initiatives, including Worksearch Premium and In Work Credit, to test out whether barriers to lone parents entering and remaining in work can be removed.

540 women have started the New Deal for Lone Parents in Crosby since the beginning of the programme in October 1998. Information on the number of women in Crosby who have started the New Deal for Partners is not available.

Occupational Pensions

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reason the Financial Services Authority implements payments to those occupational pension holders whose pensions are in deficit or administration at the age of 65 years rather than at the age of retirement stipulated in each scheme. [224071]

Malcolm Wicks: The Financial Assistance Scheme is intended to provide those hardest hit by pension scheme wind-ups with assistance funded by the taxpayer. To ensure that the resources provided by the taxpayer are used most effectively, and to keep administration simple and cost-effective, the Financial Assistance Scheme will adopt a single simple set of rules, based on the most common features of occupational pension schemes, rather than attempting to replicate each particular feature of each individual eligible scheme. According to the Occupational Pension Schemes 2000 survey by the Government Actuary's Department, around 2/3 of active members of private sector defined benefit schemes have a retirement age of 65.

Pension Credit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1397W, on pension credit, if he will estimate the savings credit take-up rate for *(a)* those who are entitled to both guarantee credit and savings credit and *(b)* those who are entitled only to savings credit. [221555]

Malcolm Wicks: National statistics on take-up of major DWP benefits are published annually by the Department in "Income Related Benefits: Estimates of Take-up". These are based on the Family Resources Survey (FRS) for the relevant year and take account of both entitled non-recipients and non-entitled recipients. However, they are published significantly in arrears and the 2004–05 statistics will not be available for some time.

Interim figures can be derived by comparing administrative claimant count with entitlement figures derived from the Policy Simulation Model, based on the 2002–03 Family Resources Survey. However administrative and survey figures are not directly comparable and any take-up figure derived this way is indicative only.

Guarantee element take-up estimates thus formed can be roughly validated by comparison with existing minimum income guarantee entitlement and take-up estimates. However, in the case of savings credit this is not possible. It is thought that take-up for those on both guarantee and savings credit is to the order of 80 per cent. Similarly it is thought that around half of individuals entitled to savings credit only are taking up their entitlement, although there is no way of validating these results.

The savings element of pension credit is a relatively new entitlement, introduced in October 2003. Weekly entitlement can be up to £15.51 for single pensioners and £20.22 for couples. It is already in payment to over half a million households. The average award was £9.81 as at November 2004, the latest date for which this figure is available.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when Mr. David Ross, a constituent of the hon. Member for Sittingbourne and Sheppey, will receive his pension credit. [224031]

Malcolm Wicks: A cheque for arrears of pension credit was issued to Mr. Ross on 4 April 2005. He will now receive his pension credit weekly by direct payment into his account.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of the number of eligible people not claiming pension credit in *(a)* Wales, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Northern Ireland, *(d)* England and *(e)* Bridgend; and what plans he has to improve take-up. [224347]

Malcolm Wicks: Direct, reliable estimates of the number of eligible people not receiving pension credit are not yet available.

The following table shows indicative, broad brush estimates of eligibility levels in 2004–05, where available, and numbers in receipt of pension credit at the end of December 2004. These sets of figures are derived from survey and administrative sources respectively and are not directly comparable. We plan to publish definitive National Statistics on take-up and entitlement for the first six months of pension credit by the end of 2005.

The pension service is committed to increasing levels of pension credit take-up. We have already written at least once to every pensioner household in the country to tell them about pension credit and encourage them to apply. We are re-contacting directly, by mail, telephone or personal visit, those people whom we believe are particularly likely to be eligible. New, targeted marketing campaigns seek to overcome the barriers which might prevent take-up of pension credit and the reasons which people give for not applying. The pension service local service continues to work in partnership with local authorities and the voluntary sector, particularly in identifying and contacting older people who are vulnerable or who have yet to take up their entitlement.

Eligibility estimates for pension credit 2004–05 and numbers in receipt of pension credit, December 2004

	Wales	*Scotland*	*England*
Estimated number of eligible private households, 2004–05	200,000	300,000	3,050,000
Estimated number of eligible individuals, 2004–05	250,000	400,000	4,000,000
Private households in receipt of pension credit, 31 December 2004	148,500	259,400	2,082,400
Individuals in receipt of pension credit, 31 December 2004	184,600	313,700	2,561,500

Notes:

1. Eligibility levels for pension credit are estimated using the 2002–03 Family Resources Survey modelled using the Department's Policy Simulation Model. Results are subject to sampling errors and estimation assumptions, so these projections are indicative only until the publication of the National Statistics estimates of income-related benefits.
2. Eligibility estimates by country are based on estimates for Government Office Regions. These do not include those in residential care or nursing homes (RCNH). Eligibility estimates are in thousands, rounded to the nearest 50,000.
3. Numbers in receipt of pension credit are as at the end of December 2004 ascrecorded by General Matching Service data, scaled up to provide month-endcfigures and rounded to the nearest hundred.
4. Numbers in receipt do not include RCNH recipients. Total numbers in receipt at the end of December have been adjusted by estimated numbers of RCNH recipients, based on the November 2004 QSE administration data and rounded to the nearest 100.
5. Some individual recipients may be under 60 years of age, where the claimant is aged 60 or over and the partner aged under 60.
6. Eligibility estimates at constituency level are not available.
7. Figures for Northern Ireland are not available.

Pensions

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what his latest estimate is of the number of companies that are failing in their duty to provide stakeholder pensions; [219562]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the number of companies that have been fined for failing to provide stakeholder pensions. [219563]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the written answer I gave the hon. Member for Northavon (Mr. Webb) on 27 October 2004, *Official Report*, column 1289W.

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on *(a)* male and *(b)* female recipients of the (i) basic State Pension, (ii) SERPS and (iii) pension credit in 2003–04; and how many recipients there were of each. [223461]

Malcolm Wicks *[pursuant to the reply, 24 March 2005, Official Report, c. 1037W]:* The requested information is in the tables.

Great Britain 2003–04

Expenditure (£ million, cash terms)

	(i) Basic state pension	*(ii) SERPS*	*(iii) Pension credit*
(a) Male	16,801	4,727	1,010
(b) Female	22,978	1,951	1,468

Recipients (Thousand)

	(i) Basic state pension	*(ii) SERPS*	*(iii) Pension credit*
(a) Male	4,241	3,597	761
(b) Female	7,011	3,572	1,405

Notes:

1. All expenditure figures have been rounded to the nearest million pounds. Expenditure recorded on the department's accounting systems has been apportioned between males and females using a 5 per cent. sample of administrative records.
2. All caseload figures have been rounded to the nearest thousand, and are based on a 5 per cent. sample of administrative records.
3. A basic State Pension is paid to those who fully or partially satisfy the contribution conditions for a category A or category B basic State Pension.
4. Category D retirement pensions are not included in the figures.
5. The SERPS (State Earnings-Related Pension Scheme) figure also includes amounts for state second pension and graduated retirement benefit.
6. Basic State Pension and SERPS expenditure includes pensions paid to people living overseas.
7. Pension credit expenditure includes both the guarantee credit and the savings credit. As pension credit was only introduced on 6 October 2003, the 2003–04 expenditure quoted relates only to half a year.
8. Figures are consistent with the pre-Budget report 2004 and with expenditure information published on the internet at http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd4/expenditure.asp (table 3). These tables will shortly be updated with Budget 2005 figures.

Source:

Departmental accounts data and 5 per cent. samples of departmental administrative records.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the schemes listed as being potentially eligible for the Financial Assistance Scheme had promised index-linked benefits to some or all of their non-pensioner members. [222185]

Malcolm Wicks: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1034W to the hon. Member for Northavon (Mr. Webb).

Pensions Act 2004

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many statutory instruments have been made under the Pensions Act 2004; and how many remain to be made to implement provisions of the Act. [224670]

Malcolm Wicks: To date 43 statutory instruments have been made under the Pensions Act 2004, 31 of which bring into force The Pensions Regulator and Pension Protection Fund from April 2005.

We anticipate that we will make approximately 60 further statutory instruments over a period of 12 to 18 months to bring into force other provisions of the Act. This estimate may change as the legislation is prepared and as we consult with the pensions industry on particular issues.

Rebates

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost of contracted out rebates in the *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector was in the last year for which figures are available; and how many people were covered by contracted out rebates in each sector. [219703]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table and based on the numbers contracted-out during the 2002–03 tax year, the latest year for which information is available:

Cost of contracted-out rebates		*Number of people covered by contracted-out rebates*	
Public sector	£3.7 billion	Public Sector	5.2 million
Private sector	£6.8 billion	Private Sector	7.6 million

Source:

"Second Tier Pension Provision" published by the Department for Work and Pensions using the Lifetime Labour Market Database which uses a 1 per cent. sample of National Insurance records.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been *(a)* applied for and *(b)* granted by the courts in Leicester, in each year since their inception. [222898]

Ms Blears: The available information on the number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) applied for and issued, on application or following conviction, as notified to the Home Office by the courts in Leicester, is given in the following table.

Number of ASBOs issued, as notified to the Home Office, by type of court in Leicester, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 September 2004

Period	*ASBOs on application[2]*		*ASBOs on conviction*	*Total issued on application/on conviction*
	Total applications	*Total issued*	*Total issued*	
Magistrates court				
1 June 2000 to 31 December 2000	4	4	n/a	4
1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001	—	—	n/a	—
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	1	1	—	1
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	1	1	—	1
1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004	—	—	4	4
Sub-total	6	6	4	10

Number of ASBOs issued, as notified to the Home Office, by type of court in Leicester, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 September 2004

Period	ASBOs on application[2]		ASBOs on conviction	Total issued on application/on conviction
	Total applications	Total issued	Total issued	
The Crown court				
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	n/a	n/a	—	—
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	n/a	n/a	3	3
1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004	n/a	n/a	2	2
Sub-total	n/a	n/a	5	5
County court				
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	—	—	n/a	—
1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004	1	1	n/a	1
Sub-total	1	1	—	1
Total	7	7	9	16

n/a = Not applicable.
[1] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected by police force area on aggregate numbers only. During this period one ASBO was notified as issued within Leicestershire.
[2] Only covers applications dealt with by 30 September 2004.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of 10 to 17-year-olds with an antisocial behaviour order also have an individual support order. [223749]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Number of individual support orders[1] given at the magistrates court, England and Wales

	1 May 2004 to 30 September 2004
ASBOs (age 10–17) (number)	454
Individual support officers (number)	5
Percentage	1

[1] Individual support orders, introduced under section 322 of the Criminal Justice Act, are available at magistrates courts only, as from 1 May 2004, for juveniles (10–17) with ASBOs.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders have been issued in Leicester in each year since 1999. [224665]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The available information is given in the following table.

Number of antisocial behaviour orders issued, at all courts, as notified to the Home Office, wherein restrictions are imposed in the local government area of the City of Leicester, 1 June 2000[1] to 30 September 2004[2]

Period	Total issued
1 June 2000 to 31 December 2000	4
1 January 2001 to 31 December 2001	—
1 January 2002 to 31 December 2002	1
1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003	4
1 January 2004 to 30 September 2004	7
Total	16

[1] From 1 April 1999 to 31 May 2000 data were collected by police force area on aggregate numbers only. During this period one ASBO was notified as issued within Leicestershire.
[2] Latest available.

Caravans

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* charged and *(b)* prosecuted for using (i) over-wide and (ii) over-long caravans on roads in the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [222999]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* It is not possible to separately identify offences relating to vehicle limit lengths on the Home Office Court Proceeding database.

Information for Scotland is a matter for the Scottish Office and that for Northern Ireland for the Northern Ireland Office.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his policy is for checking the ownership of caravans used by Travellers. [223000]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 18 March 2005]:* The Home Office does not have a policy specifically to check whether caravans used by Travellers are stolen. Where caravan theft is an issue of local concern, police forces are able to draw on guidance jointly produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers and bodies representing the interests of caravan users.

CCTV (North Tyneside)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications his Department has received from North Tyneside council for funding for CCTV cameras since 1997; what the result was of each application; and how many applications are outstanding. [220936]

Ms Blears: Under rounds 1 and 2 of the Crime Reduction Programme, a national competitive bidding process which ran from 1999 to 2003, North Tyneside did not receive any funding.

Under subsequent funding streams, North Tyneside received:

£10,000 for North Tyneside General Hospital CCTV Link and £10,000 for Tynemouth Village CCTV System from the Safer Communities Initiative in 2002–03;

£40,417 for Wallsend CCTV from the Communities Against Drugs Initiative in 2002–03; and

£20,000 for CCTV and lighting from the Small Retailers in Deprived Areas Initiative in 2003–04.

Under the Building Safer Communities and Basic Command Unit funds, no CCTV projects were planned by the North Tyneside Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) in either 2003–04 or 2004–05. The CDRP is currently determining its plans for 2005–06.

Christmas Cards

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many hours of staff time were taken up in preparation of Christmas cards in 2004; [205106]

(2) how many departmental staff have responsibility for preparing Christmas cards; [205107]

(3) what percentage of official departmental Christmas cards included a contribution to charity in their cost; and which charities benefited from such a contributions; [205108]

(4) what the cost of postage was for official departmental Christmas cards in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; [205109]

(5) what the cost was of purchasing official departmental Christmas cards in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; [205110]

(6) how many official Christmas cards were sent out by his Department in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [205111]

Fiona Mactaggart: 20,000 official departmental Christmas cards were purchased in 2003 at a cost of £11,750. The original price quoted was £13,630 but because of poor printing quality we were able to negotiate this down. In 2004, 20,270 cards were purchased at a cost of £14,380.47. In both years all cards were sold in aid of Victim Support with 10p per card being donated. The cards are used by the Department's senior managers and sent to external contacts. The information on staff preparation, time and numbers, as well as postage costs is delegated locally and not held centrally. To obtain this information would incur disproportionate costs.

Civil Servants

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff were working for each directorate of the National Offender Management Service on 11 February; and where they are based. [220517]

Paul Goggins: Staff numbers for 11 February 2005 are not available. However, on 22 November 2004, the following full-time equivalent posts were located in each National Offenders Management Service (NOMS) Directorate:

Directorate	*Full-time equivalents*
Policy	216.9
Finance	161.9
Standards and Innovation	69.2
Health	87.7
National Offender Manager	17.0

In addition, the following full-time equivalent posts were located in units that were working for NOMS headquarters but were not attached to a NOMS headquarters directorate:

	Full-time equivalents
Chief Executive's Office	7.0
NOMS Programme Office	12.0
Office for Contracted Prisons	66.0
HR Sub-Programme	3.0

The posts in the HR Sub-Programme were based in the Prison Service Headquarters. All of the other posts were based in NOMS headquarters.

Community Support Officers

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community support officers there have been in *(a)* the South Tyneside Area Command and *(b)* Northumbria in each year since their inception. [222553]

Ms Blears: The first community support officers (CSOs) were introduced into Northumbria in 2003–04. I am informed by the Chief Constable that the first deployment of CSOs to the South Tyneside Area was on 10 January when six were allocated to the area. South Tyneside should have 11 CSOs by 1 April.

The table sets out the number of CSOs for the Northumbria police.

	Number of community support officers
31 March 2004	[1]51
14 February 2005	[2]77

[1] Source Police Strength statistics collected by Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.
[2] Collection made outside of the normal quarterly collection of police strength data.

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 13 September 2004 from the hon. Member for Brent, East regarding Mrs. Helen Adumekwe. [215633]

Ms Blears: Unfortunately, there was no record of the hon. Member's letter being received in the Home Office. We have since obtained a copy and I shall reply shortly.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 25 February from the hon. Member for Northavon regarding a visa application by a constituent, Mr. Swaine. [221403]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 14 March 2004]:* I wrote to the hon. Member on 5 April 2005.

Credit Card Fraud

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Chip and PIN cards in preventing credit card fraud. [222133]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* Chip and PIN is a major finance and retail industry anti-fraud initiative. The introduction of Chip and PIN has been managed by the Chip and PIN Programme Management Organisation, and actively supported by Government.

Following a successful public trial, national roll out of the scheme began in October 2003 with the aim that by 2005 a majority of plastic card transactions should be Chip and PIN. The Chip and PIN programme announced in January that it reached all its 2004 targets for the roll out with customer research demonstrating that 71 per cent. of cardholders expect their next transaction to be Chip and PIN and 45 per cent. now using it for all or most of their card payments.

It is currently too early to assess the effects of Chip and PIN in preventing credit card fraud. The impact of Chip and PIN on card fraud is expected to be seen early in 2005 and hence will first be reflected in the APACS mid-year card fraud figures to June 2005, which will be available in the summer.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of current efforts to reduce internet based 'card-not-present' credit card fraud. [222134]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 16 March 2005]:* The Government works with the police and industry to tackle fraud and other online crime through a number of initiatives. A key factor in dealing with online fraud is prevention and education and the Government takes an active role in educating computer users about the risks of fraud committed through the internet. The Home Office website provides advice on avoiding internet fraud and the Home Office has also created, and maintains the 'e-tailing mini site', which forms part of the crime reduction website. The mini site provides information to help both businesses and consumers protect themselves specifically when using the internet.

The Home Office is represented on an industry-led Steering Group which aims to tackle 'Card Not Present' (CNP) fraud (which includes fraud over the internet). We support practical measures being introduced by the industry to increase levels of security for internet transactions. These include Address Verification Services (AVS) and Card Security Code (CSC), which inform merchants' decisions on whether to proceed with an order. AVS/CSC can provide immediate results, with APACS reporting that some merchants have reduced their fraud levels by up to 80 per cent. Card schemes MasterCard and Visa have also introduced the 3D Secure system, known as MasterCard Secure Code or Verified by Visa, which requires password verification for internet transactions. The work of the CNP Steering Group has also led to the production of a manual (Spot and Stop Card Fraud Retailer Pack) which aims to educate merchants on the dangers of CNP fraud and the steps which can be taken to prevent it.

Government are also involved in the development of Project Endurance, an initiative which will launch a computer and internet security public awareness campaign this year. The project is an alliance of public and private sector, which brings together a number of UK Government departments and law enforcement organisations with a number of high-profile private sector companies. This campaign is to be targeted at micro businesses and consumers, primarily aimed at helping these users gain confidence in using the internet, and protect themselves and their computer while online.

The Association for Payment Clearing Services (a banking industry body) considers that the recently announced increase in card not present fraud shows growth only in proportion to the increasing number of businesses now offering non face-to-face transactions, in particular over the internet.

Deaths Abroad

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to establish a system of discretionary rather than mandatory inquests for violent or suspicious deaths abroad; and if he will make a statement. [224108]

Paul Goggins: At present coroners in England and Wales are required to hold inquests into deaths which occur overseas only if the body is repatriated, the death is reported to them, and the death would have been subject to an inquest if it had occurred in England and Wales.

The Government commissioned an independent report—"Death Certification and Investigation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the report of a Fundamental Review" [Cm 5831] which was presented to Parliament in 2003. It included recommendations on coroners' responsibilities for deaths abroad (pages 136–139) and proposed that public inquests should be at the discretion of coroners, but with an expectation that they would take place in particular circumstances.

Drawing on the recommendations of the review, and taking full account of the Third Report of the Shipman Inquiry which was also published [Cm 5854] in 2003, we outlined our intention to proceed with coroner and death certification reform in a position paper presented to Parliament in March 2004 [Cm 6159]. We are concluding detailed work currently and will put forward firm plans, including the handling of coroners' investigations into deaths abroad, as soon as we can.

Departmental Policies (Newcastle-under-Lyme)

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on tackling drugs misuse in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997. [223238]

Caroline Flint: A breakdown of financial allocations to local constituencies is not available in the form requested, as funding is allocated to Drug Action Teams (DATs). In this case, the figures given are those for Staffordshire DAT, which covers Tamworth, Staffordshire Moorlands, Burton, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, South Staffordshire and Stone.

Direct annual funding nationally to tackle drug misuse amounted to £1,244 million in 2003–04, rising to £1,344 million in 2004–05. Staffordshire DAT has seen a significant increase in direct funding for tackling drugs, in particular for drug treatment services and the throughcare and aftercare elements of the Drug

Interventions Programme. In 2003–04 the allocation for Staffordshire DAT amounted to £4.38 million, rising to £5.16 million in 2004–05.

Domestic Violence

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to ensure that the recommendations of the joint Crown Prosecution Service and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary inquiry, Violence in the Home, are being implemented in all police areas. [207496]

Ms Blears: Under the leadership of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), comprehensive guidance on investigating domestic violence has been produced by the National Centre for Policing Excellence. This guidance was launched at the ACPO domestic violence conference in November 2004 and is currently being implemented by all police forces with the assistance of the National Centre for Policing Excellence.

The guidance has incorporated all of the relevant recommendations from the HMCPSI/HMIC report. ACPO has agreed with the Home Office and CPS a common definition of domestic violence. This is the definition used by the ACPO guidance on investigating domestic violence.

The new guidance is also supplemented by the Centrex modular training package on domestic violence. This training package was subjected to an annual update and has been recently re-released to all police forces in England and Wales. The update includes the incorporation of information from the HMCPSI/HMIC Thematic report and the ACPO guidance on investigating domestic violence.

Drug-related Crime

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been arrested for crimes connected with *(a)* cocaine and *(b)* heroin use in each constituency in each year since 1997. [224333]

Caroline Flint: Data on crimes related to the drugs specified are not currently collated at constituency level. The Home Office collates data at police force level on arrests for property crimes, but do not record whether they are related to an offender's drug habit. However, data on drug offenders are collated at police force level.

Data on the numbers of people arrested for cocaine and heroin offences in the United Kingdom are available in the "Drug Seizure and Offender Statistics, United Kingdom" Home Office statistical bulletin 2001 and 2002, and the Drug Offenders finding, for England and Wales 2003. The area tables accompanying these publications provide a break down at police force level.

Copies are available in the Library of the House and on the RDS website at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hosb0804.pdf%5D

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were arrested for crimes connected with *(a)* cannabis, *(b)* cocaine, *(c)* ecstasy and *(d)* heroin use in each constituency in each year since 1997. [223733]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Data on crimes related to the drugs specified are not currently collated at constituency level. The Home Office collates data at police force level on arrests for property crimes, but do not record whether they are related to an offender's drug habit. However, data on drug offenders are collated at police force level.

Data on the numbers of people arrested for cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and heroin offences in the United Kingdom are available in the "Drug Seizure and Offender Statistics, United Kingdom" Home Office statistical bulletin 2001 and 2002, and the Drug Offenders finding, for England and Wales 2003. The area tables accompanying these publications provide a break down at police force level. Copies are available in the Library and on the RDS website at: http://uk.sitestat.com/homeoffice/homeoffice/s?rds.hosb0804pdf&ns_type=pdf&ns_url=%5Bhttp://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs04/hosb0804.pdf%5D

Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of how much *(a)* heroin, *(b)* cocaine and *(c)* cannabis was sold in *(a)* cash value and *(b)* weight terms in each year since 1975. [223708]

Caroline Flint: The information requested is not centrally available.

Emergency Calls

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average response time for police to 999 calls was in *(a)* Hartlepool and *(b)* England and Wales in each year since 1997. [218509]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary (HMCIC) publishes statistics of the percentage of 999 calls answered within target time. The latest available statistics relate to 2002–03 and 2003–04 and are published in Table 5 of HMCIC's Annual Report. The publication is available via the Home Office website at:

http://www.official-documents.co.uk/document/deps/hc/hc171/171.pdf

The equivalent figures for earlier years are available from previous annual reports, copies of which should be in the Library. These statistics are only available at police force area level and figures are not available for Hartlepool.

Equip for Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a comprehensive risk assessment has been carried out by the Metropolitan Police Service on the outsourcing of the Equip for Service facility at Northolt. [219337]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 1 March 2005]:* Decisions relating to the use of resources are a matter for the Commissioner and the Police Authority.

The Commissioner of police of the Metropolis informs me that the Metropolitan Police Service conducted a comprehensive risk assessment on the outsourcing of the Equip for Service function in early 2004. From the assessment he is confident that all the risks are manageable.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what impact outsourcing the Equip for Service facility at Northolt will have on each London borough and their ability to deliver the national crime reduction strategy. [219338]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 1 March 2005]:* Decisions relating to the use of resources are a matter for the Commissioner and the Police Authority.

The Commissioner of police of the Metropolis informs me that the outsourcing will not affect the Service capacity to police each London borough or to deliver the national crime reduction strategy.

Essex Police

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans there are to amalgamate divisional police commands in Essex. [222493]

Ms Blears: The operational control and direction of police resources is vested in the local chief constable. Inevitably this includes where and how resources are deployed and the supporting structures for service delivery. This is not a matter over which Ministers, quite rightly, have any direct influence and I am not therefore in a position to be able to answer this question.

Ex-prisoners

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the ex-prisoner groups which have received funding from his Department in the 2004–05 financial year; and how much funding each has received. [223277]

Paul Goggins: There is no record of any funding being provided to ex-offender groups, we do however try to include ex-offender groups in all relevant information, discussion groups, conferences and other related events. There may be instances where individual prison governors or probation areas provide funding for specific service provision, but we do not hold this information centrally.

Gun/Knife Crime

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on levels of *(a)* gun crime and *(b)* knife crime since 1995. [222649]

Caroline Flint: Excluding air weapons, in 1995, there were 5,866 recorded firearms offences. In 2003–04, the total number of recorded offences was 10,338. This figure includes incidents in which a firearm is fired, used as a blunt instrument against a person, or used in a threat, and includes handguns, shotguns and rifles, as well as imitations, and other firearms (e.g. stun guns, CS gas). However, it is important to remember that these figures may be affected by changes in reporting and recording and, in particular, figures for some offences may have been inflated by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. In 1995, 70 homicides were committed using a firearm; in 2003–04, the total was 68 homicides.

Figures for knife crime are not collected separately from statistics for offences of violence against the person. However, in 1995, there were 243 homicides using a sharp instrument (including knives, broken bottles, etc). In 2003–04, there were 237 homicides using a sharp instrument.

We are fully committed to taking action to reduce levels of gun and knife crime. Our strategy on both fronts includes working with police, other statutory agencies, the voluntary sector, and also with the community, who have a major role to play in dealing with these issues.

We have tightened firearms legislation by banning the sale, manufacture and import of guns that use self-contained gas cartridge systems (e.g. Brococks) and have made it an arrestable offence to carry an imitation or air gun in public without lawful authority or reasonable excuse. We have also introduced a mandatory minimum sentence of five years for anyone convicted of unlawful possession of an illegal firearm. We are conducting a comprehensive review of the firearms legislation, which includes a careful look at whether there are areas of the legislation which need to be strengthened.

We have provided £2.25 million from recycled criminal assets in 2004–05 to support gun crime work in England and Wales, including £250,000 for the second round of the Connected Fund, which supports small community groups involved in a wide variety of local projects.

On knife crime, we recently announced a package of proposals, including:

- raising the minimum age for purchasing a knife to 18. This would bring the sale of knives into line with the sale of fireworks and alcohol;
- adding new categories of knife now being used in crime to the list of banned offensive weapons;
- providing a power to require specified licensed premises to search for an offensive weapon on entry;
- giving head teachers a new power to search pupils for knives;
- pulling together best practice from initiatives and schemes focusing on knife crime;
- developing local crime reduction and enforcement strategies on dealing with the carrying of knives.

Indonesian Rainforest Timber

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Indonesian rainforest timber has been used in *(a)* the new Home Office building at 2 Marsham street, *(b)* the contents of the building and *(c)* construction of the building; and if he will make a statement. [205333]

Mr. Browne: No Indonesian rainforest timber has been procured for the new Home Office headquarters building at 2 Marsham street.

In respect of Indonesian rainforest timber used in the construction process, I would refer the right hon. Member to the Report on the Procurement of Timber for the Re-development of 2 Marsham street of June 2003 which has been placed in the Library.

Infectious Diseases (UK Entrants)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria the Government have set to determine whether to test an individual for tuberculosis. [217746]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It is long standing policy that people subject to immigration control who are seeking to enter the UK for more than six months from countries which are high risk for tuberculosis (i.e. have an annual incidence rate of over 40 cases of tuberculosis per 100,000 population) and port asylum claimants should be checked for tuberculosis.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to public funds has been of testing people entering the UK for tuberculosis in each year since 1997. [217747]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The immigration service does not have any details regarding the cost of providing this service.

The department of health advises that where tuberculosis (TB) checks are carried out at ports of entry in the UK, the costs are met from health budgets. The Department of health does not collect centrally the cost to local NHS bodies of providing medical inspectors.

Inquests (Teesside)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time between death and inquest in the jurisdiction of the coroner for Teesside was in 2004; and what the average time between death and inquest was in other coroners' jurisdictions in *(a)* the North East and *(b)* England and Wales in that year. [212092]

Paul Goggins: Figures for 2004 are not yet available.

Figures for 2003 show that the coroner for Teesside had an average time of 35.6 weeks for completed inquests. The 2003 figure for the remainder of the coroners in the North East region was an average time of 24.8 weeks and for the whole of England and Wales the average time for completed inquests was 19.5 weeks.

International Terrorism

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the security services have advised the Government that powers to imprison suspected terrorists without normal trial would be helpful in tackling international terrorism. [222781]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The then Home Secretary my right hon. Friend the Member for Sheffield, Brightside (Mr. Blunkett) took account of advice from the Security Service and police, after the attacks of 11 September 2001, on the measures necessary to defend the UK and its interests against similar terrorist attacks. This resulted in the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001—including the Part 4 provisions relating to the detention of foreign nationals who could not be deported.

The Government have accepted the Lords' judgment of 16 December 2004 that the Part 4 powers of the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act are discriminatory and therefore disproportionate. Accordingly, it decided that detention in such circumstances was no longer appropriate. The measures contained in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 are the result of consultation with the police, and Security Service about the best way to deal with the problems posed by suspected terrorists who cannot be prosecuted.

Members' Security

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to increase levels of security provided for *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* hon. Members. [216059]

Mr. Charles Clarke: We do not comment on the security levels of individuals. The security of individuals is continually reviewed to ensure it is in line with the threat.

Mental Health Services (Trafford Police)

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 24 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 777W, what decisions were reached between Trafford police division and the local primary health care trust at their meeting on 22 February; and what timetable was set for the provision of a place of safety as defined by the Mental Health Bill. [212391]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 3 March 2005]:* The question relates to operational issues for the Greater Manchester police, which are matters for the chief officer. Therefore, I have asked the chief officer to respond directly to the hon. Member. I have also asked the chief officer to forward a copy of the response to my Department and I will arrange for a copy of the correspondence to be placed in the Library.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when regional offender managers will *(a)* assume their roles on a full-time basis and *(b)* cease to operate in their current posts within the prison and probation services. [201715]

Paul Goggins: All 10 Regional Offender Managers are now in post. In addition, the Regional Offender Manager for the East of England will retain his current role in the Office of Contracted Prisons until April 2007.

Neighbourhood Watch

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to provide financial support to the National Neighbourhood Watch Association; and if he will make a statement on his Department's assessment of the association's work. [223743]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has not made a formal assessment of the National Neighbourhood Watch Association's (NNWA) work. The NNWA does, however, play a role as a voice for many volunteers within the Neighbourhood Watch movement. The NNWA is a registered charity which is independent of Government and as such is responsible for assessing its own capabilities and strategy.

I understand that the NNWA has recently managed to secure core funding from a private sector sponsor which should secure the organisation's financial position. The Government did, however, grant the NNWA £25,000 during March 2005 to cover the organisation's essential running costs pending the start of this new sponsorship arrangement. We have no plans to provide further funding to the NNWA.

The main support to local Neighbourhood Watch schemes is in the form of partnership working from the police, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, and the community safety departments of local authorities. We have asked police services to ensure these arrangements are robust. We have also provided a website to encourage the sharing of good practice, www.neighbourhoodwatch.uk.com and we are in the process of setting up a telephone advice line. In addition the Government have made sure that public liability insurance cover is available for all Neighbourhood Watch groups in England and Wales, including those groups which are not affiliated to the NNWA.

Home Office support for local groups includes the printing and distribution of Neighbourhood Watch publications worth £100,000 pa. Additionally a new quarterly newsletter, called 'Community link' has been published to help spread good practice and new ideas among grassroots Neighbourhood Watch volunteers.

Organised Crime

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research he has conducted to develop a model for assessing different forms of organised crime; and if he will make a statement. [223878]

Caroline Flint: Officials have been working on measures to estimate the economic and social harms caused by organised crime, and the turnover of organised crime groups. It is intended to publish this work this summer

Overseas Bribery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions his Department has received representations from police forces about lack of resources available for investigations into overseas bribery. [219305]

Ms Blears: We have received no formal representation of this kind from police forces. However, we are aware from discussions with them that some police forces have expressed some concerns about the potential cost of investigations into overseas bribery.

Police

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police constabularies have a race and diversity policy or strategy. [221865]

Ms Blears: All police forces have a Race Equality Scheme under the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government are planning to change the discipline system for police officers who have acted in a discriminatory way. [221866]

Ms Blears: We are considering changes to the police disciplinary system rising from the review of the police disciplinary arrangements conducted by William Taylor, the report from the Commission for Racial Equality on the Police Service in England and Wales and the review conducted by Sir William Morris entitled "The Case for Change: People in the Metropolitan Police Service". This consideration will address discriminatory behaviour and other misconduct issues.

Police (Child Abuse)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what disciplinary procedure a police officer who breached the Association of Chief Police Officers' guidance on anonymity until the point of charge for individuals accused of abuse would face. [219314]

Ms Blears: Police officers have a duty of confidentiality and information should only be divulged to third parties lawfully and in the proper course of their duties. A breach of anonymity may constitute a breach of the Police Conduct Regulations 2004 and the force concerned would be obliged to investigate the matter. Where a complaint was received from a member of the public, the complaint would normally be referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission, who would determine how the complaint should be handled and the nature of any subsequent investigation.

It would also be for the Chief Officer or, in cases involving Chief Officers, the relevant Police Authority to determine whether the nature of any suspected breach of anonymity was sufficient to warrant an officer's suspension. Disciplinary proceedings would only be initiated at the conclusion of the investigation and the point of charge, where appropriate.

Police Constables (Probation)

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the average annual cost of *(a)* employing, *(b)* training and *(c)* developing a probationary police constable in the last year for which figures are available. [222670]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary have estimated that the average salary, training and development costs of a probationary police constable up to independent patrol (which is normally 31 weeks after joining a force) in 2003–04 were £27,048. This figure includes salary costs of £13,993 per probationary police constable for that period and training and development costs of £13,055.

Information about the associated costs for recruitment, supervision, accommodation, information technology etc. is not collated centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Police Detection Rates

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on trends in police detection rates. [220161]

Ms Blears: The Home Office reviews the performance of police forces on the basis of their sanction detection rate. The sanction detection rate is the percentage of crimes for which someone is charged, summonsed, receives a caution or other formal sanction.

The trend in police performance in sanction detections is now improving. Trends have, however, varied over the last two decades.

Between 1988 and 1996, there was a gradual decline in the sanction detection rate from 27 per cent. to 17.35 per cent. The rate then rose between 1996 and 1999 reaching 22 per cent. Since then, the rate has been affected by two changes which make comparisons more difficult to make: more stringent counting rules in relation to detections have taken place and a new National Crime Recording Standard was introduced inflating the number of offences against which the rate was calculated. The sanction detection rate fell after 1999 but then stabilised at around 19 per cent. between 2001–02 and 2003–04.

The Government have made clear their desire to raise performance in this area. It has set a goal of achieving a sanction detection rate of 25 per cent. by 2007–08. To achieve that improvement, a major drive has been under way to both raise rates and also to address unacceptable variations in detections performance between forces. This includes ensuring that forces prioritise and maximise investigative outcomes and that officers and other police staff have the best training and the right skills to improve the proportion of offences brought to justice.

Provisional data for 2004–05 indicate that improvements are now being achieved and the sanction detection rate has improved in each of the last 10 months.

Police Officers (Hours of Work)

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officer hours have been spent on road traffic duties in each of the last three years. [224259]

Caroline Flint: This information is not available.

Police Salaries

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average salary of *(a)* a newly trained police constable and *(b)* a community support officer is, broken down by police force. [210019]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Average salary information is not available.

The table shows the salary of a police constable on completion of initial training and the relevant regional allowance, and community support officers' salaries and allowances, as provided by forces for funding purposes for community support officers to be recruited January to March 2005.

The pay scales for police constables range from £19,803 for a newly recruited officer, rising to £31,092 for an officer with 11 year's service. Additionally, a constable who has served at the top of the pay scale for one year has access to a competence-related threshold payment of £1,032 per year.

There is no national pay scale for community support officers.

£

	Constable		*CSO*	
Forces	*Basic pay*	*Allowances*	*Basic*	*Allowance*
Avon and Somerset	22,107	—	15,732	3,775
Bedfordshire	22,107	1,000	16,573	3,943
Cambridgeshire	22,107	—	14,612	3,507
Cheshire	22,107	—	18,510	5,535
City of London	24,045	4,338	20,889	6,343
Cleveland	22,107	—	14,424	4,352
Cumbria	22,107	—	16,150	3,895
Derbyshire	22,107	—	14,424	4,217
Devon and Cornwall	22,107	—	16,149	2,021
Dorset	22,107	—	15,818	2,867
Durham	22,107	—	14,424	3,051
Dyfed-Powys	22,107	—	17,750	3,994
Essex	22,107	2,000	15,731	4,180
Gloucestershire	22,107	—	15,732	4,248
Greater Manchester	22,107	—	16,287	3,632
Gwent	22,107	—	15,731	5,506
Hampshire	22,107	1,000	18,842	3,203
Hertfordshire	22,107	2,000	20,410	2,752
Humberside[1]	22,107	—	17,100	—
Kent[2]	22,107	2,000	19,487	534
Lancashire	22,107	—	14,748	3,540
Leicestershire	22,107	—	15,732	3,706
Lincolnshire	22,107	—	12,668	2,000
Merseyside	22,107	—	14,424	2,740
Metropolitan	24,045	4,338	18,495	4,696
Norfolk	22,107	—	15,731	3,146
Northamptonshire	22,107	—	17,973	4,943
Northumbria	22,107	—	15,731	3,539
North Wales	22,107	—	15,813	4,581
North Yorkshire	22,107	—	17,746	4,710
Nottinghamshire	22,107	—	16,288	4,317
South Wales	22,107	—	17,252	5,037
South Yorkshire	22,107	—	16,836	2,528
Staffordshire	22,107	—	14,004	4,201
Suffolk	22,107	—	16,435	4,536
Surrey	22,107	2,000	17,958	1,000
Sussex	22,107	1,000	15,650	3,612
Thames Valley	22,107	2,000	17,220	4,268
Warwickshire	22,107	—	15,731	4,168
West Mercia	22,107	—	14,090	3,750
West Midlands	22,107	—	18,500	—
West Yorkshire	22,107	—	15,035	5,101
Wiltshire	22,107	—	16,476	2,306

[1] Shift allowance is included in basic salary.
[2] This figure is when the higher of one of two Kent location allowances is paid, the salary plus allowance figure when the lower location allowance is paid is £165 less.

Police Stations/Cell Blocks

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list *(a)* all newly built police stations which have not been used and *(b)* all newly built police cell blocks which have not been used which are not in use due to staff resource constraints; giving the full construction cost of each. [218895]

Ms Blears: We do not keep central records of when newly built police buildings are completed or brought into use.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* newly built police stations and *(b)* newly built

police cell blocks for which private finance initiative contracts were agreed and which do not meet the Home Office guidelines. [218896]

Ms Blears: As far as I am aware there are no newly built police stations or cell blocks for which private finance initiative (PFI) contracts were agreed and which do not meet the principles of the Home Office guidelines that were in operation at the time contracts were let.

Prevention of Terrorism Bill

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Bill will be subject to Sewel motions. [212318]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Terrorism is a reserved matter. A Sewel motion is not necessary in respect of any of the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

Prisons

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment his Department has made of the likely effects of the programme of mothballing prison places; [218146]

(2) how many prison places have been mothballed at each *(a)* public and *(b)* privately operated prison establishment. [218150]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) has implemented a plan to reduce overcrowding levels in some establishments and take out of use some accommodation due for refurbishment slightly earlier than planned. Both these measures will improve prison conditions.

The prison population will be carefully monitored and the accommodation brought back into use should this be necessary.

Sexual Abuse (Historical Cases)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many and what percentage of prisoners interviewed by the police in relation to historical sex abuse cases were taken to *(a)* an external location and *(b)* a specially equipped suite for their interview in each of the last five years; [218790]

(2) how many and what percentage of prisoners interviewed by the police in relation to historical sex abuse cases were taken to *(a)* an external location and *(b)* a specially equipped suite for their interview in each of the last five years. [210004]

Ms Blears: This information is not available.

Special Constables (Cheshire)

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many special constables there were in Cheshire in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2005. [224233]

Ms Blears: At 31 March 1997 there were 475 special constables in Cheshire. Figures for 2005 are not yet available.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce robbery in the 10 Street Crime Initiative areas by 14 per cent. from 1999–2000 levels by 2005 will be met. [219103]

Ms Blears: Performance against the Home Office targets is published in the Annual Report and the Autumn Performance Report available in the Library and on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk).

Terrorist Suspects (False Identity)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the information he has received on the use of false identities by terrorist suspects. [216004]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Home Office receives information from a variety of sources on the use of false identities by terrorists and those suspected of terrorism. Due to the nature of the information much of it is classified and cannot be published.

Transport Staff (Assaults)

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent attacks against *(a)* London Underground staff, *(b)* staff employed on the railways, *(c)* traffic police, *(d)* traffic wardens, *(e)* British Transport Police and *(f)* bus drivers there have been in each year since 1990. [220642]

Ms Blears: The only information which is collected centrally by the Home Office relates to assaults on traffic wardens in England and Wales and is only available for the last two financial years. In 2002–03, there were two recorded assaults resulting in serious injury and 63 recorded assaults resulting in minor or no injury. In 2003–04, there were 21 assaults resulting in minor or no injury.

The British Transport Police publish limited statistics on the number of officers and staff who are assaulted. The latest figures are contained in 'Statistical Bulletin 2003–04' which is available on their website at:

http://www.btp.police.uk/publications.htm

Vehicle Immobilisation (Licensing)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he has taken in response to the Security Industry Authority's request to postpone the 20 March 2006 implementation date for vehicle immobilisation personnel licensing. [222343]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The original implementation date for vehicle immobilisers on private land to be licensed by the Security Industry Authority was 28 February 2005. Due to problems with a training provider confirming qualification details, this offence date has been deferred until 3 May 2005. This will to allow individuals sufficient time to comply with the regulations.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Africa

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the projects in Africa *(a)* initiated, *(b)* fully funded, *(c)* partly funded and *(d)* run by his Department aimed at the diversification of the economies of African countries, with particular reference to Malawi; and if he will make a statement. [224583]

Hilary Benn: It would incur a disproportionate cost to approach all country offices, to identify and list all projects in Africa directly or indirectly funded by DFID to support economic diversification.

DFID's general approach to promoting economic growth covers: creating and maintaining a conducive investment environment for all types of businesses—large and small, foreign and domestic, urban and rural; promoting trade and business linkages; providing broad access to assets and markets, especially for poor people and reducing insecurity and vulnerability, for instance through social protection schemes. Many DFID programmes in African countries incorporate projects which address one or more of these and therefore contribute to diversifying economic activity.

In the case of Malawi, the greatest impediment to economic diversification and growth in recent years has been macroeconomic instability and the very high interest rates resulting from the previous Government's poor economic management. This led to a collapse in investment. Economic management has improved markedly since the May 2004 elections. In recognition of this, DFID is providing poverty reduction budget support (£15 million in 2004–05) to the new Government to enable it to stabilise the economy and bring interest rates down while continuing to provide essential services. There has been encouraging progress since the elections and there are good prospects for a new International Monetary Fund programme during 2005.

In addition to budget support, DFID supported several specific growth-related projects in Malawi. These include the Financial Services Project, which is jointly funded, by DFID (£3 million) and the US Agency for International Development (US$2.1 million). It uses the Opportunity International Bank of Malawi to expand financial services to poor Malawians and small and medium-sized enterprises. Another financial services project is run by Concern Universal, and aims to develop methods of providing loans to poor Malawians on a fully sustainable basis. The project works only in rural Malawi, and seeks to support micro and small enterprises, and to provide new opportunities for trading and agro-processing businesses. DFID is also fully funding the reconstruction of the Rivirivi railway bridge, which was washed away by floods in 2003. This will facilitate the resumption of rail services between Lilongwe and Nacala port in Mozambique, providing a major boost to economic diversification.

Darfur

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the food situation in Darfur. [224345]

Hilary Benn: The food security situation in Darfur is precarious. Of immediate concern are the increasing signs of food shortages among the general population, expected after the failure of the 2004 harvest season.

In February 2005 the World Food Programme (WFP) distributed food for 1.6 million beneficiaries from a target of 2 million in Darfur (80 per cent.). The shortfall was due to security, access and logistics difficulties, though it is a significant improvement on the January distribution figures of 1.2 million from a 1.8 million target (66 per cent.).

Nutrition levels continue to be a concern across Darfur and the picture is mixed. According to UNICEF there is growing evidence that the nutritional situation in select parts of Darfur is improving. The agency stated that admissions to therapeutic feeding centres have stabilised and decreased in most locations, indicating a potential decrease in the global acute malnutrition rate. However, in South Darfur, feeding centres run by Action Contra la Faim and Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF) in Kalma Camp are operating at maximum capacity and the WFP has advised its partners to continue blanket supplementary feeding to improve children's nutrition. Meanwhile, World Vision continues to report high admission rates in Mershing, Manawashi and Duma feeding centres. In North Darfur an MSF rapid health and nutrition assessment of 330 children in Dali camp indicated that 10.7 per cent. were moderately malnourished and 0.9 per cent. severely malnourished.

The UN is beginning to pre-position food stocks ready for the rainy season. Jan Pronk, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Sudan, has commented that although humanitarian access is still only 75 per cent., for the first time the humanitarian situation appears containable.

Guinea

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much *(a)* financial and *(b)* logistical aid his Department (i) has provided to Guinea in each year since 1997 and (ii) is planning to provide to Guinea in financial year 2005–06 with the specific aim of reforming, widening and strengthening the education system in Guinea. [224581]

Hilary Benn: The UK does not have a bilateral development programme with Guinea but the Department for International Development has provided the following assistance since 1997 (final figures for 2004–05 are not yet available):

£000

Aid type	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Heavily indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Relief	—	—	—	—	12	14	15
Humanitarian Assistance	134	54	30	500	—	1,250	1,500
Small Grants Scheme and Joint Funding Scheme	6	20	91	69	32	61	70
Total	141	74	122	569	44	1,325	1,585

None of this support had the specific aim of reforming, widening and strengthening the education system.

The United Kingdom also provides substantial assistance through the European Union's aid programmes:

£ million

	Total EC assistance	*Attributed UK share*
1997	23.24	3.3
1998	30.07	4.5
1999	25.77	3.4
2000	10.29	2.3
2001	9.95	1.7
2002	28.10	3.4
2003	28.18	n/a

We have no plans to provide funding to the education sector in Guinea during 2005–06.

World Bank

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he had with the United States Administration on the proposed nomination by President Bush of Mr. Paul Wolfowitz for the post of President of the World Bank; and what the Government's policy on the nomination of Mr. Wolfowitz to this post is. [223578]

Hilary Benn: Following the nomination of Paul Wolfowitz for President of the World Bank I discussed with Mr. Wolfowitz the work the Bank is doing in reducing international poverty, and to hear his own views on the future of the Bank. I also attended a meeting organised by the Luxembourg EU Presidency at which Mr. Wolfowitz spoke. Subsequently, the UK, along with all other World Bank members, supported Mr. Wolfowitz's appointment at a meeting of the World Bank Board on 31 March. Following his appointment, the UK and other European Executive Directors issued a statement, a copy of which has been placed in the both Libraries of the House.

I look forward to working with Mr. Paul Wolfowitz in the fight against world poverty and to secure more and better aid, multilateral debt relief and a fairer world trade system.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Antrim Hospital

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase *(a)* ward and *(b)* bed numbers at Antrim hospital. [224094]

Angela Smith: In July 2004 a new 10-bed short stay ward for patients requiring observation or short-term treatment was opened at Antrim Area hospital.

In addition, under the Reform and Re-investment initiative, funding has been made available for the construction of an additional 24-bed ward that is expected to open towards the end of 2005.

Further expansion of Antrim Area hospital is being considered in the context of the implementation of "Developing Better Services", and the United Hospitals Trust and the Northern Health and Social Services Board are currently developing a detailed business case in this regard.

Asbestos (Schools)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how *(a)* the funding made available by the Department of Education in 2003–04 to enable Education and Library Boards to survey all schools and prepare for the introduction of the new asbestos regulations and *(b)* the funding which the Department of Education allocated in 2004–05 towards the removal, decontamination work or repair and remedial work for the same purpose where it is necessary was distributed. [212326]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table shows the distribution of recurrent funding to each Education and Library Board in 2003–04 to enable them to survey all schools and prepare for the introduction of the new asbestos regulations, and in 2004–05 towards the removal, decontamination work or repair/remedial work, where necessary.

Recurrent allocations

£000

	2003–04	*2004–05*
BELB	894	760
WELB	884	760
NEELB	863	738
SEELB	800	686
SELB	971	822
Total	4,412	3,766

The apportionment of funding between individual Boards was allocated on the basis of a joint business case submitted by the Boards. The factors that determined the level of funding to each Board were the area of the estate, staffing costs and the number of schools.

Attention Deficit Disorder

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what resources have been allocated in the 2004–05 financial year to support research into attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder in Northern Ireland. [223990]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has not allocated any specific resources in the 2004–05 financial year for research into attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. However, grant support of £25,000 has been awarded to the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit Disorder Support Centre in each of the last three financial years.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what resources have been allocated to fund the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder Support Centre; [223991]

(2) if he will ensure that sufficient resources are in place to safeguard the future of the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder Support Centre. [223993]

Angela Smith: The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety assisted the Northern Ireland Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder Support Centre through a three year project grant of £25,000 per annum to help develop a support centre. This funding will end on 31 March 2005. An application for further funding will be considered by the Department in the near future.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what strategy he has in place to support sufferers of attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder and their families. [223992]

Angela Smith: Policy and services for children with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder are currently being examined under the Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (Northern Ireland). The Review will recommend what future service development will be required.

Civil Service Property

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many items of civil service property within his Department are unaccounted for, broken down by type. [205577]

Mr. Paul Murphy: None as all items of civil service property within the Northern Ireland Office are accounted for in the Resource Accounts on an annual basis.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the *(a)* average and *(b)* longest waiting time (i) for an initial assessment regarding and (ii) from assessment to commencing cognitive behavioural therapy was in each health board area for the latest period for which figures are available; [215361]

(2) what the current *(a)* average and *(b)* longest waiting time (i) for an initial assessment regarding and (ii) from assessment to commencing cognitive behavioural therapy is in each health board area. [212166]

Angela Smith: Information on cognitive behavioural therapy is not collected centrally and is not available by health board area.

Community and Voluntary Sector Grants

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent in each of the last three years in Government grants to the community and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland. [217673]

Mr. Spellar: Information on grants to the voluntary and community sector by government departments across all regions of the UK is collated by the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate of the Home Office on an annual basis. In total £147,451,863 was provided during 2001–02. This information is reproduced and analysis provided in a published report, 'Central Government Funding of Voluntary and Community Organisations 1982–83 to 2001–02', available from the Communications Development Unit of the Home Office. This includes details of grants made by Northern Ireland Departments.

Details of grants made during 2002–03 will be published shortly and will show that a total of £167,947,995 was provided.

Currently the exercise to capture information for the period 2003–04 is under way and final figures will be available later in the year. At the moment indications are that in excess of £183 million was provided to the voluntary and community sector.

Correspondence

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Environment and Heritage Service will answer the letter of 10 December 2004 from the hon. Member for North Down in relation to the restoration of Rosebank House in Donaghadee. [215188]

Angela Smith: The Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) replied to the hon. Member for North Down's letter of 10 December 2004 on 7 February 2005. I understand that EHS acknowledged the hon. Lady's letter on 5 January.

Criminal Offences

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the criminal offences created in legislation sponsored by his Department in the *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 Session, broken down by Act. [206872]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information is as follows.

Criminal offences created in legislation by the Northern Ireland Office

Parliamentary Session: 2002–03

Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002

Section 48—Obstructing the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice or his Inspectors in the execution of their duties

Section 81—Obstructing court security officers

Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003

Article 5(1)—Absconding from bail

Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003

Section 27 (8)—Restriction of disclosure of information; and

Section 39(2)—Impersonation etc. of designated persons.

Parliamentary Session: 2003–04

Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2004

Criminal Offence Created: Section 7—Influencing a prosecutor

Criminal Offence Created: Schedule 2—Absconding by persons admitted to bail under the Terrorism Act 2000

Anti-social Behaviour (Northern Ireland) Order 2004

Criminal Offence Created: Article 6—Breaching an Anti-social Behaviour Order

Criminal Offence Created: Article 8—Reporting a case where there are reporting restrictions in place

Criminal Justice No.2 (Northern Ireland) Order 2004

Criminal Offence Created: Article 5—Aggravated vehicle taking and; aggravated vehicle taking causing death or grievous bodily harm

Offences created in legislation by Northern Ireland Government Departments under the provisions of the Northern Ireland Act 2000

Parliamentary Session 2002–03

Department for Regional Development

Article 5 of the Harbours (Northern Ireland) Order 2002, 2002 No. 3155 (N.I.9)

Any person who in purported compliance with a notice under paragraph Article 5(1) who knowingly or recklessly makes any statement or produces any document which is false in a material particular, and any person who without reasonable excuse fails to comply with a notice under Article 5(1).

Department for Employment and Learning

Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (S.I. 2002/2836, N.I.2)

Article 12—Penalties: failures to comply: sets out penalties that apply in cases of failure to provide documentary material on request with regard to Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Paternity Pay. Further details are contained in Schedule 1 to the Order.

Article 13—Penalties: fraud, etc.: establishes that where a person fraudulently or negligently makes an incorrect statement regarding entitlement to Statutory Paternity Pay or Statutory Adoption Pay, a penalty may be applied. Further details are contained in Schedule 1 to the Order.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Article 3 of the Fur Farming (Prohibition) (NI) Order 2002 (2002/3151 (N.I.5)

Keeping of, or knowingly causing or permitting another person to keep, animals for slaughter for the value of their fur or breeding progeny for such slaughter.

Department of the Environment

Article 20 (a) and Article 46 (b) of the Environment (NI) Order 2002 (2002/3153 (N.I.7))

(a) Intentionally obstructing an authorised person in the exercise of his duties.

(b) The carrying out by an owner or occupier of land of work prohibited by the Order in an area of special scientific interest.

Department of the Environment

Articles 3, 4, 10, 12, 13 and 23 of the Planning (Amendment) (NI) Order 2003 (2003/430 (N.I.8))

(a) Breach of planning control

(b) Providing false or misleading information.

(c) Wilful obstruction.

Note:

Article 23 of the Order 2003 also introduced a new offence in relation to Planning Agreements, but this provision has yet to be commenced

Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment

Article 18 of the Company Directors Disqualifications (NI) Order 2002 (2002/3150 (N.I.4))

Acting in contravention of a company directors disqualification order or disqualification undertaking.

Insolvency (NI) Order 1989 and Insolvency (NI) Order 2002

The following paragraphs in Schedule A1 inserted into the Insolvency (NI) Order 1989 (1989/2405 (N.I.19) by Schedule 1 to the Insolvency (NI) Order 2002 (2002/3152 (N.I.6);

Paragraph 20(2) *(a)*, 21(3) *(b)*, 22(2) *(c)*, 27(2) *(d)*, 28(3)(a) *(e)*, 28(3)(b) *(f)*, 29(3)(a) *(g)*, 29(3)(b) *(h)*, 30(3)*(a)*, *(i)*, 30(3)*(b)* *(j)*, 31(9) *(k)*, 32(1) *(l)*, 32(2) *(m)*, 33(1)(a) *(n)*, 33(1)(b) *(o)*, 35(6) *(p)*, 44(3) *(q)*, 51(2) *(r)*, 51(3) *(s)*, 51(7) *(t)*, 52(1)*(u)*.

(a) Directors failing to notify nominee of beginning of moratorium.

(b) Nominee failing to advertise or notify beginning of moratorium.

(c) Nominee failing to advertise or notify end of moratorium.

(d) Company and officers failing to state in correspondence etc. that moratorium is in force.

(e) Company obtaining credit without disclosing existence of moratorium.

(f) Obtaining credit for company without disclosing existence of moratorium.

(g) Company disposing of property otherwise than in ordinary way of business.

(h) Authorising or permitting disposal of company property.

(i) Company making payments in respect of liabilities existing before beginning of moratorium.

(j) Authorising or permitting such a payment.

(k) Directors failing to send to registrar office copy of court order permitting disposal of charged property.

(l) Company disposing of charged property.

(m) Authorising or permitting such a disposal.

(n) Company entering into market contract, etc.

(o) Authorising or permitting company to do so.

(p) Nominee failing to give notice of withdrawal of consent to act.

(q) Nominee failing to give notice of extension of moratorium.

(r) Fraud or privity to fraud in anticipation of moratorium.

(s) Fraud or privity to fraud during moratorium.

(t) Knowingly taking in pawn or pledge, or otherwise receiving, company property.

(u) False representation or fraud for purpose of obtaining or extending moratorium.

Para.8 of Schedule 2 (a) and para. 12 of Schedule 3 (b) to, the Insolvency (NI) Order 2002 (2002/3152 (N.I.6))—which insert provisions into the Insolvency (NI) Order 1989.

(a) False representation by an officer of a company for the purpose of obtaining approval of the members or creditors of a company to a proposal for a voluntary arrangement.

(b) False representation by a debtor for the purpose of obtaining the approval of creditors.

Limited Liability Partnerships Act (Northern Ireland) 2002[1]

Article 2—false statement regarding incorporation documents.

Article 9—not delivering notice of membership changes to the registrar within specified periods.

Schedule, Part I, paragraph 4—failure to change name in accordance with Department's direction.

Schedule, Part I, paragraph 7—improper use of "limited liability partnership" etc.

Articles 51(4)(a), 51(5)(b) and 63(9)(c) of, and paragraph 5 of Schedule 2(d), to the Energy (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (2003/419 (N.I.6))

(a) Failure by a licence holder to produce any documents or information required by the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation (NIAER) as a result of any contravention of a licence condition or failure to achieve a performance standard.

(b) Intentional alteration, suppression or destruction by a licence holder of any document required by the NIAER as a result of any contravention of a licence condition or failure to achieve a performance standard.

(c) Wrongful disclosure of information relating to the affairs of any individual or business.

(d) Application—subject to certain modifications—of Section 110 (intentional alteration, suppression or destruction of any document) and Section 117 (provision of false or misleading information) of the Enterprise Act 2002 in relation to investigations by the Competition Commission of whether activities which are not licensable operate against the public interest.

[1] Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly

Parliamentary Session 2003–04

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Article 6 of the Agricultural Statistics (NI) Order 2004 (2004/1109 (N.I.7)

(a) failure to provide information;

(b) the provision of information known to be wrong;

(c) wrongful disclosure of information obtained under the Order.

Article 3 of the Financial Assistance for Young Farmers (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 (2004/3080 (N.I.21)

In connection with the provision made for inspection, preservation and production of records and documents for the purpose of verifying entitlement to grants; and making false statements for the purposes of obtaining a grant.

Department of the Environment

Article 6 of the Road Traffic (Driving Disqualifications) (NI) Order 2003 (2003/2903 (N.I.16)) which inserts provisions in the Road Traffic (NI) Order 1981

(a) Failure of the licence holder to deliver a GB licence and its counterparts to the Department when required to do so.

(b) Failure of a GB driver licence holder to notify the Department of a disability as required.

Department of the Environment

Article 4(7) and (8); Article 5(14); Article 6 (15); Article 8 (3) of the Dangerous Wild Animals (NI) Order 2004 (2004 /1993 (N.I.16))

(a) Keeping a dangerous wild animal without a licence.

(b) Contravention of or failure to comply with any condition of a licence.

(c) Obstructing any person carrying out an inspection or exercising a power of seizure authorised by the Department.

(d) Transferring ownership of a dangerous wild animal to any person who is not the holder of a valid licence.

Department of Social Development

"Article 8 of the Licensing (Indoor Arenas) (NI) Order 2004 93004/1994 (N.I.17))—which amends the Licensing (NI) Order 1996 (1996/3158)(N.I22)) to include a new offence

Selling or making available for purchase intoxicating liquor in indoor arenas, except as specified.

Articles 8 and 10 of the Betting and Gaming (NI) Order 2004 (2004/310 (N.I.1)), insofar as they extend the offences provisions in Article 108 of the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (NI) Order 1985 (1985/1204 (N.I.11)) to licensed bookmakers.

Contravention, by licensed bookmakers, of provisions relating to the use of gaming machines".

Crosshill Quarry

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the source was of the asbestos which was recently discovered in soil and water tests at Crosshill Quarry, Crumlin, County Antrim. [221617]

Angela Smith: In the recent soil survey of the Crossbill Quarry site no asbestos fibres were detected in 38 out of 40 samples. Of the other two, only chrysotile (white asbestos) fibres were detected. These fibres are of a type used in insulation materials such as heating pipes, calorifers, hot water tanks and cavity walls.

The analysis of water samples collected by my Department's staff recently from, and in the vicinity of, the Crossbill Quarry site were analysed for the presence of asbestos by Brunel University, Uxbridge. The analysis determined that there were amphibole asbestos fibres present. Amphibole is the generic term used to describe five different types of asbestos fibres (excluding chrysotile) and would not be uncommon in landfill sites used for the disposal of builders' rubble. The levels of asbestos fibres in the water were considerably less than the limit set by the USA Environmental Protection Agency for drinking water.

However, while the fibre types have been identified in both the soil and water samples, it is not possible to be conclusive about the exact source of the asbestos in these samples.

Damage to Commercial Property

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce measures to allow the owners of commercial property to claim compensation from the Northern Ireland Office in the case of damage caused by three or more people or by a proscribed organisation. [211901]

Mr. Paul Murphy: None, such claims are already covered by the Criminal Damages (Compensation) (NI) Order 1977.

Dentists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what incentives he has considered to encourage dentists in the Province to work within the NHS. [215368]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 874W.

Diabetes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the *(a)* implementation of and *(b)* operational plans for emotional and psychological support for diabetes sufferers within each health board area. [223662]

Angela Smith: Each of the Health and Social Services Boards have recognised the need to increase the level of emotional and psychological support for diabetes sufferers in their local implementation plans and are taking steps to address gaps in service provision. While such support may be provided by various professionals, it is recognised that clinical psychologists have a key role. However, there is currently a limited availability of trained psychologists and the Regional Diabetes Steering Group will consider how this issue can be addressed.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the policies within each health board area for engaging with local diabetes services advisory groups; and what plans there are to enhance these relationships. [223663]

Angela Smith: Each of the Health and Social Services Boards has local diabetes advisory groups in place. The groups are multi-disciplinary, with representation from a range of health professionals who provide services for people with diabetes, representatives from voluntary and community groups, local service users and parents of children with diabetes.

All of these advisory groups are closely linked to the commissioning team that is responsible for the development of services for people with diabetes in each board. Continued engagement between the boards and their advisory groups will be an essential element in the process of improving the services available for diabetes sufferers in Northern Ireland.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on *(a)* implementation of and *(b)* operational plans for user participation for diabetes sufferers within each health board area. [223664]

Angela Smith: Each of the health and social services boards has local diabetes advisory groups in place. These groups are closely involved in the development of services for people with diabetes. Service users and the parents of children with diabetes are represented on all of the groups.

Eating Disorders

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when specialist eating disorders teams will be operational within each board area in the Province. [215372]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to the reply I gave on 1 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 875W.

Enhanced Prescribing

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* consultation and *(b)* equality impact assessment was conducted before the directive was issued to community pharmacies that enhanced prescribing would no longer be paid for from October 2004. [223675]

Angela Smith: The Pharmaceutical Contractors' Committee and the General Practice Committee of the BMA (NI) were consulted about the clarification, effective from 1 October 2004, of the rules in the NI Drug Tariff under which it is appropriate for pharmacists to be paid Multiple Dispensing fees.

As this was a clarification of existing policy, and not a change in policy, a formal equality impact assessment was not considered necessary. No action has been taken to limit instalment prescribing of medications to patients—that remains a clinical decision for the GP (or other qualified prescriber) based upon the patient's condition.

Fertility Treatment

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to institute a tendering process for the provision of NHS fertility treatment within the private sector in the Province. [223672]

Angela Smith: The commissioning of specific health and social care services in Northern Ireland, including publicly funded fertility services, is a matter for the Health and Social Services Boards. In their capacity as commissioners, Boards may decide to test the provision of services against private sector providers, although they are not compelled to do so. It is only when a decision is made to test the market that procurement requirements apply and the tendering process is initiated.

In the case of fertility services boards have not decided to test the market, but to jointly commission publicly funded fertility treatments from the Regional Fertility Centre at the Royal Group of hospitals.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private treatment cycles have been provided at the Regional Fertility Centre in each of the last three years. [223673]

Angela Smith: The Regional Fertility Centre provided the following information for each of the last three financial years as shown in the following tables.

Financial year	*(a) Number of NHS cycles provided*
2002–03	312
2003–04	562
2004–05[1]	482

Financial year	*(b) Number of private cycles provided*
2002–03	182
2003–04	553
2004–05[1]	454

[1] Data for 2004–2005 represents the period 1 April 2004 to 24 March 2005.

Source:

Regional Fertility Centre, Royal Group of hospitals HSS trust.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to publish its response to the public consultation, From People to Parents, on fertility services in the Province. [223674]

Angela Smith: I hope to be in a position to announce proposals for the way forward in the near future.

Fishing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what compensation has been offered to date to fishermen in Northern Ireland who have been required to tie up in accordance with recent restrictions imposed on days at sea. [220755]

Mr. Pearson: A second Transitional Aid Scheme was launched on 24 February 2005. A total of 16 vessels have submitted application forms for entry to the Scheme. These are currently being assessed and it is envisaged that Fisheries Division will be making payments for the first claim period during week commencing 14 March 2005.

Full-time Reserve

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assistance is being provided to former members of the full-time reserve for re-training and re-employment. [206118]

Mr. Pearson: Retired officers of the RUC/PSNI Reserve have full access to the services of the Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust. The trust is publicly funded and was established to assist officers (regular or reserve) in achieving a successful transition on leaving the police service. The services provided by the trust include personal and careers advice and guidance, psychological and physical therapies and services, education, training and employment support. Grant funding is also provided in support of appropriate training courses. Further details of trust services may be found on their website at www.prrt.org.

Grammar Schools

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the latest figures for enrolment at grammar schools in the Province are; and what they were in 2002–03. [213092]

Mr. Gardiner: I would refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave to the hon. Lady, the Member for Strangford, on 25 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 304W.

Health Care Administration

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects to announce plans for the restructuring of health care administration in the Province. [223671]

Angela Smith: The final consultation paper from the Review of Public Administration, which was launched on Tuesday 22 March 2005, included a chapter setting out firm proposals for new Health and Personal Social Services management structures. Decisions on these proposals will not be taken until the RPA consultation process is complete. The consultation period will end on the 30 September 2005.

Hepatitis C

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals in the Province *(a)* have received and *(b)* are receiving Pegylated Interferon therapy to treat Hepatitis C. [212191]

Angela Smith: At 31 January 2005, there were 30 patients who have received Pegylated Interferon injections as part of a combination therapy for treating Hepatitis C. Of these, 24 are still currently receiving treatment at the Liver Clinic within the Royal Victoria Hospital.

Human Rights Commission

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what procedures will be followed in replacing the outgoing chief executive of the Human Rights Commission; and if he will make a statement. [221949]

Mr. Spellar: The chief executive of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has not indicated an intention to leave the post.

Infection Control

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to develop a strategy for infection control and prevention in the Province. [223676]

Angela Smith: The Department is currently developing a strategy for the prevention and control of health care associated infections (HCAI). A report is expected to issue for consultation in June 2005.

Legionnaire's

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made with identifying the source of the recent outbreak of Legionnaire's disease in the North Down area; and if he will make a statement. [224224]

Mr. Gardiner: The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland is satisfied that it has identified the source of the recent outbreak of Legionnaires' disease in the North Down area as being a cooling tower in a local manufacturing unit. Appropriate remedial action has been taken.

Lough Erne (Fish Stocks)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what different species of fish the Department of Agriculture releases into Lough Erne; and what the average annual cost of stocking waterways in Fermanagh has been over the last five years. [223946]

Angela Smith: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is responsible for inland fisheries matters. The Department of Agriculture does not have responsibility for this matter.

The Department stocks indigenous Lough Erne Brown Trout purchased from the Erne and Melvin Enhancement Company Hatchery directly into Lough Erne. Indigenous Lough Erne Brown Trout fry also from the Erne and Melvin Hatchery and Salmon ova, fry, pre-smolts and juvenile elvers from the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) Hatchery at Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal are stocked into the Lough Erne tributaries to help sustain and enhance fish stocks in Lough Erne and its tributaries.

There is no cost to the Department for the stocking from the ESB Hatchery at Ballyshannon as this is a compensatory measure for the impact of the hydroelectric dam located on the River Erne on migratory fish returning to the Erne system. The Department also stocks a number of Public Angling Estate 'nut and take' fisheries in Co. Fermanagh with Brown Trout and Rainbow Trout equating to a notional value in excess of £20,000 per annum.

The Brown Trout and fry purchased from the Erne and Melvin Hatchery, which commenced in 2002, equates to £41,650 per annum.

Methotrexate

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what precautions are taken in Northern Ireland against potential complications for patients on methotrexate. [223665]

Angela Smith: Methotrexate therapy is monitored routinely to minimise complications. In addition, shared care protocols are in place which support the management of patients treated with methotrexate across the primary and secondary care interface.

MRSA

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost to the Health Service in Northern Ireland has been of MRSA infections in each of the last 10 years. [224159]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many deaths in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years have been attributed to MRSA; and what guidelines are used in recording the numbers of deaths in which MRSA has been a factor. [224160]

Mr. Pearson: The numbers of deaths where Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) was mentioned on the death certificate in Northern Ireland, for the registration years 1999–2003, are given in the table as follows.

Number of deaths in Northern Ireland with MRSA mentioned on the death certificate by registration year 1999–2003

Registration year	*Death certificate mentioned MRSA*
1999	13
2000	14
2001	16
2002	25
2003	30
Total (1999–2003)	98

The International Classification of Diseases (ICD) is used to classify cause of death and the current version of ICD does not have a specific code for MRSA. The statistics reported in the table have been obtained by identifying all deaths with ICD codes likely to be linked with MRSA, and checking the relevant death certificates for mention of MRSA.

NHS Direct

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in relation to the extension of NHS Direct to Northern Ireland. [214381]

Angela Smith: In Northern Ireland each of the four Health and Social Services Boards currently operate their own daytime telephone advice line. Out-of-hours providers for which each Board is responsible deliver access to advice and services outside normal office hours. The Department is working with the four Boards to consider further development of these services on a regional basis.

NHS Recruitment

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many overseas personnel were recruited to the NHS in Northern Ireland *(a)* directly by the health service and *(b)* through recruitment agencies in each of the last three years; and what the recruitment costs were in each case. [222930]

Angela Smith: Information on the recruitment of overseas personnel to the health and personal social services is not held centrally. Health and social services trusts have supplied the following details of the number of overseas personnel recruited either directly by the trust or through recruitment agencies in each of the last three years.

	Recruited directly by trust	*Recruited through agency*	*Recruitment method not known*
2002	265	218	76
2003	352	253	78
2004	359	93	76
Total	976	564	230

Information on the costs involved in recruitment are not available.

NHS Walk-in Centres

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce NHS walk-in centres in Northern Ireland. [214380]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to my answer of 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1775W.

Parades

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures the chief constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland has taken *(a)* to inform parade organisers that it is their responsibility to ensure the good behaviour of supporters and followers of parades and *(b)* to instruct his officers to have regard

for the behaviour of supporters and followers, and to regard them as participants for the purposes of securing compliance with a determination of the Parades Commission. [213302]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows.

(a) PSNI provide a copy of the Parades Commission's code of conduct to parade organisers when they present the Parade Application Form 11/1 at a police station. The code of conduct sets out clearly that the onus is on organisers to ensure the good behaviour of supporters and followers. Police have a general order which contains guidelines on the planning process in the run up to a parade. In December 2002, an amendment was made to the general order which states that

> "police evidence to the commission will include evidence of efforts by the Police Service to work with parade organisers and/or representatives of the involved neighbourhoods in the planning process."

This has emphasised the work which police carry out in an area during the run up to a parade.

(b) PSNI take appropriate action to police Parades Commission's determinations. Where conditions have included the behaviour of supporters and followers the police take account of these.

Pre-school Children (Child Care)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average cost of pre-school childcare in Northern Ireland was in the last period for which figures are available; and what assistance is available to working families who require nursery support. [214769]

Angela Smith: Health and Social Services Trusts provide annual data on unit costs of services through their Trust financial returns and this includes information on day nurseries, playgroups, out of school hours clubs and holiday schemes for children. The mean average cost of day attendances at day-care services provided for under-18s was £92 per day in the 2003–04 financial year. It is not, however, possible to break down the unit cost information held by the Department into particular client groups and, for that reason, the average cost of pre-school childcare provision could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Assistance is also available through the working families tax credit, which can provide support for families on low or middle incomes who are responsible for one or more children.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether child care providers in Northern Ireland are required to be registered; and what estimate he has made of the number of child care providers. [214770]

Angela Smith: Child care providers are required to be registered as defined in the Children NI Order 1995. The following table provides the number of child care providers.

	Providers	*Places*
Day nurseries	197	7,798
Childminders	4,224	21,164
Playgroups	607	14,648
Out of School Clubs	212	4,773
Holiday schemes	73	1,403
Total	5,313	49,786

Prisons (Medical Treatment)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for surgery was in 2004 for prisoners in Her Majesty's prisons in Northern Ireland who *(a)* had been sentenced and *(b)* were being held on remand. [224208]

Angela Smith: The information is not available in the form requested.

Public Disorder (Ardoyne)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been paid by his Department in compensation claims following public disorder at Ardoyne on 12 July in each year since 2001. [216412]

Mr. Spellar: I have asked the chief executive of the Compensation Agency to write to the hon. Gentleman.

Letter from Anne McCleary to Mr. Nigel Dodds, dated 21 February 2005:

> Claims for compensation following public disorder at Ardoyne on 12 July 2001–2004
>
> You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about how much had been paid in compensation claims following public disorder at Ardoyne on 12 July in each year since 2001 (216412). I have been asked to reply as the issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of the Compensation Agency.
>
> I can advise that the available information is as follows:

£

	Claims under the Criminal Damage (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977	*Claims under the Criminal Injuries (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1988*
2001	406,271	256,256
2002	0	0
2003	0	0
2004	0	0

> The 1988 Order was replaced, on 1 May 2002, by the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2002. The location of incidents recorded under this scheme is not wholly reliable as, for record keeping purposes, the Agency holds claims by the applicant's home address. The applicant is asked for a general description of the incident location which is later confirmed by the police in their report on the incident. On this basis it is not possible to determine, without disproportionate costs, claims which may arise out of incidents in Ardoyne on 12 July during 2002–2004.
>
> I hope that this is helpful.

School Buildings

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what new school buildings in the Lagan Valley constituency *(a)* have opened in each year

since 1997 *(b)* are under construction and *(c)* have been approved for funding but are not yet under construction. [204017]

Mr. Gardiner: In the Lagan Valley constituency *(a)* eight new school buildings have opened since 1997, namely:

	Date
Bridge Integrated Primary School	April 1998
Moira Primary School	June 1998
Riverdale Primary School	March 2000
Balmoral High School	January 2002
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	February 2002
Ballymacward Primary School	September 2002
Christ The Redeemer Primary School	September 2003
Meadowbridge Primary School	September 2003

(b) One new school is currently under construction, namely:

Hillsborough / Newport Primary School

(c) Six schools have been approved for funding but are not yet under construction, namely:

Ballinderry Primary School

Ballymacrickett Primary School

Brookfield Special School, Moira

East Lisburn Primary Schools (amalgamation of four existing schools)

St. Colman's Primary School, Lambeg

Dromore Central Primary School

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the contracts signed by his special advisers differ from the Model Contract for Special Advisers. [207229]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister on 17 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 753W.

Teaching

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment his Department has made of the level of unemployment among teaching graduates in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [224157]

Mr. Gardiner: The most recent Claimant Count figures indicate that in February 2005 there were 482 persons claiming unemployment related benefits who stated that were seeking work as Teachers. Figures are not currently available for previous years.

Tyrone Hospital

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the reason was for the closure of the Intensive Care Unit at Tyrone County hospital; and if he will make a statement. [224171]

Angela Smith: The decision to close temporarily the critical care unit at Tyrone County hospital during the weekend of 12 and 13 March was taken as a result of staff shortages. The unit was reopened for patients requiring high dependency care on Monday 14 March.

Sperrin Lakeland Trust is currently undertaking a risk assessment that will include consideration of arrangements for the longer-term provision of critical care services.

Victims' Organisations

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding he has provided for victims' organisations in each year since 1998. [210026]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer of 18 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 891W.

Waste Licensing

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on what date waste licensing powers will be transferred from local authorities to the Environment and Heritage Service. [221615]

Angela Smith: The Waste Management Licensing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 came into force on 19 December 2003. The introduction of the regulations transferred responsibility for waste regulation from the district councils to the Department of the Environment (specifically the Environment and Heritage Service). The Waste and Contaminated Land (1997) Commencement No.7 Order (Northern Ireland) 2003 came into operation on 27 November 2003. This Order repealed the waste licensing powers of the district councils.

Women's Centres

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the role of women's centres in Northern Ireland. [223353]

Mr. Spellar: The range of services provided by women's organisations is extensive and impacts primarily on disadvantaged communities. These services can be broadly broken down into three areas:

i. Core activities—community development and support to women on a range of matters.

ii. Childcare—early years provision day care.

iii. Education and training—often supported directly by child care provision, and aimed at building skills and confidence among women who have been out of education and/or the labour market for a significant time.

Short-term funding of £1.1 million has been made available to a number of women's organisations that are facing financial difficulties to enable them to continue to provide key services over the next six months period. This will allow them to continue to provide valuable services on which many people in their communities depend while alternative longer-term funding from a variety of Government Departments and agencies is considered.

HEALTH

Abortion

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions were carried out in the UK in 2003–04; and how many of those were carried out between 22 and 24 weeks of pregnancy. [222982]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2003, there were 181,582 abortions performed in England and Wales, on residents of England and Wales, of which 1,229 (0.7 per cent.) were carried out between 22 and 24 weeks gestation.

Addictions (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what health services are provided for people addicted to *(a)* illegal drugs, *(b)* alcohol and *(c)* tobacco in York; and how much was spent on each of these services in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2004–05. [224633]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Agenda for Change

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how Agenda for Change affects interpreters working in the health service; and if he will make a statement. [224475]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Interpretation services in the national health service are provided in a variety of ways, for example, through the independent/voluntary sector, or through NHS Direct's national contract with an interpreting service provider.

Some NHS organisations do however employ their own interpreters, and in these cases, they will have the same access to Agenda for Change terms and conditions as other directly employed staff.

Alcohol-related Emergencies

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many alcohol-related emergency cases there were in hospitals in the Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority in each of the last four years. [224543]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Alcohol-related emergency admissions to hospitals in the Northumberland Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority and predecessor bodies/national health service trusts

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
South Tyneside Healthcare NHS Trust	535	513	479	517
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Trust	1,093	1,329	1,504	1,683
Northgate and Prudhoe NHS Trust	—	3	5	1
Newcastle City Health NHS Trust	82	—	—	—
Newcastle North Tyneside and Northumbria Mental Health NHS Trust	—	113	96	68
Gateshead Health NHS Trust	701	749	737	739
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust	1,684	1,674	1,652	1,764
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust	1,026	1,048	1,036	1,154
Priority Healthcare Wearside NHS Trust	152	91	—	—
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust	—	—	158	195

Notes:

1. Count of finished admission episodes (alcohol related[1]), method of admission—emergency.
2. SNA of treatment (in 2002–03 and 2003–04)—Northumberland, Tyne and Wear.
3. HA of treatment (in 2000–01 and 2001–02)—Gateshead and South Tyneside, Newcastle and North Tyneside, Northumberland, Sunderland. NHS hospitals in England 2003–04.
4. The Newcastle North Tyneside and Northumbria Mental Health NHS Trust was formed on 1 April 2001 following the merger of the Newcastle City Health NHS Trust and the Northumberland Mental Health NHS Trust.
5. The South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust was formed on 1 April 2002 following the closure of Priority Healthcare Wearside NHS Trust.
6. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
7. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.
8. As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 13 (six prior to 2002–03) secondary diagnosis fields in HES that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care.
9. [1] ICD-10 codes = "alcohol related" as advised by NHS Information Authority clinical coding service. Counts include any of the records where the following listed codes are recorded in the primary or secondary field:

Primary diagnosis:

F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol.
T51—Toxic effect of alcohol.
R78.0 Finding of alcohol in blood.

Secondary diagnosis:

F10—Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol.
T51—Toxic effect of alcohol.
X45—Alcohol poisoning and exposure to alcohol.
X65—Intentional self-poisoning by and exposure to alcohol.
Y90—Evidence of alcohol involvement determined by alcohol level.
Y91—Evidence of alcohol involvement determined by level of intoxication.
R78.0 Finding of alcohol in blood.

10. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

Arthritis

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate for the most recent year available the *(a)* value of national production lost and *(b)* number of working days lost as a result of (i) inflammatory arthritis, (ii) psoriatic arthritis and (iii) moderate to severe osteoarthritis of hands, knees and hips. [223185]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not centrally available.

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the proportion of sufferers from *(a)* psoriatic arthritis and *(b)* osteoarthritis who are of working age. [224527]

Dr. Ladyman: We have no estimates for the number of sufferers of psoriatic arthritis and osteoarthritis who are of working age.

Bed Occupancy

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 269W, on bed occupancy, when he last received representations from healthcare professionals on the optimal level of bed occupancy; and what views were expressed. [224319]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is not aware of any representations being made by healthcare professionals on the optimum level of bed occupancy in recent years. Carrying out a detailed search to establish whether such representations were received could be done only at a disproportionate cost.

Breast Cancer (Wimbledon)

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Wimbledon with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks of referral in each of the last five years. [224248]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows how many and what percentage of women with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks, following urgent general practitioner referral received within 24 hours, in each of the last four years by south west London national health service trusts. Since June 2004, the data source is the cancer waiting times database. Prior to this, the data source was the Department's quarterly QMCW Korner return.

Two week wait data—breast cancer—annual aggregates for three trusts—Wimbledon
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust
Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

Quarter	*Year*	*Trust code*	*Trust*	*Total number of referrals seen*	*Percentage compliance with the two week standard*	*Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist within 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP*
01	2003–04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS trust	141	100.00	141
01	2003–04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	285	100.00	285
02	2003–04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	325	99.69	324
02	2003–04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	145	100.00	145
03	2003–04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	340	100.00	340
03	2003–04	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	1	100.00	1
03	2003–04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	209	100.00	209
04	2003–04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	185	100.00	185
04	2003–04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	339	100.00	339
		Annual		1,970	99.95	1,969
01	2004–05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	175	100.00	175
01	2004–05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	352	100.00	352
01	2004–05	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	1	100.00	1
02	2004–05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	222	100.00	222
02	2004–05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	304	100.00	304
03	2004–05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	366	100.00	366
03	2004–05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	200	100.00	200
		Annual		1,620	100.00	1,628
01	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	270	100.00	270
01	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	97	100.00	97
02	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	305	100.00	305
02	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	158	100.00	158
03	200203	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	340	100.00	340
03	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	180	98.33	177
04	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	340	100.00	340
04	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	154	100.00	154
		Annual		1,844	99.84	1,841
04	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	104	98.08	102
04	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	260	100.00	260
03	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	96	96.88	93
03	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	285	100.00	285
02	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	136	100.00	136
02	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	230	100.00	230

Two week wait data—breast cancer—annual aggregates for three trusts—Wimbledon
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust
The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust
Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

Quarter	Year	Trust code	Trust	Total number of referrals seen	Percentage compliance with the two week standard	Number of patients seen during the quarter by a specialist within 14 days of the decision to refer by their GP
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	100	100.00	100
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	178	100.00	178
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	51	100.00	51
	2001-02	Annual		1,448	[1]99.65	1,435

Quarter	Year	Trust code	Trust	<24 15 to 16	17 to 21	22 to 28	28+
01	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS trust	0	0	0	0
01	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	1	0	0
02	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2003-04	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
04	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
04	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	0	0	0
		Annual					
01	2004-05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2004-05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2004-05	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2004-05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2004-05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2004-05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2004-05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
		Annual					
01	2002-03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2002-03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2002-03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2002-03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	200203	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2002-03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	3	0	0	0
04	2002-03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
04	2002-03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
		Annual					
04	2001-02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	1	0	0	1
04	2001-02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
03	2001-02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	3	0	0	0
03	2001-02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2001-02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
02	2001-02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
01	2001-02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0
	2001-02	Annual					

Quarter	Year	Trust code	Trust	Within 14	>24 15 to 16	17 to 21	22 to 28	28+
01	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS trust	0	0	0	0	0
01	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	58	0	0	1	1
02	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	48	1	1	1	0
02	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	7	0	0	0	0
03	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Trust	53	0	2	0	0
03	2003-04	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0
03	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	18	0	0	1	1
04	2003-04	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	10	2	2	2	1
04	2003-04	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	48	0	0	1	1
		Annual		—	—	—	—	—
01	2004-05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	11	1	1	0	1
01	2004-05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	56	0	1	0	1
01	2004-05	RVR	Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	0	0	0	0	0
02	2004-05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	9	0	0	0	2
02	2004-05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	53	1	2	1	0

Quarter	Year	Trust code	Trust	Within 14	15 to 16	17 to 21	22 to 28	>24 28+
03	2004–05	RPY	The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	57	0	2	0	1
03	2004–05	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	16	0	3	0	1
		Annual		—	—	—	—	—
01	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
01	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
02	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
02	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
03	200203	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
03	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
04	2002–03	RPY	Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
04	2002–03	RJ7	St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
		Annual		—	—	—	—	—
04	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
04	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
03	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
03	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
02	2001–02		St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
02	2001–02		Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
01	2001–02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
01	2001–02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
01	2001–02		Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	—	—	—	—	—
	2001–02	Annual		—	—	—	—	—

[1] Was 99.78

Sources:

CWT-OB and Department of Health QMCW

Cancer Services

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on cancer services in *(a)* Leicester South and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [224283]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested is not held centrally. The complex nature of the delivery of cancer services means that we are unable to accurately monitor expenditure. It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to determine how best to use their funds locally to meet national priorities for cancer services.

Care Homes (Medication)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Commission for Social Care Inspection will publish its report on the use of medication in care homes following up on the report of the National Care Standards Commission. [224537]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 April 2005]*: The Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection has advised that a report on the use of medication in care homes is due for publication in December 2005.

Children's National Service Framework

Mr. Berry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how he plans to support primary care trusts in conducting regular audits and reviews of local children's health services. [223849]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has set out a framework for the national health service for continuous improvement in the overall quality of care people receive, including children, in "Standards for Better Health". Underpinning this is clinical governance, including clinical audit, which provides healthcare organisations, including primary care trusts, with a systematic means of ensuring compliance with their statutory duties. The Healthcare Commission has recently completed an extensive public consultation on a new system for assessing and performance rating NHS trusts in 2005–06 against these standards.

The national service framework for children, young people and maternity services requires each health economy to develop a managed local children's clinical network to review and meet the needs of the local population.

As set out in "National Standards, Local Action", strategic health authorities (SHAs) are responsible for developing healthcare improvement plans in their local areas and making sure that local health services, including children's services, commissioned by primary care trusts are of a high standard and are performing well.

The "Better Metrics" project offers primary care trusts a range of clinical measurements of performance for local target setting, which is available on the website of the office of the SHAs at www.osha.nhs.uk

Clean Hospitals Summit

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Department will be represented at the forthcoming Clean Hospitals Summit of the Patients Association. [224041]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department will be represented at the conference by, among others, chief executive Sir Nigel Crisp and chief nursing officer, Christine Beasley. The Department is an active partner in the summit.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* expenditure of the Commission for Social Care Inspection was in each of the last two years. [223548]

Dr. Ladyman: The Commission for Social Care Inspections became operational on 1 April 2004. The Commission for Social Care Inspection's budget for 2004–05 was £147.2 million. Subject to audited accounts, it is currently estimated that the budget will be spent in full.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes in inspection fees the Commission for Social Care Inspection has made since it was established. [223549]

Dr. Ladyman: The Commission for Social Care Inspection charges registration fees and annual fees, which are set by central Government. Since the commission became operational on 1 April 2004, its fees have not changed. An increase across the board of 20 per cent. will come into effect on 1 April 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the responsibilities of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) which are not due to be merged into the Healthcare Commission in the proposals announced with the Budget; what estimate he has made of the likely change in *(a)* costs and *(b)* jobs arising from the merger; what the duties of staff employed by the CSCI are; and which duties are likely to be merged into the Healthcare Commission. [223550]

Dr. Ladyman: Subject to further review, we expect the duties of both commissions to remain in place after the merger takes effect. Those duties are as set out in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. The merger will allow a reduction in costs through more efficient administrative arrangements. The detailed staffing and financial implications will be considered as part of the process of planning and implementation.

Congenital Defects

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will commission research into possible clusters of congenital defects around the former British Steel ironworks at Corby. [222273]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This is a matter for the Director of Public Health at the Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Strategic Health Authority.

Correspondence

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to the letter regarding Mrs. Faye Daniel sent to his Department on 30 April 2004 by the hon. Member for Brent, East, reference: DC/Daniel/30/04/04. [224691]

Dr. Ladyman: Officials have no record of a letter referring to Mrs. Faye Daniels, or correspondence under the reference DC/Daniel/30/04/04, arriving in the Department.

Crohn's Disease

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action the Government have taken to combat Crohn's disease in terms of *(a)* treatment, *(b)* support for sufferers and *(c)* research into (i) the causes of and (ii) a possible cure for the condition. [224161]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions was published on 10 March. While the NSF principally focuses on services for people with neurological conditions, brain and spinal injury, it will help ensure that all people with a long-term condition are supported to live as full and independent life as possible.

Responsibility for the treatment and support for patients with Crohn's disease in England rests with primary care trusts (PCTs), which are responsible for deciding which health services the local population requires, and ensuring that these services are provided.

In May 2002, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidance on the clinical and cost effectiveness of the drug Infliximab in the treatment of severe Crohn's disease. The national health service is statutory obliged to provide funding for treatments and drugs recommended by NICE within three months of publication of its guidance.

The Department's national research programme expenditure on projects related to Crohn's disease in the period from 1994 to 2004 was £234,000.

The cause of Crohn's disease has not yet been identified. There is no known cure for Crohn's disease at present, but treatment can control the disease in most cases.

Dementia

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has held with representatives of elderly patients suffering from dementia regarding the provision of services; and if he will make a statement on the availability of resources to assist the long-term care of those suffering from dementia. [223925]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department and its Ministers meet regularly with organisations representing the interests of those with dementia. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State met with the Alzheimer's Society on 22 March 2005 to discuss with them the draft guidance on the use of Alzheimer's drugs, issued on 1 March 2005 for consultation by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).

For the period 2003–04 to 2007–08, expenditure on the national health service in England will increase on average by 7.2 per cent. a year over and above inflation. We are also making available an additional £1 billion over the three years 2003–04 to 2005–06 for social services that will benefit carers and the training of support staff. As the majority users of these services, older people, including those with dementia, will particularly benefit.

Dentistry

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what financial assistance has been offered to those primary care trusts who have received Polish dentists to

help cover the costs of relocation packages, the eight-week training programme and any necessary additional training. [223970]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* Primary care trusts are required to provide financial support, as part of the Department's central recruitment initiative to dentists from Poland, to cover the cost of relocation to England. The eight-week training programme for Polish dentists is covered in the cost of the contract with Methods, and is therefore met by the Department. £20,000 was made available by the Department to each post graduate dental deanery to provide an induction programme for Polish and other dentists following their arrival in England.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1976W, on dentistry, what specific expertise Methods Consulting has in recruiting dentists from overseas countries, with particular reference to Poland. [223972]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Methods Consulting are working with Paragona AB, who manage the recruitment activity in Poland. Paragona AB have extensive experience of recruitment of healthcare professionals from Poland.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with which countries his Department has discussed recruiting dentists from; and what the value is of each contract let to Method Consulting for the recruitment of overseas dentists. [223973]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Talks have progressed on recruiting dentists from Greece, Portugal, Germany, Spain, India and Poland. The value of the contract let to Methods Consulting for the recruitment of overseas dentists was £4.1 million.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many Polish dentists *(a)* have registered and *(b)* are waiting to register with the General Dental Council to practise as a result of primary care trusts' recruitment initiatives; and how many have commenced practising in England. [223974]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Since accession to the European Union in May, a total of 224 dentists from Poland had registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) to the end of February 2005. Information is not held about the number of these who may have responded to primary care trusts' local recruitment.

As a result of the Department's central recruitment initiative in Poland, 69 Polish dentists have registered with the GDC and none are currently waiting to register. 28 dentists have started practising in January. The remaining 41 dentists are commencing practise between 14 March and 4 April.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to improve access to NHS dentistry in Leeds, North-West. [222880]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Leeds North West Primary Care Trust (PCT) has received £96,000 capital funding, which is being utilised through the PCTs dental incentive scheme, to ensure that the commitment of local dentists to the national health service is maintained. This funding will also support general dental practitioners in ensuring patient safety and improving practice premises.

A further £42,000 revenue funding has been received by the Leeds North West PCT, which will provide three extra NHS dental sessions a week. In addition, the PCT is currently implementing an access scheme to provide urgent and routine treatment sessions for non-registered NHS patients in the area.

By April 2005, Leeds North West PCT will have six general dental practices working under personal dental services (PDS) arrangements. These practices have successfully secured an additional £221,000 to increase the work force, benefiting an additional 1,355 new patients and enabling the re-registration of approximately 2,500 NHS patients.

Leeds North West PCT is currently being supported through the West Yorkshire work force confederation to participate in the tranche four of the international dental recruitment campaign co-ordinated by the Department.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have been recruited via his Department's International Recruitment Scheme since the beginning of 2004; how many are working in the south-west; how long each has been at work and where; and whether each *(a)* recruit from an EU member state and *(b)* partner of such a recruit is eligible for state benefits, with particular reference to maternity benefits. [223841]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* 69 dentists have been recruited from Poland via the Department's international recruitment scheme. 17 of these have been working in Devon or Cornwall since January 2005. They are located in Camborne, Liskeard, Paignton, Exeter (all two each) and Falmouth, Cullompton, Exmouth, Seaton, St. Budeaux, South Brent, Constantine, Plymouth, Torquay (all one each).

Dentists are eligible for maternity, paternity and adoptive leave payments as part of the general dentists service (GDS) system of remuneration. This includes dentists from European Union member states if they satisfy the conditions of maternity pay in the GDS.

There are two maternity benefits in the United Kingdom: statutory maternity pay (SMP) from a woman's employer or maternity allowance from the state. A woman from a country that is a member of the EU may receive statutory maternity pay from her employer if she satisfies the qualifying conditions. Further details are available at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2003/gl28_dec.pdf

and at:

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2004/bc1_oct04.pdf

If she is not eligible for SMP, she may be eligible for maternity allowance if she has worked in the United Kingdom for at least a week earning 30 a week, and is able to use her work or insurance record in another EU state to help her qualify.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Ribble Valley and Fulwood constituency, the effects on the constituency of changes to his Department's policies since 1997. [222100]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Ribble Valley and Fulwood constituency.

For example:

At the end of December 2004, the total number of people waiting more than nine months for inpatient treatment within Hyndburn and Ribble Valley primary care trust (PCT) and Preston PCT has fallen to zero, from 412 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2004, the total number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for outpatient treatment within Hyndburn and Ribble Valley PCT and Preston PCT has fallen to 368, from 1,175 in June 2002.

In June 2003, at Lancashire teaching hospitals NHS trust, 92.5 per cent., of patients spent less than four hours in Accident and Emergency (A&E) from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge. Figures for September 2004 show an improvement to 97.6 per cent.

Between September 2002 and June 2004, the number of consultants at Lancashire teaching hospitals NHS trust has increased from 167 to 170. Between September 2002 and September 2003, the number of nurses has increased from 1,915 to 1,928.

Between September 2001 and June 2004, the number of general practitioners (GPs) within Hyndbum and Ribble Valley PCT and Preston PCT has increased from 152 to 165.

Figures for December 2004 show that all patients within Hyndbum and Ribble Valley PCT and Preston PCT are able to be offered an appointment with a GP within two working days and a primary care professional within one working day.

100 per cent, of urgent GP referrals to Lancashire teaching hospitals NHS trust, with suspected cancer, are seen by a specialist within two weeks of the referral.

In the Ribble Valley local authority area, the death rate from cancer per 100,000 population was 163 in 2003 compared to 197 in 1997. For Preston, the rate in 2003 was 181, compared to 190 in 1997.

In the Ribble Valley local authority area, the death rate from coronary heart disease per 100,000 population was 131 in 2003 compared to 164 in 1997. For Preston, the rate in 2003 was 142, compared to 176 in 1997.

A new multi-million pound flagship education centre has been opened at the Royal Preston hospital.

A new £700,000 dermatology and diabetes centre opened in April 2003 at Chorley and South Ribble hospital.

The latest phase of modernisation of Burnley General hospital will include 170 in-patient medical beds, an acute rehabilitation suite and a 15 station renal satellite dialysis unit.

The £110 million private finance initiative development project at Queens Park hospital in Blackburn is scheduled for completion in summer 2006. It involves the rationalisation of services from two sites on to one. The benefits of this include the provision of an integrated children's unit, as well as A&E and medical beds on the same site, thus eliminating patient transfers between the two sites.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to Wimbledon constituency, the effects of changes to departmental policy since 1997 on Wimbledon constituency. [224296]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government have put in place a programme of national health service investment and reform since 1997 to improve service delivery in all parts of the United Kingdom. There is significant evidence that these policies have yielded considerable benefits for the Wimbledon constituency. For example:

Currently, within Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust (PCT), no one is waiting more than nine months for inpatient treatment. This is down from 603 in June 2002.

At the end of December 2004, the number of patients waiting over 13 weeks for outpatient treatment within Sutton and Merton PCT was 265; from 586 in June 2002. No one was waiting over 17 weeks for first outpatient appointment.

100 per cent. of people are getting access to their general practitioner within two working days in the Sutton and Merton PCT area. This is an improvement on 82.4 per cent. in June 2002 for people wanting an appointment with their GP.

In June 2003, at Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, 85.4 per cent. of patients spent less than four hours in accident and emergency from arrival to admission, transfer, or discharge. Figures for December 2004 show an improvement to 95.3 per cent.

In the South West London Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, death rates from cancer per 100,000 population have fallen to 172.7 in 2003; from 197.9 in 1997.

In the South West London SHA area, death rates from coronary heart disease per 100,000 population have fallen to 101.9 in 2003; from 130.6 in 1997.

In the borough of Merton, death rates from cancer per 100,000 population have fallen to 170.8 in 2003; from 197.5 in 1997.

In the borough of Merton, death rates from coronary heart disease per 100,000 population have fallen to 99.7 in 2003; from 129.7 in 1997.

Between September 1999 and September 2004, the number of consultants at Epsom and St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust has increased from 157 to 200.

Latest figures, as at September 2004, show that there are 64 more GPs in the Sutton and Merton PCT area now than there were in September 2001.

Latest figures, for September 2004, show that there are currently 165 dentists in the Sutton and Merton PCT area.

Over the period 2003 to 2006, Sutton and Merton PCT received an overall increase in allocation of £87.5 million and for 2006 to 2008, an overall increase of £72.1 million.

Better healthcare closer to home is the strategy from the health and social care organisations in Merton, Sutton and Mid Surrey to modernise and improve upon local health service.

Since 2002, the trust has appointed 13 modern matrons, resulting in huge improvements in all aspects of care across the trust.

A replacement computed tomography scanner was delivered to Epsom General Hospital in January 2002.

Diabetes

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his estimate is of the reported incidence of diabetes in Camden and Islington in each year since 1997. [224529]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 April 2005]*: I regret that this information is not available in the form requested.

Direct Payments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what publicity he has funded to encourage the uptake of direct payments; and what funding was made available in each case. [224275]

Dr. Ladyman: We have produced a range of user-friendly information including, "A guide to receiving direct payments from your local council", which will also be available in Braille and audio formats. In association with the Council for Disabled Children, we have also produced "A Parents' Guide to Direct Payments" for parents with disabled children.

We have produced an easy guide to direct payments to encourage people with learning disabilities to consider the option of direct payments.

We have also produced a video targeted at people from black and ethnic minority communities who want to access direct payments. a video targeting older people is also being produced by Age Concern.

Local councils should supplement this with local appropriate information.

We also provide funding to the National Centre for Independent Living, which provides information and advice about direct payments and independent living to individuals, local councils and voluntary organisations.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total value of direct payments made by local authorities to individuals has been in each year since 1997, broken down by local authority. [224276]

Dr. Ladyman: Data on expenditure by local authorities on direct payments for 1997–98 is not available centrally. Data showing gross expenditure on direct payments, as reported by local authorities in England for the period 1998–99 to 2003–04, has been placed in the Library.

Drugs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residential drug rehabilitation places are available in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire. [221167]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not held centrally.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have used NHS services to treat *(a)* addiction to and *(b)* the adverse effects of (i) heroin, (ii) crack cocaine, (iii) cocaine, (iv) ecstasy, (v) cannabis, (vi) alcohol, (vii) solvents and (viii) prescription drugs in each of the last five years. [222640]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data on numbers in treatment by drug misuse is not available. The National Treatment Agency for Substance Misuse will publish information in the spring on numbers in treatment by drug misuse in England for 2003–04, from the national drug treatment monitoring system. Data on drug treatment may include non-national health service providers.

Data on numbers in treatment for alcohol misuse is not available.

Food Labelling

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prosecutions have been initiated in each of the last five years for labelling of food content which was deliberately misleading; and what percentage of those prosecutions related to the salt content. [223843]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 March 2005]*: Information is not held centrally on the number of prosecutions for labelling of food offences which were deliberately misleading, or which related to salt content.

In line with the requirements of the European Union's Official Control Directive (OCD) 89/397, the data on prosecutions collected from local authorities by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) is reported under seven generic headings, one of which is "labelling and presentation". In accordance with the relevant European Union guidance, each type of enforcement action is only recorded once per premises per year.

The FSA currently holds information for the five years covering the period 1999 to 2003. The numbers of premises subject to prosecutions initiated in the United Kingdom under the heading of "labelling and presentation" during the years 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2003 are shown in the table.

	Number of establishments subject to prosecution	*Percentage of all prosecutions initiated*
1999	284	26
2000	224	30
2001	150	23
2002	161	20
2003	193	22

General Practitioner Surgeries (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioner surgeries in York have been *(a)* newly built and *(b)* modernised since 1997. [224632]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health Promotion

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2004, *Official*

Report, column 504W, on Health Promotion, where the first wave of pilots to promote health and wellbeing through the workplace will be situated; when the pilots will commence; and what funding he is providing to the pilots. [224323]

Miss Melanie Johnson: "Workplace Health", which is aimed at improving health and well-being in the workplace, is a two-year, £1.4 million programme managed by the British Heart Foundation and funded by Sport England, the Big Lottery Fund and the Department with a workplace pilot based in each of the nine regions in England.

Each pilot is being delivered by a regional partnership with representation from primary care trusts, local government, business forums and industry. The first and second waves of pilots will commence in summer 2005.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 6 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 355W, on Health White Paper, what the timeframe is for developing the National Health Competency Framework; whether all Staff will be covered by the Framework; and if he will make a statement. [224321]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The "Skills for Health" (SfH) strategic plan 2004–09 sets out plans to achieve in excess of 95 per cent. coverage of the United Kingdom health sector work force in terms of competence frameworks, including national occupational standards.

The Department has a service level agreement in place with SfH to support the continuing development and maintenance of competences in the health sector.

HIV

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new cases of HIV were diagnosed in the UK in each year since 2001; what percentage of new cases were African migrants coming to the UK from *(a)* former British colonies and *(b)* elsewhere; and what estimate he has made of the number of African people living in the UK who have undiagnosed HIV. [223842]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Information about new HIV diagnoses and HIV prevalence estimates is contained in the Health Protection Agency's (HPA) report "Focus on prevention: HIV and other sexually transmitted infections in the United Kingdom in 2003—an update: November 2004 and AIDS/HIV quarterly surveillance table: cumulative UK data to end December 2004". These documents are available on the HPA's website at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_and_sti/publications/annual2004/annual2004.htm

and at:

www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hiv_andsti/hiv/epidemiology/files/quarterly.pdf

Hospital-acquired Infection

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps his Department is taking to communicate the results of the Regional Review Panel in relation to hospital-acquired infection; [216929]

(2) what steps he is taking to communicate level 1 and 2 recommendations of the Rapid Review Panel to NHS trusts. [217865]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Recommendations from the rapid review panel have been widely publicised. The most recent reports were announced in the Medical Director's Bulletin. Future reports will also be announced via the Chief Executive's Bulletin.

Interpreters

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many interpreters are employed in the NHS; what their roles are; and if he will make a statement. [224474]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Interpreters will have a variety of roles within the national health service. It is for primary care trusts in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders to plan, develop and improve services for local people.

IVF

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many IVF embryos were destroyed between 1991 and 2004; [222719]

(2) how many IVF embryos are held in freezing facilities. [222720]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised me that between 1991 and 2004, 814,537 embryos were allowed to perish.

The HFEA has also advised me that information provided to it by licensed centres indicates that the total number of embryos held in storage as at 31 March 2004 was 117,619. This is the most recent date for which information is available.

These figures are derived from data on the HFEA register, which is currently being audited to improve the accuracy of the information available. The data may, therefore, be subject to future amendment following the completion of the modernisation programme in March 2006.

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether *(a)* the NHS and *(b)* healthcare professionals are statutorily obliged to follow guidance issued by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. [224660]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Decisions on whether to prescribe medicines, including decisions to prescribe outside the licensed indications, are for individual clinicians, subject to any local

national health service arrangements or protocols. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) guidance on the use of medicines should also be taken into account

Where a NHS body or a healthcare professional is manufacturing, supplying, prescribing or administering a medicine or a medical device, it must comply with the relevant legislation governing that activity, such as the Medicines Act 1968 and the Medical Devices Regulations 2002. The MHRA issues guidance as to the application and interpretation of such legislation, which should by considered by any person or body subject to its provisions.

Mental Health

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts spent less than the national average on mental health in 2003–04. [217579]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Estimates of primary care trust (PCT) expenditure on mental health are provided by the programme budgeting returns. The list shows PCTs with below average spend, where the average is defined in terms of spend per 100,000 unified weighted population, which takes account of population age and need.

PCTs with spend less than average calculated on the basis of spend per 100,000 unified weighted population

Adur, Arun and Worthing
Amber Valley
Ashfield
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan
Barnet
Barnsley
Bassetlaw
Bedford
Bexhill and Bother
Birkenhead and Wallasey
Blackburn with Darwen
Blackpool
Blackwater Valley and Hart
Bolton
Bournemouth
Bracknell Forest
Bradford City
Bradford South and West
Brighton and Hove City
Broxtowe and Hucknall
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale
Burntwood, Lichfield and Tamworth
Bury
Canterbury and Coastal
Central Cheshire
Central Cornwall
Central Suffolk
Charnwood and North West Leicestershire
Chelmsford
Cheltenham and Tewkesbury
Cherwell Vale
Cheshire West
Chesterfield
Chiltern and South Bucks
Chorley and South Ribble
Colchester
Cotswold and Vale
Craven, Harrogate and Rural District
Crawley
Dacorum
Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley
Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire
Derwentside
Doncaster Central
Doncaster East
Doncaster West
Dudley Beacon and Castle
Dudley South
Durham and Chester-Le-Street
Easington
East Cambridgeshire and Fenland
East Devon
East Hampshire
East Kent Coastal
East Lincolnshire
East Staffordshire
East Surrey
Eastern Birmingham
Eastern Cheshire
Eastern Leicester
Eastern Wakefield
Eastleigh and Test Valley
Epping Forest
Erewash
Exeter
Fareham and Gosport
Fylde
Gateshead
Great Yarmouth
Guildford and Waverley
Hambleton and Richmondshire
Harlow
Herefordshire
Heywood and Middleton
High Peak and Dales
Hillingdon
Hinckley and Bosworth
Hounslow
Huntingdonshire
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley
Kennet and North Wilts
Knowsley
Langbaurgh
Lincolnshire South West Teaching
Luton
Maldon and South Chelmsford
Mansfield District
Medway
Mendip
Mid-Sussex

Milton Keynes
Newark and Sherwood
Newbury and Community
Newcastle-Under-Lyme
North Birmingham
North Bradford
North Devon
North Dorset
North East Lincolnshire
North East Oxfordshire
North Eastern Derbyshire
North Hampshire
North Hertfordshire and Stevenage
North Kirklees
North Lincolnshire
North Liverpool
North Peterborough
North Sheffield
North Somerset
North Stoke
North Surrey
North Tees
North Tyneside
North Warwickshire
Northamptonshire Heartlands
Nottingham City
Oldbury and Smethwick
Oldham
Poole
Redditch and Bromsgrove
Rochdale
Rotherham
Rowley, Regis and Tipton
Royston, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford
Rushcliffe
Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale
Sedgefield
Selby and York
Shepway
Shropshire County
Slough
Solihull
Somerset Coast
South and East Dorset
South Cambridgeshire
South East Hertfordshire
South East Oxfordshire
South Hams and West Devon
South Leicestershire
South Peterborough
South Sefton
South Somerset
South Stoke
South Tyneside
South Warwickshire
South West Dorset
South West Kent
South Western Staffordshire
South Worcestershire
Southern Norfolk
St. Albans and Harpenden
St. Helens
Stockport
Suffolk Coastal
Suffolk West
Sunderland Teaching
Surrey Heath and Woking PCT
Sussex Downs and Weald
Tameside and Glossop
Taunton Deane
Teignbridge
Tendring
Torbay
Tower Hamlets
Trafford North
Trafford South
Vale of Aylesbury
Wakefield West
Walsall
Warrington
Watford and Three Rivers
Waveney
Wednesbury and West Bromwich
Welwyn Hatfield
West Lancashire
West Lincolnshire
West Norfolk
West of Cornwall
West Wiltshire
Western Sussex
Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead
Witham, Braintree and Halstead Care Trust
Wokingham
Wolverhampton City
Wyre
Wyre Forest
Yorkshire Wolds and Coast

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which specialist mental health helplines outside NHS Direct receive funding from his Department; and what the *(a)* remit, *(b)* types of mental health conditions handled, *(c)* geographical coverage, *(d)* opening hours and *(e)* the average length of calls were of each in the last period for which figures are available. [222663]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In December 1997, the Department launched the CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) telephone helpline in Manchester in response to the high rate of suicide and depression among young men aged 15 to 35 years old. The Department provides core funding for CALM, with local funding provided by local health and social care agencies.

The CALM initiative is aimed at raising awareness of depression amongst 15 to 35-year-old men and encouraging them to seek help. As part of this work, CALM provides a specialist national freephone mental

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

health helpline for young men with feelings of depression that offers confidential information, advice, referrals and telephone counselling from specially trained professional advisers. While the campaign is targeted at young men, all callers will receive the same basic service, regardless of gender, age, culture or sexual orientation.

CALM's services are focused on Manchester, Merseyside and Bedfordshire and callers to the helpline from these areas will receive, in addition to the help and support already mentioned for all callers, information about local services.

CALM's helpline is available from 5 pm to 3 am seven days a week, 365 days a year. When the service is closed, callers receive a message that provides details of opening hours and the telephone number for the Samaritans, should the caller wish to speak with someone urgently.

The CALM helpline receives an average of 8,000 'interactive' calls every year, often long and in-depth. The average call time is 18 minutes. The helpline also receives many thousands of silent calls where the caller was not willing to talk.

Ministerial Duties

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what official duties were carried out by the Minister of State, the hon. Member for Doncaster Central (Ms Winterton) on Thursday 17 March; how many officials accompanied her; for what purposes; and what the total cost of travel was. [223535]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* On Thursday 17 March, I attended Mind's annual conference in Harrogate, opened York hospitals national health service trust's renal satellite unit at Harrogate general hospital, visited Kippax North junior and infant school in Kippax to see the impact of the Government's healthy schools programme and visited Undercliffe surgery in Batley. All the duties were carried out in an official capacity.

As is usual on official visits, I was accompanied to all the engagements by an official from my ministerial private office and by one of the Department's press officers. A senior official from the Department's mental health team attended Mind's conference.

The total cost of travel, including for those officials accompanying me, was £898.40.

Mrs. A. Murphy

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received about Mrs. A. Murphy of Huyton, a constituent of the hon. Member for Knowsley South. [224060]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not received any representations about Mrs. A. Murphy of Huyton.

MRSA

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of MRSA have been identified in hospitals within Greater London, broken down by national health service trust, in each year since March 2003. [221946]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on reported methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bloodstream infections for each national health service trust in London is shown in the tables. Full year figures for April 2004 to March 2005 are not yet available. However, there was a 20 per cent., reduction across London in the first six months of 2004–05—April to September 2004—compared with the same period in 2003.

Reports of MRSA blood stream infections

Trust name	*April 2003 to September 2003*	*October 2003 to March 2004*	*April 2003 to March 2004*
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	59	57	116
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	48	46	94
Baits and the London NHS Trust	33	29	62
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	9	9	18
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	15	23	38
Baling Hospital NHS Trust	19	17	36
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	44	44	88
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	0	4	4
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	82	84	166
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	61	64	125
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	9	15	24
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	4	10	14
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	62	45	107
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	16	10	26
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	17	32	49
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	26	30	56
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	0	0	0
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	11	13	24
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	25	28	53
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	33	22	55
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	8	21	29
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	13	15	28
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	2	3	5
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	46	52	98
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	3	1	4
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	0	1	1

Reports of MRSA blood stream infections

Trust name	*April 2003 to September 2003*	*October 2003 to March 2004*	*April 2003 to March 2004*
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	48	45	93
St. Mary's NHS Trust	30	29	59
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	50	35	85
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	17	17	34
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	20	17	37
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	9	20	29
Grand total	819	838	1,657

Trust name	*April 2004 to September 2004*	*Total*
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust	47	163
Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals NHS Trust	60	154
Barts and the London NHS Trust	29	91
Bromley Hospitals NHS Trust	8	26
Chelsea and Westminster Healthcare NHS Trust	26	64
Ealing Hospital NHS Trust	13	49
Epsom and St. Helier NHS Trust	28	116
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	1	5
Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Trust	57	223
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	42	167
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Trust	16	40
Homerton Hospital NHS Trust	3	17
King's College Hospital NHS Trust	34	141
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	21	47
Lewisham Hospital NHS Trust	21	70
Mayday Healthcare NHS Trust	16	72
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Trust	0	0
Newham Healthcare NHS Trust	6	30
North Middlesex Hospital NHS Trust	14	67
North West London Hospitals NHS Trust	28	83
Queen Elizabeth Hospital NHS Trust	15	44
Queen Mary's Sidcup NHS Trust	12	40
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust	4	9
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	37	135
Royal Marsden Hospital NHS Trust	0	4
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	2	3
St. George's Healthcare NHS Trust	28	121
St. Mary's NHS Trust	26	85
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust	13	98
West Middlesex University NHS Trust	12	46
Whipps Cross University Hospital NHS Trust	26	63
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	9	38
Grand total	654	2311

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Health Protection Agency's survey of data collection methods for the mandatory MRSA surveillance scheme is complete; and what assessment has been made of the consistency in data collection methods across NHS trusts. [222778]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The user study by the Health Protection Agency of the methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacteraemia mandatory surveillance scheme is expected to be received by the Department shortly.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of MRSA have been reported involving kidney patients receiving treatment through intravenous tubes in each of the last three years; [223536]

(2) what measures have been taken to prevent MRSA infections being contracted during dialysis treatment. [223537]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* Figures on the incidence of methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in kidney patients dialysed using central venous catheters are not available.

All national health service trusts need to take steps to control MRSA and other healthcare associated infections and general guidance on infection control is set out in "Winning Ways: Working together to reduce healthcare associated infection in England".

Specific advice on infection control in dialysis units has been issued by the Renal Association in "Treatment of adults and children with renal failure—standards and audit measures".

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information he has collated on the incidence of community-acquired MRSA; and what action he is taking to prevent its spread. [223904]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Community-acquired methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (CA-MRSA) usually refers to cases of MRSA isolated from previously healthy people without any obvious risk factors such as admission to hospital. The Health Protection Agency's (HPA) staphylococcal reference laboratory has confirmed 100 cases over the last three years—an extremely small proportion of the isolates they receive (less than 0.005 per cent.). The Specialist Advisory Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance (SACAR) and the HPA are monitoring reports of CA-MRSA and recommend continued vigilance, but that there is no immediate cause for concern. They will be carrying out a small survey to establish the prevalence of these infections.

CA-MRSA is controlled by good hygiene and infection control and guidance for the national health service is available in "Infection Control: Prevention of healthcare associated infection in primary and community care" published by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence in 2003.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the reasons for changing the name of the antibiotic 'methicillin' to 'meticillin'; and whether the collation of statistics on deaths from MRSA includes cases where MRSA is described as 'meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*'. [224139]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The name of the antibiotic known as methicillin has been changed to meticillin. This is in accordance with the International Pharmacopoeia guidelines. The change in nomenclature does not affect statistics on deaths from meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) as data collected by the Office for National Statistics includes references to both meticillin and methicillin.

Neo-natal Care

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to include the performance of neo-natal care in key indicators of hospital standards. [221998]

Dr. Ladyman: The independent Healthcare Commission is responsible for developing and producing the national health service performance ratings. The Commission is currently developing a new assessment methodology, which will include assessments against the national standards for the NHS published in "Standards for Better Health". Its proposals will be published in the spring.

NHS Finance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 278W, on NHS finances, if he will give examples of the exceptional circumstances which have previously permitted unplanned support to be given to NHS and primary care trusts. [224318]

Mr. Hutton: The Department introduced restrictions in the use of unplanned financial support in the national health service from 2003–04. The policy is that unplanned financial support should only be used where the extent of financial problems is unmanageable and a failure to act would lead to an undue detrimental impact on the quality of patient care.

NHS Trusts

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* total and *(b)* individual current recurrent deficit for (i) NHS hospital trusts and (ii) NHS primary care trusts is. [223555]

Mr. Hutton: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for South Cambridgeshire (Mr. Lansley) on Tuesday 21 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1688W.

Nurses (North-east)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* trainee nurses are employed by each NHS Trust in the North East region and *(b)* student nurses on NHS contracts and receiving bursaries from the NHS are studying at each higher education institution in the North East region; what the value of NHS bursaries was in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 1997; and whether such bursaries (A) are taxable and (B) were taxable in 1997. [221970]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* Student nurses are not technically employed by national health service trusts whilst undertaking pre-registration nurse training courses, even though they continue to be paid a salary, as they have supernumerary status during their training period. There were 307 health care assistants seconded to nurse training by Northumberland, Tyne and Wear strategic health authority on behalf of their local trusts in 2003–04. (*Source:* Q4 2003–04MPET NMET Quarterly Monitoring).

Information is not held centrally on which higher education institution each student attends.

Total student bursary awards in Northern England Education and Training Consortium were £183,452 in the 1997–98 academic year and £2,463,424 in the 2004–05 academic year. The figures are not directly comparable because the NHS Student Grants Unit (SGU) did not take on the responsibility for the assessment and payment of NHS Bursaries to nursing degree students until the 1998–99 academic year and only assessed and paid bursaries to Allied Health Profession students in the 1997–98 academic year. Similarly, Diploma level nursing and midwifery students were not paid their bursaries by SGU until the 1999–2000 academic year, with fifth year undergraduate medical and dental students, who commenced their first year from 1 September 1998 onwards, being incorporated into the NHS Bursary Scheme from the 2002–03 academic year.

NHS student bursaries are not taxable and were not taxable in 1997.

Obesity

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if the National Institute for Clinical Excellence

will assess the efficacy of low carbohydrate diets as part of its obesity guidance; and if he will make a statement. [223722]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The focus of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's work is broad and does not include investigations into any particular weight loss strategy. Where there is good evidence of effectiveness, dietary advice including the role of low-fat, low-carbohydrate and very low-energy diets will be considered.

Patients Forums

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many members of patients' forums have resigned since 1 December 2003; and what percentage turnover in membership this represents. [224268]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since 1 December 2003, 7,614 members have been recruited to patients' forums, of whom 1,609, or 21 per cent., have resigned. Current membership is 4,809, which is the highest since forum establishment.

Practice-based Commissioning

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to encourage uptake of practice-based commissioning; and if he will make a statement. [224286]

Mr. Hutton: The Department has issued two sets of guidance clarifying how practice-based commissioning will operate. Furthermore, external stakeholders have been involved in producing practical booklets aimed at helping practices and primary care trusts with local implementation. A communications strategy has also been developed which highlights the benefits that practice-based commissioning can bring to both patients and those who work in the national health service. Officials are also considering what more can be done to encourage uptake.

Premium Rate Phone Lines

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is on the cost for patients' friends and relatives of calling patients in hospital through premium rate lines operable through bedside telephones; if he will publish guidance given to NHS trusts on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [222181]

Mr. Hutton: Patients in national health service hospitals have requested personal use of a telephone to remain in contact with family and friends. This is provided through the patient power system and over 75,000 beds in NHS trusts have this service.

There are four companies licensed to provide these services and they are responsible for all aspects of installation, managing and running the service.

Contracts are entered into by individual trusts, which will set out in the contract an agreed schedule of charges, including the cost of incoming calls to patients.

Three suppliers, covering 69,000 beds, include a message notifying callers at the outset of the call what the cost will be. The fourth, which provides a service to the remaining 6,000 beds, will shortly be including a similar message at all its sites.

Bedside televisions and telephones are an additional service to patients. It is still possible for friends and relatives to contact a hospital through its main switchboard and then be transferred to a nurses' station to enquire about their relative's health.

NHS Estates commissioned the British Market Research Bureau to carry out a survey to conduct research into patient and staff satisfaction with the bedside communication and entertainment systems. Over 300 patients and nearly 100 staff were interviewed at six NHS hospitals between October and November 2004.

88 per cent. of patients said that they were satisfied with the services.

95 per cent. of patients chose to pay for services offered.

Patients said the most important reason for using the system was to make phone calls without having to ask a member of staff for help or go to a public pay phone.

The patient bedside entertainment system provides a vital direct link with the outside world for NHS patients. The results of the recent survey confirm that the service is useful in improving the patient's stay in hospital.

Psoriasis

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will make a statement on levels of psoriasis in the population; [224450]

(2) what improvements he is making in *(a)* treatments and *(b)* services for patients suffering from psoriasis; [224451]

(3) what estimate he has made of the number of general practitioner consultations for psoriasis that took place in the last year for which figures are available; [224463]

(4) if he will estimate the number of working days lost in the population as a result of psoriasis in each year. [224471]

Dr. Ladyman: Data on the incidence of psoriasis is not available centrally. However, the Psoriasis Association estimates that the condition affects approximately two per cent, of the United Kingdom population.

Information on the number of general practitioner consultations for psoriasis is not collected centrally, nor are figures covering the number of working days lost as a result of the condition.

In England, primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible for deciding which health services the local population requires and ensuring that these services are provided. We have asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) to establish the clinical and cost effectiveness of efalizumab and etanercept within their licensed indications for the treatment of psoriasis and to produce guidance for the national health service in England and Wales. We expect NICE to publish

guidance in October 2005. PCTs are obliged to provide appropriate funding where treatments have been recommended by NICE.

Psychiatric Treatment

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Leicester South have had psychiatric treatment since 1997. [223651]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not available in the format requested.

SANE

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions he has had with the charity SANE following withdrawal of funding for 2004–05 concerning the effects of this withdrawal on the organisation. [221991]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department and SANE have conducted a number of discussions regarding funding for SANELINE. The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two year contract for the SANELINE service. The contract came to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

SANE is eligible to apply for Government funding streams aimed at the voluntary and community sector.

The chair of the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP), of which SANE was until recently a member, has written to SANE offering the MHHP's support. The Department has indicated to the chair of the MHHP that it would offer advice and support to the MHHP in this matter.

Scanning (Waiting Times)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many out-patients diagnosed as 'routine' waited for an ultrascan for longer than *(a)* two weeks, *(b)* one month, *(c)* three months, *(d)* six months and *(e)* nine months in each NHS trust in England in the last year for which figures are available; [224580]

(2) how many out-patients diagnosed as routine are waiting for an *(a)* ultrascan and *(b)* ultrasound scan, broken down by NHS trust in England; [224584]

(3) how many out-patients diagnosed as urgent are waiting for an ultra sound scan, broken down by NHS trust in England. [224594]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions took place between his Department and the County Durham and Tees Valley strategic health authority about reducing waiting times for scans in County Durham; [224514]

(2) what discussions took place between his Department and *(a)* the Chester-le-Street and Durham primary care trust and *(b)* Derwentside primary care trust concerning the reduction of waiting times for scans in County Durham. [224515]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As part of the recent capacity planning exercise, the Department met with all strategic health authorities (SHAs) to discuss their plans for delivering the 2005–06 to 2007–08 public service agreements. It is for SHAs to discuss and agree these plans with their local primary care trusts. We expect these plans to be formally agreed with the Department in May.

Schizophrenia

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the Home Office and his Department work together in developing public information publicising the risks of developing schizophrenia from cannabis use aimed at *(a)* early age users, *(b)* carers, *(c)* chronic users and *(d)* professionals. [224595]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department and the Home Office work closely together in publicising the health risks of all illegal drugs, including cannabis.

Both Departments, supported by the Department for Education and Skills, fund and manage the FRANK campaign, which informs young people and their parents, carers and families about the effects and risks of taking illicit drugs. The risks associated with cannabis use, including mental health illness, are documented. A FRANK information pack for practitioners, "Communicating the health risks of cannabis use", was developed and approved by both Departments and published in 2004. Included is material that focuses specifically on young non-users, light users and those contemplating use. It also includes materials aimed at heavy chronic users. They draw attention to the important mental health risks of cannabis, including the risk that use can trigger serious mental health problems and that there is concern that people who use cannabis a lot when they are young may be vulnerable to mental health problems later in life. These will continue to be updated in the light of emerging evidence. Materials aimed specifically at cannabis users with mental health problems, their carers and the professionals who work with them are currently in development by the Home Office and the Department following consultation with key stakeholders.

Stroke Care

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on improving care facilities for stroke patients in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England in each year since 1997. [224250]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally. The complex nature of the delivery of stroke services means that we are unable to monitor expenditure. It is for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds locally to meet national priorities for stroke services.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in implementing stopping tuberculosis in England. [224285]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Work has started to implement some key areas of the tuberculosis action plan, including:

Publication of new media material to raise awareness among professions.

Launch of a new mobile X-ray unit in London on World TB Day (24 March 2005) to enhance case finding for difficult to reach groups.

Funding to the Health Protection Agency to help the top 10 TB areas implement local actions in line with the aims of the TB action plan.

Review of the BCG immunisation programme by the BCG subgroup of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation.

Work with London TB groups to enhance service delivery and improve treatment completion rates.

The effectiveness of these initiatives and projects and the impact on the prevalence of disease will be monitored. However, data on TB is compiled retrospectively and we will not have robust information for another two years.

Future work will address other areas of the plan.

University Hospital, North Durham

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) at what capacity the existing NHS scanner at the University Hospital North Durham was working in each month since April 2004; [224214]

(2) what the capital costs were of providing the equipment to undertake CT and MRI scans at the University Hospital, North Durham; [224518]

(3) what the running costs of the equipment used for CT and MRI scans at the University Hospital, North Durham were in each year since purchase of the equipment. [224519]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answers 4 April 2005]:* While information on the capital costs of trusts is held centrally, it cannot be analysed individual assets.

The average cost of a computerised tomography (CT) scanner is around £450,600 to £500,000, excluding value added tax (VAT). A magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner is around £700,000 to £750,000, excluding VAT.

These costs are only guides and would vary depending on equipment supplier and configuration. They only cover the scanners themselves and do not include any peripheral equipment needed to provide the service.

Information on the running costs and current capacity of equipment is not held centrally.

Waiting Times (North-west)

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his assessment is of the change in patient waiting times since 1997 in *(a)* Liverpool, *(b)* Merseyside and *(c)* the north-west. [223981]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested is shown in the tables.

Number of patients waiting for in-patient admission 1997 and 2005 (commissioner based)—January 2005

Primary care trust (PCT)/Strategic health authority (SHA)	*Total waiting*	*Patients waiting for admission by month waiting*				
		0–2 months	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*	*9–12 months*	*12–15 months*
North Liverpool PCT	2,296	1,815	394	87	0	0
Central Liverpool PCT	4,186	2,832	960	394	0	0
South Liverpool PCT	1,656	1,123	394	139	0	0
Liverpool total	8,138	5,770	1,748	620	0	0
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	37,541	24,199	9,916	3,425	0	1
Greater Manchester SHA	52,804	36,382	12,868	3,554	0	0
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	42,938	28,182	10,734	4,015	6	1

Primary care trust (PCT)/Strategic health authority (SHA)	*Patients waiting for admission by month waiting*					
	15–17 months	*18–20 months*	*21–23 months*	*24 plus*	*Percentage waiting <3 months*	*Percentage waiting <6 months*
North Liverpool PCT	0	0	0	0	79.1	96.2
Central Liverpool PCT	0	0	0	0	67.7	90.6
South Liverpool PCT	0	0	0	0	67.8	91.6
Liverpool total	0	0	0	0	70.9	92.4
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	0	0	0	0	64.5	90.9
Greater Manchester SHA	0	0	0	0	68.9	93.3
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	0	0	0	0	65.6	90.6

March 1997

	Total waiting	*Patients waiting for admission by month waiting*				
		0–2 months	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*	*9–12 months*	*12–15 months*
Liverpool HA	13,146	7,219	2,857	1,528	956	427
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	50,907	25,261	13,053	7,731	4,489	336
Greater Manchester SHA	76,328	40,258	17,155	10,313	6,645	1,646
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	66,359	34,091	15,334	9,079	6,315	1,361

Patients waiting for admission by month waiting

	15–17 months	*18–20 months*	*21–23 months*	*24 plus*	*Percentage waiting <3 months*	*Percentage waiting <6 months*
Liverpool HA	132	26	1	0	54.9	76.6
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	31	6	0	0	49.6	75.3
Greater Manchester SHA	283	28	0	0	52.7	75.2
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	152	26	1	0	51.4	74.5

Percentage reduction in list size since 1997

	Percentage
Liverpool HA	-38
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	-26
Greater Manchester SHA	-31
Cheshire and Merseyside SHA	-35

Social Care (Direct Payments)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research he has commissioned on the attitude of staff employed in the social care profession towards direct payments. [224267]

Dr. Ladyman: We have not commissioned or conducted a study on the attitude of staff employed in the social care profession towards direct payments.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 6 April 2005

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Planning

Andy Burnham: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 793–94W, on planning, what the *(a)* location and *(b)* name of each of the contested planning developments is; how much was spent on mounting and defending the challenge in each case; what the final outcome of each case was; and what the effect on the timescale of each project was. [224499]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) were only able to identify six cases in the answer of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 793–94W. This does not include possible judicial reviews because the LSC does not record figures for judicial review by way of type of application.

Different Departments record their information in different ways, therefore the Government have been unable to match the records for all of these six cases without incurring disproportionate costs. However, the following information has been obtained from the LSC, the Planning Inspectorate and the Treasury Solicitors:

	Location	*Contested development*	*Legal aid costs (£)*	*Defence costs (£)*	*Outcome of case*
2001–02	Stroud, Gloucestershire	Shutway Quarry	4,745.11	Unable to link costs of case	This information is not currently available
2001–02	Hounslow, Middlesex	Private dwelling—extension	2,751.01	4,429.60 plus VAT. Plus 10,500 in costs to claimant	Appeal refused
2002–03	Wexham, Slough	Greenbelt land	The defence met the full costs	Unable to link costs of case	Appeal allowed
2003–04	Otterton, Devon	The location of a mobile phone mast	3,152.12 (legal aid only covered preparation costs to trial)	3,360. (Unsuccessful claimant ordered to pay costs)	Appeal refused
2003–04	Middlewich Cheshire	The disposal of hazardous waste in rock salt mines	Costs are yet to be finalised	Costs are yet to be finalised	Appeal refused
2004–05	Exeter	Private dwelling—extension	Costs are yet to be determined	Unable to link costs of case	Outcome is currently unknown

It is not possible to predict what the effects on the time scale of each project was. However, I can give the following dates from the cases that we have been able to cross-reference:

Hounslow, Middlesex: The original planning decision was made on 23 January 2001 and the redetermination decision was issued on 16 December 2004.

Otterton, Devon: The decision allowing the appeal was issued on 14 August 2003 and was upheld by the court on 1 March 2004.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.2 million by 2005–06 will be met; [219137]

(2) what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target to reduce the proportion of ineffective trials. [219140]

Mr. Lammy: Progress against these targets is set out in the Department for Constitutional Affairs' autumn performance report (Cm 6391) which was presented to Parliament in December 2004.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by 2007–08 will be met. [219138]

Mr. Lammy: Plans to deliver this public service agreement target, which was announced as part of the 2004 spending review and came into effect on 1 April 2005, are currently being developed. Progress will be covered in the departmental report 2005 and the autumn performance report 2005 both of which will be laid before Parliament later this year.

Training Budget

John Mann: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, what the total education and training budget of the Department is for 2005–06. [218036]

Substantive answer from David Lammy to John Mann:

PQ 05/476—DCA Education & Training Budget

You tabled a Parliamentary question, ref 218036, to my Department last session. You asked what the total education and training budget of the Department is for 2005–6.

For DCA staff training the total allocation is £4.4m.

The major business customers for training (e.g. the new Her Majesty's Courts Service) are in the process of agreeing their Business Plans that inform their staff education and training needs. Therefore not all of this expenditure can be precisely broken down at present. The areas that can be are:

£650,000—Leadership and Management programmes—developing the DCA's senior managers leadership skills;

£600,000—Professional Skills for Government—cross-governmental qualifications in Corporate/Specialist, Policy and Operational skills;

£400,000—IT and Business skills—supporting operational staff by maximising their use of IT and their knowledge of the DCA's business to deliver effective services to the public;

£300,000—Continuing Professional Development for Lawyers;

£300,000—Diversity Awareness—ensuring the staff in the Department understand the diverse needs of the society they serve—their customers and their colleagues;

£100,00—First Aid training—ensuring legal obligations are fulfilled for qualified first-aiders to provide support and possibly life-saving assistance to colleagues and the DCA's customers.

As an Investor In People (IiP) employer the DCA provides active support to the continuing education and development of all staff. At the March 2004 IiP assessment, the DCA was praised on its approach to leadership and diversity—recognised as important cornerstones for delivering high quality services.

I have placed a copy of this letter in the libraries of both Houses.

PRIME MINISTER

Iraq War

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to the answer of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 301W, on Iraq, whether it was on his instructions that the Attorney-General went to Washington in relation to the legal situation relating to war against Iraq on 21 and 22 July 2003 to have talks with the US Defense Department General Counsel and the Australian Justice Minister. [224703]

The Prime Minister: The Attorney-General's visit to Washington in July 2003 did not relate to the military action in Iraq. As the Attorney-General made clear in a statement issued on 22 July 2003, he had discussions with senior representatives of the US Administration about the British detainees in Guantanamo Bay with a view to ensuring that the detainees, if prosecuted, were guaranteed fair trials in accordance with international standards and to make clear the Government's opposition to the death penalty.

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister when he was first informed that Professor Christopher Greenwood QC had been retained by the Government to assist in relation to legal issues arising from the Iraq conflict. [224332]

The Prime Minister: Counsel are routinely retained by the Government on the advice of the lead Department(s).

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) on how many occasions Professor Christopher Greenwood was paid by the Attorney-General's office for legal opinions on the legality of military action against Iraq; and how much was paid in each case; [224701]

(2) what guidance Professor Christopher Greenwood was given about appearances in the print and broadcasting media in relation to opinions about the legality of the Iraq war which he provided to the Prime Minister. [224702]

The Solicitor-General: As I said in my reply to the hon. Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llew Smith) of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, and the hon. Member for Ceredigion (Mr. Thomas) of 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1224W, Professor Christopher Greenwood QC was not instructed to advise on whether the war in Iraq would be lawful.

Published Article

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Prime Minister whether the article to which he referred in his reply to the hon. Member for Nottingham, South of 22 October 2003, *Official Report*, column 636, was that of Professor Christopher Greenwood, QC, published in The Times, on 22 October 2003. [224055]

The Prime Minister: Yes.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Environmental Crime

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to her answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1638–39W, on environmental crime, for what reasons the Crown Prosecution Service does not generally prosecute in cases of environmental crime. [223518]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not generally prosecute in cases of environmental crime because, within England and Wales, the Environment Agency and local authorities generally do so instead.

The Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 requires the CPS to take on the prosecution of criminal proceedings instituted by a police force. Police forces do not generally investigate allegations of environmental crime, as successive governments have given powers to agencies other than the police and CPS to enforce environmental legislation.

TREASURY

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the value of the family element of the child tax credit would have been in 2005–06 if it had been uprated *(a)* with earnings, *(b)* with prices and *(c)* at the same rate as the child element since the introduction of the child tax credit. [224678]

John Healey *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The value of the family element in 2005–06, had it been uprated as described in the question since its introduction in 2003–04, would be as follows:

(a) £590

(b) £585

(c) £640.

Correspondence

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will provide a response to the hon. Member for Bassetlaw regarding the tax credits of Graeme Edward Aitkins of Sunnyside, Worksop. [224878]

John Healey: There is no record of any correspondence received from the hon. Member about his constituent. The Inland Revenue wrote directly to the hon. Member's constituent on 30 March 2005.

Lyons Review

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the areas in Scotland which he expects to gain public sector jobs under the Lyons review, as indicated in his Budget statement. [224737]

Mr. Boateng: Of the workforce relocations referred to by the Chancellor in Budget 2005, 90 jobs are going to East Kilbride and 120 to Glasgow and Dundee. It will be for Departments to decide the destination of further relocations.

Sir Ronald Cohen

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he last met Sir Ronald Cohen to discuss official Government business. [214025]

Mr. Gordon Brown: Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of individuals and organisations as part of the process of policy development and analysis. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's usual practice to provide details of all such meetings. Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Code, as appropriate.

Stamp Duty

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to review the percentage of shared ownership house purchase price that is eligible for stamp duty. [224877]

Mr. Timms: The Government keep all taxes under review.

WALES

Sports Broadcasting

9. **Kevin Brennan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in the context of BBC -charter renewal on the role of the broadcasting of sport in promoting Wales. [224377]

Mr. Hain: The renewal of the charter presents an opportunity to preserve the BBC as a strong independent broadcaster.

It plays an important part in the national life of Wales—not least in its excellent coverage of sport.

Aerospace Industry

10. **Mark Tami:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet and National Assembly for Wales colleagues on future investment in the aerospace industry in Wales. [224378]

Mr. Hain: I have regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues and the First Minister on a number of issues, including the very successful aerospace sector in Wales.

Railways

11. **Mrs. Betty Williams:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Transport on the possible future use of Meridian trains on the Holyhead to Euston rail route. [224379]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with ministerial colleagues about matters affecting transport in Wales. I understand that the Strategic Rail Authority has written to stakeholders, including hon. Members representing north Wales constituencies, to consult them about future service levels, particularly beyond 2008, when the physical infrastructure works on the West Coast Main Line will be complete. Various options for improving the frequency of services, and types of rolling stock are being considered.

Inward Investment

12. **Mr. Walter:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales Government regarding inward investment into Wales. [224381]

Mr. Hain: I have regular discussions with the First Minister on a variety of subjects, including the promotion of Wales as a business location. Wales is in a strong position to take advantage of increasing global trade, and benefit rapidly from new ideas, management techniques and production methods.

Antisocial Behaviour

13. **Dr. Francis:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will meet the First Secretary to discuss strategies to combat antisocial behaviour in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* Aberavon. [224382]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Assembly colleagues on matters affecting Wales.

Police forces and partner organisations in Wales are increasingly using the wide range of powers, which we have put in place, to tackle antisocial behaviour.

14. **Huw Irranca-Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will meet the First Secretary to discuss strategies to combat antisocial behaviour in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* Ogmore. [224383]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Assembly colleagues on matters affecting Wales.

Police forces and partner organisations in Wales are increasingly using the wide range of powers, which we have put in place, to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Coal Health Claims Monitoring Group

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales pursuant to the oral answer of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1150, on Coal Health Claims Monitoring

Group, if he will break down the payments made to ex-miners by *(a)* respiratory disease and *(b)* vibration white finger compensation schemes. [224202]

Mr. Touhig: Figures available at the time of my oral reply showed that a total of over £344 million had been paid out in Wales for respiratory claims and over £122 million for vibration white finger (VWF). This brought the total paid out in Wales since the start to over £467 million.

Since my reply, these figures have increased, with over £347 million paid out for respiratory disease and over £123 million for VWF.

This is an increase of £3 million, bringing us to a combined total of over £470 million paid out in Wales for both schemes so far.

Dee Estuary

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales when a decision will be made regarding the Port of Mostyn's application to dredge the Dee Estuary. [223029]

Mr. Touhig: Decisions on the Port of Mostyn's proposals are matters for the National Assembly for Wales, the Environment Agency and the Department for Transport.

The regulators are considering a range of complex issues, including environmental factors. It is not possible to say when a decision will be reached.

Medical Staff

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales on joint initiatives to increase the numbers of medical staff in Wales. [219379]

Mr. Hain: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Newark (Patrick Mercer) earlier today, at Oral Questions to the Secretary of State for Wales.

Wildlife Management (Dee Estuary)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has held with the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales Government regarding the management of wildlife on the Dee Estuary. [224380]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Assembly Ministers. The Dee Estuary is a candidate 'Special Area for Conservation' under European Habitat Regulations. It includes two nature reserves and seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It supports a large bird population over the winter, and has a number of rare plants and animals, including 12 internationally important bird species.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Correspondence

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will reply to the letter of 18 November 2004 from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford, concerning Mr. East of Essex County Cricket Club. [224477]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The original letter from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford was not received in the Department. My office has however obtained a copy of the letter and I replied to the hon. Member on 5 April.

Sport England

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of Sport England's Exchequer grant in aid was spent on *(a)* staff costs, excluding those for national centres, *(b)* administrative costs, *(c)* publicity promotions and communications, *(d)* grants to national governing bodies, *(e)* grants to Sportscoach UK, *(f)* sports science and sports medicine, *(g)* national centres, *(h)* grants to other national sports bodies, excluding national governing bodies and *(i)* regional support, in each year from 2002–03 to 2005–06. [224522]

Mr. Caborn: The following table provides the percentage of Sport England's grant in aid spent on the costs listed *(a)* to *(i)*.

Percentage

		2002–03	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06 (projected)*
(a)	Staff costs	21.18	8.79	8.05	9.60
(b)	Administrative costs	15.05	3.77	4.61	4.40
(c)	Publicity promotions and communications	1.61	1.84	1.11	0.90
(d)	Grants to national governing bodies (including P.E., school sport and club links and community club development programme)	12.03	9.90	30.79	38.50
(e)	Grants to Sportscoach UK	1.76	1.48	4.35	6.00
(f)	Sports science and medicine	0.47	0.16	0.00	0.00
(g)	National centres	27.42	26.24	19.18	14.40
(h)	Grants to other national bodies (including the Central Council for Physical Recreation and Equity)	12.45	11.88	11.05	11.05
(i)	Regional support	1.26	1.18	1.26	2.60

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Commission on Sustainable Development

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which Minister from his Department will be attending the Commission on Sustainable Development in New York in April. [214552]

Hilary Benn: The Department will provide expert and senior policy support to the representatives of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, who lead on this issue.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when he intends to reply to the letter dated 10 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. O. Brobdan, sent again on 22 February. [224864]

Hilary Benn: DFID has no record of a letter dated 10 January, from the right hon. Member on behalf of Mr. O. Brobdan. A reply to the letter of 22 February was issued on 5 April.

SCOTLAND

Asylum Seekers (Grants)

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list the payments and grants made by the Government to each local authority in Scotland to reimburse the costs of supporting asylum seekers in each year from 1996–97 to the establishment of the Scottish Executive. [217878]

Mrs. McGuire: Immediately prior to 1 April 1999, the budget for support of asylum seekers was split between the then Department of Social Security and the Department of Health. The Department of Social Security was responsible for supporting applicants who made their application at a port of entry until such times as an initial decision was recorded on the claim for asylum. The Department of Health picked up the costs of supporting those claiming asylum after entry and also appellants (including those who made their original application on arrival).

The budget for adult and family asylum seekers transferred to the Home Office on 1 April 1999. The budget for unaccompanied asylum seeking children transferred to the Home Office on 1 April 2000.

For information on the costs to the Government in relation to asylum seekers prior to 1999–2000, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 9 May 2000, *Official Report*, column 331W by the then Home Secretary. The figures contained in the answer are global, and cover the entire of the UK. They cannot be broken down further into areas.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223438]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W by my hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) if he will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which Ministers were not present; [210549]

(2) if he will list the speeches his special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210561]

Mrs. McGuire: I refer the hon. Member to the answers given on 10 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1648W to questions 203460 and 203493.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Tax

John Mann: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria he has set for class R exemptions from council tax for narrow boat resident owners. [224870]

Mr. Raynsford: A mooring occupied by a boat which is somebody's sole or main residence is deemed to be a "dwelling" for council tax purposes and will therefore attract a council tax liability in the same way as other domestic types of property. Under class R of the Council Tax (Exempt Dwellings) Order 1992 (as amended) a dwelling consisting of a mooring which is not occupied by a boat is exempt from council tax.

National House Building Council

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what arrangements he has in place to monitor the building control and inspection procedures of the National House Building Council; and if he will make a statement. [224911]

Phil Hope: As approved inspectors, the National House Building Council has to satisfy the Construction Industry Council's requirements to continue to practice as a building control body. They are also obliged to apply 12 standards specified in our "Building Control Performance Standards" handbook.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions he has held with Cheshire county council on the removal of unlawfully placed roadside advertising. [224724]

Keith Hill: No recent discussions have been held with Cheshire county council on this subject.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has held with other Departments on the potential for distraction caused by temporary wheeled billboards placed next to motorways. [224725]

Keith Hill: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have had regular contact with the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency on the road safety aspects of siting advertisements alongside motorways.

Social Housing

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much central funding has been invested in *(a)* social and *(b)* council housing in (i) the Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) England in each year since 1997. [224722]

Keith Hill: Details of the capital allocations made for housing investment in South Tyneside, the north-east region and England as whole since 1997–98 are tabled as follows. Information is not readily available for the Jarrow constituency.

£ million

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
South Tyneside				
Housing investment Programme[1]	3.6	6.3	6.2	10.6
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	—	—	—	—
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	—	—	—
Market renewal[3]	—	—	—	—
Approved Development programme[4]	1.1	1.1	1.8	0.8
Other[5]	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.2
Total	5.2	7.9	8.5	11.6
North East				
Housing investment Programme[1]	49.8	73.7	77.3	130.4
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	—	—	—	—
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	—	—	—
Market renewal[3]	—	—	—	—
Approved Development programme[4]	21.7	18.9	18.4	20.5
Other[5]	11.5	10.0	10.1	3.4
Total	83.0	102.6	105.8	154.2
England				
Housing investment Programme[1]	803	1,113	1,179	2,019
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	—	—	—	—
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	—	—	—
Market renewal[3]	—	—	—	—
Approved Development programme[4]	683	606	638	717
Starter Home Initiative	—	—	—	—
Other[5]	301	256	232	72
Total	1,787	1,975	2,049	2,807

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*	*2005–06*
South Tyneside					
Housing investment Programme[1]	3.1	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.0
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	11.1	11.0	10.9	10.9	11.0
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	—	—	—	—
Market renewal[3]	—	—	—	—	—
Approved Development programme[4]	1.3	2.8	4.4	4.9	2.6
Other[5]	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3
Total	15.6	17.6	18.7	19.4	16.9
North East					
Housing investment Programme[1]	43.8	47.0	41.0	46.5	47.9
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	114.4	[illegible].4	105.6	105.8	95.5
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	[illegible].6	42.1	48.8	98.6
Market renewal[3]	—	—	7.0	28.0	38.0
Approved Development programme[4]	22.9	[illegible].3	41.3	37.4	38.0
Other[5]	4.2	[illegible].3	4.5	4.4	4.8
Total	185.3	[illegible].6	241.4	270.9	322.8
England					
Housing investment Programme[1]	891	945	792	795	842
Major Repairs Allowance[2]	1,587	1,529	1,459	1,459	1,417
Arms Length Management Organisation[2]	—	56	321	575	956
Market renewal[3]	—	—	40	170	290
Approved Development programme[4]	775	918	1,613	1,618	1,676
Starter Home Initiative	2	67	173	8	—
Other[5]	105	96	107	107	107
Total	3,361	3,611	4,505	4,732	5,288

[1] Housing Annual Capital Guidelines/Supported Capital Expenditure and Capital Receipts Initiative—funding to support local authorities overall housing capital programmes.
[2] For maintaining and improving council housing.
[3] Funding to support long-term strategies for tackling low demand/abandonment.
[4] Resources provided to registered social landlords for new/replacement affordable housing.
[5] Allocations to local authorities for disabled facilities grants, private sector renewal grant and cash incentive schemes; there are no longer separate allocations for the last two of these.

Thames Gateway

Llew Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will take steps to ensure that a new heat grid and combined heat and power plants are installed as part of his sustainable communities plan for the Thames Gateway. [224715]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Companion Guide for Planning Policy Statement 22 (planning for renewable energy) highlights the benefits of using renewable-powered CHP schemes in developments.

In addition, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister announced that, from April 2006, all publicly funded new homes in the Thames Gateway will subscribe to the Code for Sustainable Buildings, which will bring new buildings up to world-class environmental standards. The Code will set out clearly specified performance based criteria for energy efficiency, rather than stipulating particular methods. Flagship projects using the code will be demonstrated in the Thames Gateway by both the public and private sectors before being rolled out nationally.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Corporate Plan

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission when the Electoral Commission's Corporate Plan for 2005–06 to 2009–10 was approved by the Speaker's Committee. [224972]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission's Corporate Plan for 2005–06 to 2009–10 was approved by the Speaker's Committee at its meeting on 2 February. The plan was laid before the House by the Speaker, on behalf of the Speaker's Committee, on 24 March as House of Commons Paper No. 347. Copies are available in the Vote Office.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Construction Industry

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the number of workers in the building industry *(a)* directly employed by agencies and *(b)* subcontracted to building firms. [219953]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Dr. John Pugh, dated 6 April 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about employment in the building industry. (219953)

Information is available from the Labour Force Survey about people working in temporary employment in the building industry who give their reason for not being in a permanent job as being an "agency worker". During the three months ending November 2004, an estimated 11,000 people were classified in this category.

Further information relating to workers in the building industry who were directly employed by agencies or subcontracted to building firms, is not available.

These estimates from the Labour Force Survey are, as with any statistical sample survey, subject to sampling variability.

Correspondence

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Rochford and Southend, East dated 5 January 2005 and 25 July 2004 regarding a constituent, Mr. Christopher Yeomans. [216586]

Mr. Sutcliffe: A response to the 25 July 2004 letter (which covers the letter of 5 January 2005) will be sent out in the first week in April. It appears that due to an administrative error this was not responded to earlier.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letters from the hon. Member for Argyll and Bute, dated 22 November 2004 and 31 January 2005, concerning a constituent who had lodged a claim against British Coal and her Department. [224739]

Nigel Griffiths: I have answered the hon. Member's letter today. I apologise for the delay.

Economic Partnership Agreements

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has made to the European Commission on ACP countries retaining national and regional autonomy in Economic Partnership Agreements with the EU. [221269]

Mr. Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 575W.

EU Directives

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many EU *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives covering matters within the responsibility of her Department have been repealed since 1 April 2004. [224570]

Nigel Griffiths: The European Commission publishes information on the repeal of EU regulations and directives in its simplification progress reports. Its last report was published in June 2004. The next report will cover the period since 1 April 2004.

EU Regional Funding

Iain Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what action the Government are taking to secure the best outcome for regions in the UK from negotiations regarding the European Convergence (Objective 1) Programme post 2006; [224497]

(2) what action the Government will take to support regions which risk losing eligibility for European convergence funding in the post 2006 programme because of the effect of enlargement upon allocation of Extra Regio. [224498]

Mr. Alexander: The Government set out their approach to the negotiations on the future of the EU structural and cohesion funds in their consultation document, "A new Regional Policy for the United Kingdom", of March 2003 and in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's two written statements to Parliament of 17 September and 11 December 2003.

Exporters

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with representatives of *(a)* the textile industry, *(b)* clothing manufacturers and exporters, *(c)* the Scottish Executive and *(d)* Scottish Enterprise regarding small and medium-sized enterprises participating in exhibitions and missions in export markets under the support for exhibitions and seminars abroad scheme; and if she will make a statement. [217959]

Mr. Alexander: The textile and clothing industries have made representations to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and other Ministers about changes to the support for exhibitions and seminars abroad scheme from 2006–07. UK Trade and Investment has consulted industry and Scottish Development International on the detail of these changes, which aim to focus assistance on the small and medium-sized enterprises who can benefit most, namely new-to-export companies.

Independent Generators

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what grants are available to individuals who want to provide their own electricity independent from the national grid. [217515]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI provides capital grants to individuals to encourage the uptake of small scale renewable technologies to generate electricity through the Clear Skies programme and the Major PV Demonstration programme. Grants are also provided by the Scottish Executive through the Scottish Community and Householder Renewables Initiative.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many staff in each regional development agency work on supporting exporters in the *(a)* civil aerospace, *(b)* agriculture, horticulture and fisheries, *(c)* airports, *(d)* automotive, *(e)* biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, *(f)* business and consumer services, *(g)* chemicals, *(h)* clothing, footwear and fashions, *(i)* communications, *(j)* construction, *(k)* creative and media, *(l)* education and training, *(m)* electronics and IT hardware, *(n)* environment, *(o)* financial services, *(p)* fire, police and security, *(q)* food and drink, *(r)* giftware, jewellery and tableware, *(s)* healthcare and medical, *(t)* household goods, furniture and furnishings, *(u)* leisure and tourism, *(v)* marine, *(w)* mechanical engineering and process engineering, *(x)* metallurgical process plant, *(y)* metals and minerals, *(z)* mining, (aa) oil and gas, (bb) ports and logistics, (cc) power, (dd) railways, (ee) software and computer services business-to-business, (ff) sports and leisure infrastructure, (gg) textiles, interior textiles and carpets and (hh) water sectors. [203950]

Mr. Alexander: Support for exporters in England is the responsibility of UK Trade and Investment, which has agreed with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) to operate as their international trade arm. Through this relationship, UKTI funds a network of over 270 International Trade Advisers (ITAs) who provide support and advice on international trade to businesses within each region. The delivery of UKTI trade services for each region is in line with the Regional International Trade Strategy (RITS), which is closely linked to the Regional Economic Strategy, and drawn together by UKTI and the RDA, in consultation with business representatives, to reflect regional priorities. Therefore, the number of ITAs working in a particular sector will depend on the varying regional sector priorities as reflected in each RITS.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the responsibilities of each of the regional development agencies are with regard to inward investment. [224080]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) alongside the development agencies of the devolved Administrations and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) comprise the UK's inward investment network. UKTI leads and guides the network. It funds the RDAs to enable them to provide a tailored service to potential inward investors in co-operation with UKTI, to attract inward investment to the UK and to maintain and expand that investment.

Regulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many regulations have been repealed by her Department since 1 October 2004. [224621]

Nigel Griffiths: Since 1 April 2004, DTI regulatory reforms which have reduced burdens on business include:

Repeal of the Trading Stamps Act by Regulatory Reform order, expected to produce annual administrative cost savings of £0.5–£1.5 million.

Modernisation of the Competition regime completed in 2004; this will reduce compliance costs for business, generating annual savings to business of up to £1.5 million.

Administrative simplification to reduce burdens on directory publishers, saving business £1 million per year: through the Directory Publishing—reducing and simplifying regulations (Amends Unsolicited Goods and Services Act).

Wireless Telegraphy (Register) Regulations 2004; together with the Communications Act 2003 these will generate £5.4 million savings per annum to business.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Adult Disadvantages

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will recalculate the figures placed in the Library following the answer to the hon. Member for Arundel and South Downs (Mr. Flight) of 26 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1715W, on adult disadvantages, to include retirement on 31 December 2004. [224659]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not currently available. The calculations referred to are based on figures published by UBS Global Asset Management. Figures for 2004 are expected to be published in June.

Asylum Seekers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the payments and grants made by his Department and its predecessors to each local authority in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland to reimburse the costs of supporting asylum seekers in each year from 1996–97 until the transfer of responsibility to the Home Office. [217876]

Mr. Pond: No payments or grants were made to local authorities specifically in respect of asylum seekers, including those subsidies for housing benefit or council tax benefit. Although asylum seekers may have been eligible for housing benefit and/or council tax benefit, estimates of the proportion of subsidy payments which relate to asylum seekers for each local authority are unavailable.

Carers Allowance (Milton Keynes)

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in Milton Keynes are in receipt of carers allowance. [224129]

Maria Eagle: The administration of carers allowance is a matter for the chief executive of the disability and carers service, Mr. Terry Moran. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Vivien Hopkins to Dr. Phyllis Starkey, dated 6 April 2005:

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in Milton Keynes are in receipt of carers' allowance. The Minister for Disabled People, Maria Eagle MP, promised you a substantive reply from the Chief Executive of the Disability and Carers Service.

The information available for Milton Keynes, as at 30th November 2004 and broken down by constituency, is as follows.

	In Payment	*Entitlement*
Milton Keynes South West	670	1,050
Milton Keynes North East	525	780

Note:
Figures taken from a 100 per cent. sample at 30 November 2004.
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
Entitlement includes people in payment, as well as those with underlying entitlement but not actually receiving payment because of the overlapping benefit rules.
Source:
Information Directorate.

I hope this is helpful.

Dementia Sufferers

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* financial and *(b)* other support is available for the carers and family members of people suffering from dementia. [224197]

Maria Eagle: Carers have access to the full range of social security benefits depending on their individual circumstances. Carers of severely disabled people in receipt of attendance allowance or the middle/highest rate of disability living allowance care component may be entitled to carer's allowance.

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 gives carers a right to an assessment of their needs, and gives local councils a mandatory duty to support carers by providing services such as short breaks. The Carer's Grant funds provision of such services and breaks, and will be worth £185 million in 2005–06.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004 which comes into force on 1 April 2005 places a duty on councils to inform carers, in certain circumstances, of their right to an assessment of their needs:

provides that when assessing a carer's needs, councils must take into account whether the carer works or wishes to work, undertakes or wishes to undertake education, training or leisure activities; and

facilitates co-operation between authorities in relation to the provision of services relevant to carers.

Disabled People

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to encourage *(a)* independent living and *(b)* independent advocacy for disabled people. [224561]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for financing the Independent Living Funds which currently benefits some 16,400 severely disabled people and also acts as sponsor for the Motability scheme which helps finance personal transport for some 378,000 disabled people.

In addition, independent living is one of the key areas addressed in the recent Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report "Improving the life chances of disabled people" a copy of which is available in the Library. The report sets out a vision that by 2025 disabled people will have the full opportunities and choices necessary to enable them to improve their quality of life. Among the proposals are a range of measures including new individual budgets,

together with better advice and advocacy support. This is a cross-Government report, and this Department will be coordinating the overall implementation action.

Financial Assistance Scheme

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his estimate is of the average core annual pension entitlement of the 15,000 occupational pension scheme members who will be covered by the Financial Assistance Scheme's provisions for those within three years of retirement age. [212305]

Malcolm Wicks: We shall not have full information on members' entitlements under their schemes until their schemes are close to completing wind up.

As announced in my ministerial written statement of 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 126–28WS, we are also in the process of consulting on the details of how "core pension entitlement" will be determined for the purposes of the FAS. The detailed definition will be subject to the outcome of the consultation and until it is finalised we are unable to estimate the average entitlement for these scheme members.

Health and Safety at Work

Dr. Francis: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will bring forward legislative proposals to make company directors legally responsible for health and safety breaches within their companies; [224211]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects on the number of convictions for breaches of health and safety legislation of the absence of legally binding duties for health and safety on company directors; [224212]

Mr. Pond: The Government believe that there is already an appropriate balance of legislative and non-legislative responsibilities on directors in relation to health and safety and have no immediate plans to legislate.

However, we have asked the Health and Safety Executive to assess the effectiveness of the current measures in place concerning director responsibilities for health and safety, to review all the available evidence and to report its findings together with recommendations by December 2005. The issues raised by my hon. Friend will be considered as part of that assessment.

Once this review has been completed, the Government will be in a position to reconsider the issue of further legislation.

Income Support

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the most common reasons are that people of working age claim income support; and how many claimants there were in each category for the last year for which figures are available. [224671]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the following table.

Income support claimants of working age in Great Britain by client group: February 2004 to November 2004

Number

	All working age	*Aged 60 or over*	*Disabled*	*Lone parent*	*Others*
February 2004	2,199,500	11,700	1,118,000	820,500	249,200
May 2004	2,170,800	11,000	1,116,100	809,800	234,000
August 2004	2,169,100	10,800	1,120,500	804,000	233,800
November 2004	2,147,900	10,900	1,124,400	781,700	230,800
Four quarter average	2,171,800	11,100	1,119,700	804,000	237,000

Notes:
1. Caseload figures have been rounded to the nearest.
2. Working age refers to men aged 16 to 64 and women aged 16 to 59.
3. 'Aged 60 or over' are cases where the claimant and/or partner is 60 or over.
4. Disabled category refers to claimants aged under 60 with a disability premium and not in receipt of a pensioner premium.
5. Lone parents are claimants aged under 60 with dependants and not in receipt of a disability premium or pensioner premium.
6. Others are those who do not fall into any of the other three categories.

Source:
Information Directorate, 5 per cent. samples.

Pensioners

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many households will be eligible for winter fuel payments in 2005–06 but will not be eligible for the special £200 payment in respect of council tax. [224673]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* We forecast that 8.4 million households will be eligible for a winter fuel payment in 2005–06, of these it is estimated that 3.5 million will not be eligible for the £200 council tax payment. This comprises:

1.7 million households where no one in the household is aged 65 or over.

1.8 million households where the eldest occupant is aged 65 or over and eligible for full council tax rebate because they are in receipt of the guarantee element of pension credit. Of these, 1.5 million households where the eldest occupant is aged 70 or over will however be eligible for the £50 payment for living expenses announced in the Pre-Budget Report.

Source:
Forecasts based on DWP administrative data and GAD population estimates.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average *(a)* council tax benefit and *(b)* housing benefit payment to pensioners was in the last period for which figures are available. [224672]

Mr. Pond: The average council tax benefit payment to claimants over 60 is £11.90 a week.

The average housing benefit payment to those claimants over 60 is £48.98 a week.

Notes:

1. The figures are based on a one per cent. sample and subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Council tax benefit data excludes any second adult rebate cases.
3. Housing benefit data excludes extended payments.
4. The figures are rounded to the nearest penny.
5. The figures refer to cases where the claimant and/or partner are aged 60 or over.

Source:

Housing benefit and council tax benefit management information system, annual one per cent. sample, taken in May 2003.

Statutory Maternity Pay

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many and what percentage of pregnant women in York qualified for statutory maternity pay in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available. [224644]

Maria Eagle: The information is not available.

Work-focused Interviews

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average length of time taken for a work-focused interview was in 2004; [222627]

(2) how many work-focused interviews have been conducted since the new deal programme was introduced in 1998; and in how many cases participation in the new deal ended with such an interview. [222628]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the chief executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from Lesley Strathie to Paul Holmes, dated 6 April 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked David Anderson, Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, to reply to your questions asking what the average length of time taken for a Work Focused Interview was in 2004, how many Work Focused Interviews have been conducted since the first New Deal programme was introduced in 1998 and in how many cases participation in the New Deal ended with such an interview. I am replying on behalf of Mr Anderson as one of the Directors of the Jobcentre Plus Board.

Up to 60 minutes is allowed for a Work Focused Interview (WFI) although actual timings will vary. Evidence shows that in practice 40 minutes is sufficient to complete an initial WFI, with the balance of 20 minutes available if required, for supporting activity such as referral to jobs, the New Deal or other appropriate provision.

Customers making a claim for Jobseeker's Allowance are required to attend WFIs, at the start and at set intervals throughout their claim, as a condition of their claim.

WFIs for lone parents were introduced in October 2000 for lone parents making new or repeat claims to Income Support in three pathfinder areas and were then introduced nationally on 30 April 2001.

WFIs for customers claiming Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance, Carer's Allowance or any Bereavement Benefit were introduced as part of the rollout of Jobcentre Plus integrated offices from October 2001. WFI conditionality requires customers making a claim for these benefits to attend a WFI at the start of their claim and at set intervals throughout their claim and, as such, are not part of any mandatory or voluntary New Deal although referral to such a programme may be the outcome of a WFI. Currently WFI conditionality for these benefits operates in around 50 per cent. of Jobcentre Plus offices but we expect rollout to be complete by the summer of 2006.

The available information is that, since 2001, there have been 3,209,000 WFIs that have been conducted at the outset of a claim.

CABINET OFFICE

Government Policy Co-ordination

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if he will list the areas in which he has co-ordinated Government policy; when he set himself the task of so doing in each case; what his objectives were; what the outcomes were; and which Government Departments were involved. [224740]

Mr. Milburn: I was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster by the Prime Minister in September 2004.

I have a cross-Government role in the co-ordination of Government policy. I am also responsible for the work of the Strategy Unit and the Policy Directorate.

As a result I have been involved in a wide range of policy issues including those covered by the Cabinet Committees of which I am a member.

Detailed information about the development of Government policy is not routinely disclosed.

Sikhs (Public Appointments)

Rob Marris: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) what steps he has taken in the last four years to increase the number of applications received from members of the British Sikh community for public appointments to *(a)* local and *(b)* national decision-making bodies; [224494]

(2) what assessment he has made of progress since June 2001 in increasing the number of public appointments to *(a)* local and *(b)* national decision-making bodies of members of the British Sikh community; and what estimate he has made of the number of such appointments since that date. [224496]

Mr. Miliband: The Government remain committed to encouraging applications for public appointments from all sections of society. Data are not collected centrally on applications and appointments from more specific groups, but the Cabinet Office does monitor progress on the Government's broader targets to ensure that the make-up of the boards of public bodies is representative in terms of gender, ethnicity and disabled people. The latest report, "Delivering Diversity in Public Appointments 2004", published on 16 December 2004 shows that the proportion of public appointments held by people from a minority ethnic background was 7.7 per cent. in 2004, up from 7.4 per cent. in 2002. The report also sets out targets set by individual Departments and action plans to achieve those targets.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made of the voting system in place for the forthcoming parliamentary elections in Afghanistan. [224487]

Mr. Rammell: The choice of voting system for the Afghan parliamentary elections scheduled for 18 September is single non-transferable vote. The Government of Afghanistan concluded that this was the only system the Afghan people would immediately recognise as democratic. The challenge now is to ensure that elections are as well-organised and transparent as possible. The UK and other international partners are offering support to the Government of Afghanistan to ensure the success of the elections.

Anti-semitic Incitement

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made regarding anti-Semitic incitement to the governments of *(a)* Iran, *(b)* Syria and *(c)* Egypt. [223710]

Mr. Rammell: We remain deeply concerned at continuing anti-Israel and anti-Semitic rhetoric from senior figures in the Iranian regime. Senior UK officials discussed this most recently with representatives of Iran's Supreme National Security Council on 2 February. We have also pressed the Iranian authorities on many occasions to address international concerns about Iran's links to groups undermining the Middle East Peace Process through violence.

We have raised the issue of anti-Semitism with the Egyptian and Syrian authorities in the past, but have not had occasion to do so recently.

China

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department took to consult business organisations regarding the lifting of the arms embargo on China. [224341]

Mr. MacShane: Ministers and officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have had frequent contacts with individual companies and representative business organisations regarding the future of the EU arms embargo on China. These discussions are continuing.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK nationals are under sentence of death in China; and what steps the Government are taking to assist in these cases. [224623]

Mr. Mullin: In February 2003, two British nationals (Overseas) were sentenced to death in China. We have not been granted consular access to these British nationals, nor have we received any information about them from the Chinese authorities.

In March 2003, my noble Friend Baroness Amos, the then Minister responsible for consular matters, wrote to the Vice Minister of the Chinese Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) and requested that the sentences be commuted to terms of imprisonment. We did not receive a response. In February 2005, the British Embassy in Beijing wrote to the MFA requesting an update on these two cases. We are awaiting a response.

We are resolutely opposed to the death penalty in all circumstances. We will continue our enquiries about these British nationals and will make representations on their behalf at every appropriate opportunity.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated *(a)* 19 January with regard to Mr. Fernando, *(b)* 17 February with regard to Mr. Rashid, *(c)* 14 February with regard to U. Ilyias and *(d)* 23 February with regard to Anthony Leroy Thompson. [224359]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend wrote to my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary with regard to Mr. Fernando on 18 January and my hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Douglas Alexander) replied on 27 January.

The letter from my right hon. Friend with regard to a Mr. Rashid is dated 14 February and I replied on 24 February.

There is no record of a letter dated 14 February from my right hon. Friend to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with regard to U Ilyias. The last correspondence on this was the Foreign Secretary's reply of 13 January.

The Foreign Secretary replied to my right hon. Friend's letter of 23 February with regard to Anthony Leroy Thompson on 31 March.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he will reply to the letter dated 20 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Hina Khalid. [224362]

Mr. Mullin: A reply was sent to my right hon. Friend on 1 April. I apologise for the delay.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the impact on the *(a)* security and *(b)* humanitarian situation in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwandan Joint Border Verification Mechanism established in the Pretoria peace accord of September 2002; and if he will make a statement. [224577]

Mr. Mullin: The Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda did not become operational until December 2004. It has been a useful confidence-building measure, and combined with the strengthened mandate and more robust approach of the UN peacekeeping mission in the DRC, is helping to maintain pressure on the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda, who declared in Rome on 31 March that they would disarm. We call on them to do so.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* financial and *(b)* logistical assistance the UK has offered (i) directly, (ii) through the EU and (iii) through the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo to (A) the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and (B) the government of Rwanda for the activation and implementation of the Joint Border Verification Mechanism between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and if he will make a statement. [224578]

Mr. Mullin: We worked closely with the UN and the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda, exerting political pressure to ensure that this important confidence-building measure was established, and continue to provide political support, encouraging both sides to use the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) to investigate allegations.

The United Nations peacekeeping mission (MONUC) provides logistical and secretariat support to the JVM. The UK's financial contribution to MONUC was an estimated £36 million in financial year 2004–05.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimates he has made of the number of armed forces active in Eastern Congo that are not under the command of either the Government of Congo or the UN. [224627]

Mr. Mullin: Recent United Nations estimates suggest that there are around 15,000 militiamen in Ituri and around 20,000 Rwandan Hutu (Forces Democratiques de Liberation de Rwanda) rebels in the Kivu provinces. There is also a smaller number of other foreign armed fighters in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Central government control of troops nominally under its command is tenuous in eastern DRC. Some groups, although officially part of the DRC armed forces, operate independently of the army command structure.

European Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) from whom he sought legal advice regarding the incorporation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights within the EU constitutional treaty; [224269]

(2) from whom he sought legal advice on changes to the qualified majority voting rules of the EU set out in the constitution for Europe. [224271]

Mr. MacShane: There is a strong public interest in ensuring that a Government Department, in the process of formulating policy, is able to act free from external pressure in deciding whether it seeks legal advice, at what stage, and from whom. Accordingly, it is not the Government's practice to indicate on which issues, or from whom, legal advice has been sought.

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what procedures he expects would be followed if *(a)* France, *(b)* the Netherlands and *(c)* the UK were to fail to ratify the constitutional treaty; [224274]

(2) what his policy will be should *(a)* France and *(b)* the Netherlands fail to ratify the constitution for Europe following its referendum. [224312]

Mr. MacShane: Under the terms of the EU constitutional treaty, it is the separate obligation of each of the 25 signatories of the constitutional treaty to seek ratification of the treaty by the appropriate domestic arrangements of each member state. In the event of a member state being unable to ratify the treaty, and in line with declaration 30 of the treaty, the matter would be referred to the European Council.

European Court of Justice

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list those items of legislation introduced since 1997 in response to a ruling against the Government at the European Court of Justice. [216451]

Substantive answer from Mr. Denis MacShane to John Hayes:

You recently tabled a Parliamentary Question asking the Foreign Secretary to list those items of legislation introduced since 1997 in response to a ruling against the Government in the European Court of Justice, I answered as Minister for Europe and informed you that I would write with further details when they were available. I am pleased to be able to do so now.

Legislation introduced as a result of rulings in the European Court of Justice is relevant to all Government Departments, not just the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The information below has been collated from information received from all Departments, with the exception of HM Treasury, the Department for Transport and the Wales Office, who were unable to provide the information from their records.

Table of secondary legislation since 1997

Title of legislation	*SI number*	*Amendments introduced as a result of specified ruling by ECJ*
Regulation 5, Social Fund Maternity and Funeral Expenses (General) Amendment Regulation 1997	SI 1997/2538	Case C-237/94, *John O'Flynn v Adjudication Officer*
Regulation 2, Social Fund Winter Fuel Payment Regulations 2000	SI 2000/729	Case C-382/98, *R v Secretary of State for Social Security, ex p John Henry Taylor*
Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999	SI 1999/1102	Case C-13/94, *P v S and Cornwall County Council*
Equal Pay Act 1970 (Amendment) Regulations 2003	SI 2003/1656	Case C-326/96, *Levez v TH Jennings (Harlow Pools) Ltd,* and Case C-78/98, *Preston v Wolverhampton Healthcare NHS Trust*
Regulation 3 and 4, Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Amendment) Regulations 2003	SI 2003/1657	Case C-185/97, Coote v Granada Hospitality Ltd
Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2001	SI 2001/3256	Case C-173/99, *R v Secretary of State for Trade and Industry ex parte BECTU*

Table of secondary legislation since 1997

Title of legislation	*SI number*	*Amendments introduced as a result of specified ruling by ECJ*
Regulation 11, Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2000	SI 2000/2326	Case C-370/90, *R v Immigration Appeal Tribunal and Surrender Singh, ex parte Secretary of State for the Home Department*
Regulation 2(3), Immigration (European Economic Area) (Amendment) Regulations 2003	SI 2003/549	Case C-413/99, *Baumbast v Secretary of State for the Home Department*
Regulation 2, Immigration (European Economic Area) (Amendment) Regulations 2005	SI 2005/47	Case C-109/01, *Akrich v Secretary of State for the Home Department*
Value Added Tax (Insurance) Order 2004	SI 2004/3083	Case C-394/96, *Card Protection Plan v The Commissioners of Customs and Excise*
Drinking Water (Undertakings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000	SI 2000/1297	Case C-340/96, *Commission v United Kingdom*
Nitrates Vulnerable Zones (Additional Designations) (England) (No 2) Regulations 2002	SI 2002/2614	Case C-69/99, *Commission v United Kingdom*
Amendment to Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme. Done by way of an amendment scheme laid before Parliament on 22/07/04	N/A	Case C-78/98, *Preston v Wolverhampton Healthcare NHS Trust*
Immigration Act 1971 (c.77) (amended December 2004)	Section 3(2)	Case C-200/02, *Chen v Secretary of State for the Home Department*
Finance Act 2000 (c.17)	Corporation tax rules	Case C-254/96, *ICI v Colmer*. Amendments to these rules also a result of a wide ranging modernisation.

Hezbollah

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the motion of the European Parliament in favour of outlawing Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation. [224130]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has already proscribed the terrorist wing of Hezbollah (the External Security Organisation). We keep the status of Hezbollah under constant review, and liaise closely with our European and US colleagues. The list of proscribed organisations in the UK is also kept under constant review, in light of changing circumstances.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the risk posed by Hezbollah to the establishment of stable Palestinian government in the Palestinian Territories. [224131]

Mr. Rammell: Terrorist attacks by Hezbollah and Palestinian Rejectionist Groups risk disrupting relations between the Palestinian Authority and Israel and cause many innocent casualties. These groups must cease terrorist attacks.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the risk posed by Hezbollah to the establishment of stable Palestinian Government in the Palestinian Territories. [224223]

Mr. Rammell: Terrorist attacks by Hezbollah and Palestinian rejectionist groups risk disrupting relations between the Palestinian Authority and Israel and cause many innocent casualties. These groups must cease terrorist attacks.

Intelligence Operations

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what additional resources he plans to commit to support the delivery of the changes in the operation of British secret intelligence set out in Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction: Implementation of its Conclusions, Cm6492, published on 23 March. [224235]

Mr. Straw: As set out in Cm6492, the Government have instigated a range of improvements to the handling and processing of secret intelligence material. The assessments staff in the Cabinet Office will increase in size by approximately one third. Increased resources have been made available to the Security and Intelligence Services to improve scrutiny and validation of sources. We are developing a new IT system which will improve dissemination of intelligence material and we will be appointing a professional head of intelligence analysis in the Cabinet Office tasked with ensuring the quality and coverage of our analysis capability.

Iran

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of people executed in Iran *(a)* since May 1999 and *(b)* between January 1995 and May 1999. [224186]

Mr. Rammell: We are unable to assess reliably the number of executions taking place in Iran. Respected international human rights NGOs have published estimates in the region of 100 cases a year.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made since November 2003 in improving human rights in Iran as a result of the EU-Iran human rights dialogue. [224295]

Mr. Rammell: An evaluation of the EU-Iran human rights dialogue by the EU presidency in October 2004 found that there had been little overall progress in the human rights situation in Iran since the start of the dialogue and recommended ways that the dialogue process could be made more effective. The EU is encouraging Iran to renew its commitment to the process and has proposed substantive improvements. The EU has made clear that its relations with Iran can only move forward if Iran takes action to address the EU's concerns, including in the area of human rights.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest estimate is of the number of *(a)* people sentenced to death in Iran and *(b)* executions carried out in the last 12 months. [224298]

Mr. Rammell: We are unable to assess reliably the numbers of people sentenced to death and executed in Iran during the past 12 months. Amnesty International has reported that 108 people were executed in Iran in 2003. The number sentenced to death is likely to be substantially higher.

We have serious concerns about the use of the death penalty in Iran, which we have made clear to the Iranian authorities on many occasions.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the production of enriched uranium by the government of Iran; whether he has assessed Iran as being in breach of the non-proliferation treaty as a result of such production; and if he will make a statement on UK relations with Iran. [224589]

Mr. MacShane: The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has reported extensively on Iran's past nuclear activities, including on some enrichment of uranium to low levels. Iran agreed to suspend all its enrichment-related activities under the so-called "Paris Agreement" of 15 November 2004. This suspension has been verified by the IAEA.

Iran's past enrichment activities were not declared to the IAEA at the time, as Iran was obliged to do under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, pursuant to its obligations under the nuclear con-proliferation treaty.

Our policy towards Iran is one of constructive, but critical, engagement. We maintain a robust dialogue on issues of concern, such as Iran's nuclear programme; human rights record; approach to the fight against terrorism; and attitude to the middle east peace process.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether consent was sought from the originator of the information upon which the UK based its claim that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa, to pass it to the Butler Review; and whether consent was sought to pass the information to *(a)* the US Central Intelligence Agency, *(b)* the International Atomic Energy Agency and *(c)* the Intelligence and Security Committee. [216364]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave her on 17 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1552W.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what material breaches of obligations under United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) were perpetrated by the then Government of Iraq between 8 November 2002 and 17 March 2003. [224556]

Mr. Rammell: United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 determined that Iraq had been and remained in material breach of resolution 687 because it had failed to cooperate with United Nations inspectors and the International Atomic Energy Agency and had not fully complied with its obligations to disarm under that resolution. The Security Council gave Iraq "a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations" and decided that if Iraq failed at any time to comply with and cooperate fully in the implementation of resolution 1441, that would constitute a further material breach. Iraq failed to comply and cooperate and as such was in material breach at the time of resolution 1441 and continued to be so in the period thereafter.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will post on his Department's website, and place in the Library, a record of the negotiations of United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) on Iraq. [224586]

Mr. Rammell: The vast majority of the negotiations on United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 were carried out in closed Security Council sessions, of which there are no publicly available minutes. Details of the public meetings that the Security Council held on Iraq/Kuwait at that time are available on the UN's website at: http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/scact2002.htm

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (www.fco.gov.uk), the UK Mission to the United Nations in New York (www.ukun.org) and other British embassies and High Commissions have information on their websites on UN activities and issues.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many of those of his Department's legal advisers who were employed in March 2003 provided the judgment that it would be *(a)* lawful and *(b)* not lawful to take military action against Iraq. [224466]

Mr. Straw: It is well known that the Attorney-General provided the Government with their legal advice on the use of force in Iraq. Where Foreign and Commonwealth Office legal advisers provide advice they do so in confidence.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether Mrs. Elizabeth Wilmshurst was consulted in advance of the decision to publish on 23 March her letter of resignation from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office civil service with a part retracted in respect of her stated judgment on the legality of military action against Iraq. [224468]

Mr. Straw: Ms Wilmshurst was informed in advance of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's intention to disclose most of her minute of 18 March 2003 in response to a number of requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

Middle East

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what *(a)* events and *(b)* meetings are planned concerning middle east reform during the UK presidency of the G8. [224123]

Mr. Rammell: We intend to take forward during the UK's G8 presidency implementation of the G8 Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative agreed last year at Sea Island. This will include meetings of G8 and regional Foreign, Finance and Education Ministers. We

also intend to support civil society and business contributions to regional reform through their participation in ministerial meetings and through sponsorship of events that bring G8 and regional civil society groups together to address various aspects of reform.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Government of *(a)* Saudi Arabia, *(b)* Jordan, *(c)* Egypt, *(d)* Syria and *(e)* Lebanon regarding political reform in the middle east. [224126]

Mr. Rammell: We support the emerging momentum for change and modernisation that is developing in the middle east region. Both my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and my right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister for the middle east, have over the past year encouraged political reform in the middle east both on a bilateral basis with the countries identified by my hon. Friend and in the context of EU and G8 meetings with the region.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Israeli Government regarding the Israeli and Palestinian peace process. [224337]

Mr. Rammell: We hold regular discussions with Israeli Government representatives at all levels. My right hon. and Noble friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office visited Israel, 2–3 March, to brief the Israeli Government on the outcome of the London meeting. Baroness Symons met Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Vice Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom. On 23 March, Baroness Symons met Israeli ambassador Zvi Heifetz in London, to discuss the issue of settlement expansion. I am meeting ambassador Heifetz on 6 April and will raise this again during that meeting.

Nepal

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with *(a)* the government and *(b)* civil society organisations in Nepal on restoring elected government; and if he will make a statement. [224614]

Mr. Alexander: We have had several discussions with the Government of Nepal following the King's takeover of power on 1 February, in which we have expressed our concerns about the dismissal of the elected government and urged them to make moves towards the restoration of representative democracy. I raised our concerns with the Nepalese ambassador immediately after the King's takeover. Our ambassador in Kathmandu raised these concerns with the King and, along with EU partners, with the foreign Minister.

Through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and other programmes we continue to support and engage with civil society organisations in Nepal in our efforts towards restoring democracy. We remain in close contact with the Nepalese authorities, NGOs and international partners in our efforts to secure a peaceful, durable and democratic resolution to the conflict in Nepal.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many representations *(a)* he, *(b)* his Department and *(c)* representatives of the UK in Kathmandu have received concerning the detention of (i) Mr. Bishnu Nisthuri, General Secretary of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, (ii) Mr. Narayan Adhikari, Rashtriya Samachar Samiti, Chitwan, (iii) Mr. Basanta Prajuli, Daily Gorkhapatra, Chitwan, (iv) Mr. D. R. Panta, Kantipur correspondent in Dadeldhura, (v) Mr. Khem Bhandari, editor, Anhiyan, Mahendranagar and (vi) Mr. Sujeev Bajracharya, editor, City Post Sandhyakalin, Kathmandu; what inquiries (A) his Department and (B) representatives of the UK in Kathmandu have made into the whereabouts of each; what discussions (1) he, (2) members of his Department and (3) representatives of the UK have had with members and representatives of the government of Nepal concerning *(y)* the detention of the journalists and *(z)* the government of Nepal's policy on freedom of the press; and if he will make a statement. [224654]

Mr. Alexander: We have received many representations about the situation in Nepal and the detention of journalists and others since the King's takeover of power on 1 February. However, we are not aware of having received any specific representations or letters concerning any of the above named individuals.

Since the King took power in Nepal many hundreds of political activists, have been detained as well as a number of students, journalists, human rights defenders and trade unionists. I have publicly raised our concerns about the Kings actions, and our Ambassador in Kathmandu has called on the King directly to release all political prisoners detained under the emergency regulations.

Through local inquiries, our Embassy in Kathmandu has established the following details about the individuals in question:

Bishnu Nisthuri—Detained on 4 February and released on 25 February

Narayan Adhikari—Detained on 13 February from Chitwanin and is still in detention

Basanta Parajuli—Detained on 1 February from Pokhara and is still in detention

D. R. Panta—detained on 15 February and is still in detention

Khem Bhandari—detained 1 February from Mahendranagar and is believed to be still detained

Sujeev Bajracharya—detained on 16 February and is believed to be still detained.

The UK remains committed to restoring the institutions of democracy, including freedom of the press, and is making efforts to support the media to function independently and without interference in Nepal.

Palestinian Authority

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest assessment is of progress made by the Palestinian Authority in reform of its security apparatus. [224222]

Mr. Rammell: Following the pledges made at Sharm el Sheikh on 8 February and the London Meeting on 1 March, the Palestinian leadership has made progress with security reform, but the situation remains fragile.

Both Israelis and Palestinians agree that security co-operation has improved sharply, with local and national commanders meeting frequently. The Israel Defence Forces credit the Palestinian Authority (PA) with closing a number of smuggling tunnels in Gaza, and for *making real* efforts against rocket attacks. The handover of West Bank cities, as agreed at Sharm el Sheikh, is progressing. Jericho was handed over to the PA on 16 March and Tulkarem on 21 March. On 17 March President Abbas reached an agreement with 12 Palestinian militant groups to extend the current period of calm until the end of 2005.

The PA still has a great deal to do. The agenda for security reform was set out in the conclusions of the London Meeting on 1 March. The United States is leading in the efforts to assist the PA in achieving its goals. General Ward (regional security co-ordinator) has established his office and is already working with Palestinian officials. We will continue to work to ensure that this reform programme is successful in the longer term.

Sierra Leone

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the likely effects of fuel shortages in Sierra Leone on the security situation. [224483]

Mr. Mullin: The continued fuel shortage in Sierra Leone is worrying. On its own, we do not judge it to be a major security threat. But in the longer term we are concerned about its potential impact on the daily lives of ordinary Sierra Leoneans, many of whom are already severely disadvantaged.

Somalia (UN Peacekeepers)

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the implications of deploying *(a)* Ugandan and *(b)* Sudanese peacekeepers in Somalia. [224484]

Mr. Mullin: Although plans for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) sponsored Peace Support Operation have yet to be finalised, we are pleased that IGAD's proposals take account of Somali sensitivities over the involvement of neighbouring states. We await further information about the final decisions.

Sri Lanka

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance the Government have provided to the Government of Sri Lanka in relation to peace talks and negotiations with the Tamil Tigers. [224482]

Mr. Alexander: We are encouraged that the ceasefire between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) remains in place three years after it was signed. But we are concerned that there have been no direct peace talks since April 2003. We fully support the work of Norway as facilitators of the peace process. We work closely with other international partners to encourage all parties to maintain the ceasefire and to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible. The British Government have not provided any assistance to the Government of Sri Lanka directly in relation to peace talks with the LTTE. We do support wider peace-building efforts in Sri Lanka, including through projects in areas such as access to justice and human security, and by working with other donors to encourage the development of an environment supportive of a sustainable peace process.

Sudan

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has discussed with *(a)* Government colleagues and *(b)* international counterparts providing UK police officers for civilian protection in Darfur. [224325]

Mr. Mullin: We support the African Union (AU) civilian police mission in Darfur. Around 200 police officers are currently deployed, with more expected soon. We have provided more than £14 million and loaned technical expertise to the AU mission. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's chief police advisor helped the AU in Addis Ababa to develop the plan for the policing mission. There are currently no plans to deploy UK police officers for civilian protection in Darfur and the AU has not requested any.

Syria/Lebanon

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of Syria regarding the presence of its intelligence apparatus in Lebanon. [224124]

Mr. Rammell: Through our embassy in Damascus we have made several representations to the Syrian Government regarding the need for a complete and early withdrawal of all Syrian troops and intelligence personnel from Lebanon. My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, made the same points when she saw the Syrian ambassador on 7 March.

Terrorism

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the Governments which his Department assesses as *(a)* sponsoring and *(b)* having links with terrorist organisations, indicating in each case the (i) nature and (ii) effectiveness of representations made to end these activities. [224294]

Mr. MacShane: The British Government do not compile lists of state sponsors of terrorism.

We have serious concerns about the approach of the Iranian and the Syrian Governments to terrorism. We have pressed both countries to co-operate fully with international efforts to combat terrorism and not to support groups trying to undermine peace in the middle east by violent means.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised these concerns with the Syrian Foreign Minister in October 2004, and with the Secretary General of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Hassan Rouhani, in December 2004. Most latterly, my right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, reiterated our concerns to the Syrian ambassador on 7 March. Senior officials have also raised it with their Syrian and Iranian interlocutors.

Ukraine

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance has been offered to the Government of Ukraine as part of his Department's counter-proliferation strategy and cooperative threat reduction programme *(a)* to secure the existing Ukraine military rocket programme and *(b)* to assess whether cruise missiles missing from the Ukraine missile inventory can be recovered. [224188]

Mr. MacShane: We are in close contact with the Ukrainian authorities on a range of counter-proliferation matters including in relation to missiles. We shall continue as part of this process to evaluate whether the UK could provide relevant assistance to Ukraine in the context of cooperative threat reduction.

UN Security Council

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the merits of India being granted permanent membership of the UN Security Council. [224485]

Mr. Rammell: The UK has long supported the expansion of the UN Security Council in both permanent and non-permanent seats. We want it to become more inclusive of the international community it represents. Indian membership of the Security Council will help achieve this goal.

We therefore support India's bid and have done so with cross party support. It is the obvious candidate for membership from its regional grouping, considering its contribution to UN assessed budgets, participation in peace operations, voluntary contributions to UN activities in security and development, and general support for the UN's objectives and mandates.

Vienna Convention

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government have made to the United States regarding its decision to withdraw from the Optional Protocol to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations; and if he will make a statement. [224622]

Mr. Alexander: The UK Government have not made representations to the United States following its decision to withdraw from the Optional Protocol to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. We note that the US Government has stated that it will continue to fulfil its obligations under the Convention and that it remains committed to its principles and provisions. Consular relations between the UK and the United States are principally governed by the 1951 UK-US Bilateral Consular Convention.

War Criminals

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the impact the lawsuit brought in the federal court of Alexandria (VA) against Mohamed Ali Samatar and Yusuf Abdi Ali in November 2004 *(a)* has had and *(b)* will have on the prosecution of alleged war criminals resident in the US; and if he will make a statement. [224653]

Mr. Alexander: This is a private matter for those involved. The UK strongly believes there should be no impunity for the most serious international crimes, including war crimes.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour Orders (North Yorkshire)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in North Yorkshire in 2003–04; how many were breached; and how many of those breached were prosecuted in courts. [224560]

Ms Blears: The number of antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued in North Yorkshire, at all courts, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 is seven.

ASBO breach data are currently available up to 31 December 2003 only. Six ASBOs were issued in North Yorkshire from 1 April 2003 to 31 December 2003. Of these, one person breached their ASBO during the period.

Askham Grange Prison

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) for what reason one of the mother and baby units at HMP Askham Grange is to be closed; and if he will make a statement; [220610]

(2) how many mothers with babies have been moved to establishments *(a)* closer to and *(b)* further from, their homes following the closure of the Mother and Baby Unit at HMP Askham Grange; and if he will make a statement; [220611]

(3) what financial savings will be made from the mothballing or closure of the Mother and Baby Unit at HMP Askham Grange; and if he will make a statement; [220612]

(4) how many mothers have been refused places on mother and baby units due to lack of availability of places in the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement; [220613]

(5) how many places are available in each mother and baby unit within prison establishments; and what the occupancy levels of each are. [220614]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* The demand for mother and baby places at Askham Grange has declined over the last 12 months. A decision was therefore made to reduce the number of mother and baby places available at that establishment. The change was carried out through natural reductions without the need to relocate mothers and babies. The decision was taken in order to match supply more closely to demand and provide more flexible use of existing accommodation. It was not taken to achieve savings and no estimate has been made of any reduction in mother and baby unit costs.

The decision to reduce capacity at Askham Grange was taken as part of a wider review of all mother and baby places. No women have been refused admission because of lack of capacity in the units. The new capacities and occupancy figures at 14 March 2005 are set out in the following table.

Prison	*Places*	*Occupancy at 14 March 2005*
Askham Grange, north Yorkshire	10	7
Holloway, London	13	13
New Hall, west Yorkshire	9	6
Styal, Cheshire	12	9
Eastwood Park, Gloucestershire	12	8
Bronzefield, London	12	7
Peterborough (unit opening April 2005)	12	0
Total	79	50

Asylum and Immigration

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for indefinite leave to remain in the UK are being considered by his Department; and how many of these have been outstanding for *(a)* one month or less, *(b)* one month to three months, *(c)* three months to one year and *(d)* more than one year. [224534]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* As of 29 March 2005, there were 19,679 indefinite leave to remain cases outstanding for consideration by the immigration and nationality directorate general group in Croydon, Sheffield and the public inquiry offices. Of these, 3,066 have been outstanding for less than 30 days; 5,324 cases outstanding from one month up to three months; 10,264 cases outstanding from three months up to one year; and 1,025 cases outstanding for one year or more.

Child Pornography

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many requests the UK Government have made to non-EU countries requesting that child pornography websites be removed from the internet; and on what legal basis. [203677]

Paul Goggins: No such requests have been made by the Home Office. Where investigation by a UK law enforcement agency identifies a child abuse image being hosted in another jurisdiction, it will seek to notify the appropriate authority in that country of its presence so that they can seek its removal and take further appropriate action. A similar process is also undertaken by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF). The IWF was formed in 1996 following an agreement between the Government, police and the internet service provider industry that a partnership approach was needed to tackle the distribution of child abuse images online. The IWF operate the only authorised hotline in the UK for the public to report their inadvertent exposure to illegal content on the internet. The hotline provides internet users with a means of reporting potentially illegal content that are located on websites that specifically contain images of child abuse (hosted anywhere in the world), criminally obscene content (hosted in the UK) or criminally racist content (hosted in the UK). As a result of these arrangements less than one per cent. of potentially illegal content is apparently hosted in the UK. Figures for the number of instances on which such requests have been made to other jurisdictions by UK law enforcement are not collated. The legal basis for removing such sites will be dependent on the legislation in place in the particular country in question.

More generally, the Government continues to talk with our international partners about further measures which can be taken to combat the abuse of children and remove such images wherever they are hosted. The G8 countries have adopted a strategy on protecting children from sexual exploitation on the internet. As part of this strategy the UK is leading the development of an international child image database, housed at Interpol which aims to act as a global repository of images of child abuse contributing to the identification of victims and offenders and analysis of images.

The UK also leads in promoting co-operation among law enforcement agencies through the creation, by the National Crime Squad in 2003, of the Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT). This is an international alliance of law enforcement agencies delivering innovative crime prevention and crime reduction initiatives to deter and prevent individuals from committing child abuse on-line offences. The VGT is engaged in a number of initiatives which compliment and support the work of existing law enforcement agencies. These include Operation Pin, a website purporting to host child abuse images but which in fact directs those searching for child abuse images to a law enforcement page. The VGT have also developed an international website (www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com) which was launched on 26 January 2005. This acts as a gateway to a wide range of information on how to use the internet safely and links to a range of support agencies around the world that advise and support parents, children and victims of abuse.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 2 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Waheeda Ahmed. [221909]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 1 April 2005.

Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of inmates in prisons in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

England and Wales were serving sentences for drug-related convictions in each year since 1975; and what the cost was of accommodating the inmates. [223702]

Paul Goggins: The population in prison establishments in England and Wales under an immediate custodial sentence for drug offences as a percentage of the total population under an immediate custodial sentence, in each year since 1976, is provided in the table. Information is not available for 1975.

The Prison Service does not collect data relating to the costs of keeping prisoners in custody by offence type, nor does it retain information readily to hand on costs as far back as 1975. However the overall cost per prisoner for 2003–04 was £25,718 in public sector prisons and £25,377 in contracted out prisons.

These figures exclude headquarters overheads, including the cost of capital on all Prison Service land and buildings plus the cost of depreciation on buildings.

Information for Scotland and Northern Ireland would be a matter for my colleagues at the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland Office.

HMP/YOI Parc

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make an assessment of the way in which the transitional support scheme is working at HMP and YOI Parc. [224181]

Paul Goggins: An assessment has been undertaken of the effectiveness of the transitional support scheme in Wales. A report is expected at the end of May 2005.

Home Detention Curfew

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many crimes have been committed by prisoners released under the Home Detention Curfew in each of the last five years. [221494]

Paul Goggins: The table sets out the number of cautions, convictions and pending prosecutions for offences committed while offenders were subject to the Home Detention Curfew (HDC) scheme over the past five calendar years, as notified to the Home Office by 14 March 2005. The table also gives the numbers of prisoners placed on to the scheme for each of the five years.

It is always a matter of concern when any prisoner who is placed on Home Detention Curfew commits an offence. However, HDC has been successful in providing prisoners with a smoother and more effective re-integration back into the community. The scheme helps prisoners resume employment or training at an earlier stage and so support themselves and their families.

Since the scheme began in January 1999, over 100,000 people have been released on HOC and 85 per cent. of those have successfully completed the curfew period without any problems at all.

	Number of prisoners placed on scheme[1]	*Number of offences*	*Number of offenders*
2000	15,514	371	231
2001	13,646	418	218
2002	20,452	699	395
2003	21,223	2,132	1,193
2004	19,340	947	556

[1] These statistics are based on information recorded on the central Prison Service IT system. Further update and amendments may be made to records on this system in future resulting in revised figures. Figures include those sentenced to three months to less than 12 months.

Kidnapping

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many kidnappings there have been in *(a)* the Metropolitan, *(b)* Thames Valley and *(c)* Surrey police authority area in each of the last three years. [223166]

Ms Blears: The available information relates to recorded offences of kidnapping and is given in the table.

Police force	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Metropolitan	1,094	1,144	1,012
Thames Valley	68	82	64
Surrey	24	31	48

Murders (Essex)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been murdered in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex. [222478]

Ms Blears: Police statistics for the number of homicides include murders, manslaughters and infanticides that come to the attention of the police. Deaths that are not initially believed to be suspicious but are later re-categorised are counted in the year in which they have been recorded as homicide. This is not necessarily the year in which the incident took place.

The following table shows available information relating to the Southend Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership for 2001–02 to 2003–04 and homicide figures recorded by Essex police from 1997 to 2003–04.

	Number of homicides	
	Southend	*Essex*
1997	—	16
1998–99	—	14
1999–2000	—	20
2000–01	—	15
2001–02	5	24
2002–03	6	22
2003–04	2	12

National Asylum Support Service

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the unit cost incurred by the National Asylum Support Service in supporting a single adult was

in each of the past five years for which figures are available; and what the unit cost for each local authority was in the same period. [223493]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The information is not available in the precise format requested. The approximate costs incurred by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) to support a single adult asylum in each of the last five years are shown in the table.

Table 1 shows the costs for a single adult asylum seeker provided with financial assistance support only.

Table 1: Single adult asylum seekers supported by NASS (subsistence only)

Costs (£)

	Age 18–24	*Age 25 and over*
2000–01	28.95	36.54
2001–02	28.95	36.54
2002–03	29.89	37.77
2003–04	30.28	38.26
2004–05	30.84	38.96

Table 2 shows the costs for a single asylum seeker provided with both accommodation and financial support directly by NASS and those supported by local authorities under the interim scheme. The ranges represent the differing costs between local authorities under the interim scheme and the varying cost of accommodation for those supported directly by NASS.

Table 2

Costs (£)

	Single adult asylum seekers supported under the interim scheme	*Single adult asylum seekers supported by NASS*
2000–01	140.00	115.95–230.69
2001–02	140.00–160.00	117.43–212.79
2002–03	52.26–280.89	119.87–217.12
2003–04	54.05–290.48	121.27–223.39
2004–05	55.32–297.33	113.09–228.84

Notes:

1. Excluded from these costs is the small number of cases supported under the disbenefited arrangements and also those supported under section 4.
2. Costs include VAT where appropriate.

Operation Paladin Child

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he is taking to address the issues raised by Operation Paladin Child. [224342]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 5 April 2005]:* Since publication of the report we have made significant progress. In particular the Immigration and Nationality Directorate's (IND) Children's Taskforce is tackling a number of the recommendations. These include:

The provision of guidance to staff on identifying and dealing with children in need.

Developing processes for working with other agencies on child protection issues

The provision of specialist training for IND staff

Identifying ways to improve information received from abroad

Child Protection Officers are now based at Heathrow airport and both Child Protection Officers and Social Service staff are based at the Croydon Asylum Screening Unit to ensure a more joined up approach. The UK Immigration Service with the Department for Transport (DfT) is also setting up a voluntary code of practice to be followed by airlines when carrying children who are either unaccompanied or travelling with an adult who is not a family member.

Paedophiles

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received concerning the possible arrival in the UK of paedophiles from overseas who have not been convicted of any offences under UK jurisdiction; and what measures he is able to take to protect the public in such cases. [224201]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office receives information that an individual with a conviction for a serious sexual offence will be travelling to the UK then the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) will be informed. NCIS may also receive information directly from the foreign authorities through Interpol. Where it is judged to be appropriate, NCIS will then liaise both with appropriate police forces and ports of entry in order to arrange a meeting with the offender on his arrival.

The notification order, introduced by the Sexual Offences Act 2003, is a civil preventative order designed to ensure that offenders who receive convictions or cautions for sexual offences overseas can be made to sign on the sex offenders register while they are in the UK. Application for such an order is made by the police to a magistrates court. If an offender fails to comply with the registration requirements then he commits a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

The 2003 Act also provides for sexual offences prevention orders (SOPO). SOPOs are made on application from the police to a magistrates court and impose prohibitions on a sexual or violent offender who poses a risk of serious sexual harm. They also require the offender to sign on the sex offenders register. When making a SOPO courts set such prohibitions as they consider necessary. For example, an offender could be prohibited from being alone with children under 16 and/or from being within a certain distance of a school, a playground and/or a swimming baths etc. If an offender breaches a SOPO then he commits a criminal offence with a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment.

Police

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers there were in Nottinghamshire constabulary in *(a)* 2000 and *(b)* the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [223204]

Ms Blears: As at 31 March 2000, there were 2,204 full-time equivalent officers in Nottinghamshire. On 30 September 2004 the force had 2,526 officers—a record number. This represents an increase of 14.6 per cent. or an additional 322 officers.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in the number of full-time police officers in Wimbledon has been since 1997. [224241]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available. Statistics on the number of full-time equivalent officers are only available for London boroughs and only from 2003 onwards.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1694W, on police vehicles, how many collisions on public roads in Essex in which police vehicles were involved were the fault of the police vehicle in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [222424]

Ms Blears: Information is not collected centrally on the causes of collisions involving police vehicles on public roads.

Prevention of Terrorism Act

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the *(a)* police and *(b)* security services first requested that British citizens should be subject to control orders on the lines of those included in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005. [222358]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* In February 2004 the Government published a discussion paper ("Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society") responding to the Newton report which recommended, among other things, that an alternative—capable of general application to British citizens as well as foreign nationals—be found to the part 4 powers of the Anti Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCS).

Consideration of an alternative was given further impetus by the Lords' ruling in December 2004 that section 23 of the ATCS Act was incompatible with articles 5 and 14 of the convention on the grounds that the provisions were discriminatory and therefore disproportionate.

The control order provisions contained in the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 were developed in consultation with the security service and police, who have confirmed that measures which could be more specifically tailored to the threat posed by particular individuals, irrespective of nationality, would be a valuable tool in countering terrorist related activity.

Prisons

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is on sourcing pork, bacon and ham bearing the British Pig Executive's Quality Standard Mark in prisons; and if he will make a statement. [223243]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service procures food using contracts awarded in accordance with European Union procurement regulations and on a best value for money basis, which takes account of product quality, cost and availability. The EU regulations are designed to support fair and open competition allowing UK suppliers to compete for business with other EU members.

The Prison Service is working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the sustainable food procurement initiative, which is part of the Government's strategy for sustainable farming and food. This is intended to encourage the public sector to procure food in a manner that promotes sustainable development and does not discriminate against local and UK suppliers.

All products supplied to the Prison Service must comply with current and subsequent relevant UK and EU legislation, regulations and directives. Suppliers are required to provide products that are sourced in compliance with EU regulations and from assured providers under animal welfare conditions that are compatible with the UK animal welfare regulations.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications have been made in each of the last three years by inmates to the board of visitors of prisons and young offender institutions; and what the most common reasons for such applications were. [224185]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held centrally.

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many compassionate licences HMP Dovegate has issued since it opened; and what the average number for non-private prisons is for the same period. [224144]

Paul Goggins: Since Her Majesty's Prison Dovegate opened in July 2001, two prisoners have been granted release on compassionate licence.

The average number of releases on compassionate licence for all public sector prisons over the same period was 314. This covers prisons of all security categories, including open prisons.

Her Majesty's Prison Dovegate is a Category B training prison. The average number of releases on compassionate licence for Category B establishments in the public sector is eight.

Probation Service

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which functions of the probation service in England and Wales will be the subject of *(a)* contestability and *(b)* private tendering during (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07. [204008]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 15 December 2004]:* I am currently considering how best to introduce contestability within the probation service in England and Wales and will make an announcement in due course.

Contestability opens up competition to all sectors—public, private and voluntary and community. Private tendering will continue to be used by the probation service where appropriate, including for example technical and IT services, but the norm under contestability will be for all sectors to be invited to bid for the delivery of services for offenders.

Sentencing Policy

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment his Department has made of the public's attitude to prison and its alternatives; [213357]

(2) if he will institute a major public education campaign about community penalties; [213349]

(3) if his Department will establish a media marketing campaign to promote alternatives to prison; [213348]

(4) how his Department promotes alternatives to prison; and if he will make a statement on the value of those alternatives. [213347]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office conducts an assessment of public attitudes to prison and its alternatives through its own research, including the British Crime Survey, as well as through the consideration of other research and representations.

While prison is the right place for serious and dangerous offenders, community sentences can be an effective alternative to short-term imprisonment for less serious offenders.

We have made community sentences both tough and demanding while providing the opportunity for offenders to pay something back directly to the community.

There is a national visibility scheme in place to identify community work done by offenders. The 'Clean-Up Week' campaign, launched on 14 March, involved thousands of people in deciding which local projects should be undertaken by offenders. These included cleaning up prominent eyesores and enhancing the local environment as part of their community sentence.

Publicity about the new sentences introduced this month under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 provides an opportunity for further information to be given to the public about the range of sentences available to the court and the need to target them effectively so as to reduce reoffending, protect the public and increase public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether departmental special advisers have attended meetings with external *(a)* bodies and *(b)* individuals, in their official capacity and without Ministers, since May 1997. [203452]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer the hon. Member to the answer provided on 13 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 791W, by my right hon. Friend the Member for Neath (Mr. Hain).

Special Constables

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the special constabulary force strength of each constabulary was in each of the last 30 years; what plans he has to increase special constabulary force strength; and if he will make a statement. [220549]

Ms Blears: Figures on the strength of the Special Constabulary have been collected by the Home Office since 1995. They are given in the table.

Research suggests that the main reason for the fall in numbers is external commitments, with ineffective management and deployment also contributing. A number of specials leave to join as regular officers so there is no overall loss to the policing family. The Government are working with stakeholders (particularly the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)) on range of measures to improve Specials' recruitment, management and deployment, including the implementation of Home Office/ACPO Good Practice Guidance designed to help forces attract and hold on to Specials, ensuring their time and skills are properly valued and used to best effect.

A survey of forces recently conducted by ACPO reveals that at 31 January 2005 the number of specials had increased to 12,100 with a further 2,500 applications in the system.

	As at March:									
	1995	*1996*	*11997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Avon and Somerset	651	688	759	621	547	459	400	364	345	305
Bedfordshire	189	189	182	186	154	151	115	118	98	146
Cambridgeshire	279	275	303	320	310	274	218	207	189	193
Cheshire	321	274	475	459	407	350	290	191	161	173
Cleveland	83	195	160	164	126	128	93	85	102	85
Cumbria	212	201	189	198	204	176	156	102	94	77
Derbyshire	241	413	428	380	317	282	275	260	249	301
Devon and Cornwall	434	1,102	1,148	1,024	918	870	804	689	645	602
Dorset	1,142	254	289	315	305	298	267	253	214	210
Durham	221	187	184	144	159	157	146	134	94	81
Essex	200	608	634	638	544	483	445	381	371	349
Gloucestershire	302	330	297	276	233	206	183	154	157	155
Greater Manchester	674	746	685	598	523	457	367	338	340	345
Hampshire	320	564	621	698	760	615	462	444	373	346
Hertfordshire	768	315	297	306	238	216	198	206	193	206
Humberside	126	391	340	324	269	246	212	207	157	209
Kent	598	555	589	592	526	436	392	327	286	341
Lancashire	320	553	483	489	449	382	360	363	351	336
Leicestershire	427	360	415	406	316	247	162	143	149	159
Lincolnshire	569	299	271	260	216	195	166	155	139	156
London, City of	608	77	86	76	64	56	43	36	42	54
Merseyside	356	333	401	419	458	476	541	468	503	371
Metropolitan police	322	1850	1714	1282	1138	758	774	680	692	742

	As at March:									
	1995	*1996*	*11997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Norfolk	384	319	402	337	336	285	259	244	239	241
Northamptonshire	1,550	289	316	288	230	199	188	177	189	197
Northumbria	345	471	533	400	342	332	300	256	221	169
North Yorkshire	288	360	362	358	276	217	182	185	177	160
Nottinghamshire	381	537	620	558	461	411	335	341	261	295
South Yorkshire	303	381	308	281	246	205	188	206	204	200
Staffordshire	506	702	685	595	468	482	402	384	391	376
Suffolk	552	407	379	397	420	391	349	308	275	266
Surrey	477	260	297	235	224	175	149	187	212	255
Sussex	452	511	472	442	393	352	306	306	303	181
Thames Valley	725	744	656	609	569	472	418	356	369	341
Warwickshire	409	340	381	345	261	260	221	209	190	169
West Mercia	238	613	582	512	515	476	399	339	309	280
West Midlands	527	897	945	889	731	680	617	598	637	715
West Yorkshire	679	709	690	589	559	484	415	349	374	403
Wiltshire	352	233	154	149	184	173	152	147	154	169
Dyfed-Powys	582	314	283	254	237	202	191	157	152	151
Gwent	818	136	157	119	113	119	137	142	130	136
North Wales	777	332	341	358	400	247	207	125	133	124
South Wales	318	461	361	366	338	267	254	277	173	218
Total all forces	20,026	19,775	19,874	18,256	16,484	14,347	12,738	11,598	11,037	10,988

[1] Total strength breakdown has been estimated for Dorset, Essex, Hampshire, Metropolitan police and West Yorkshire

TRANSPORT

Air Passengers (Heathrow)

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers arriving at Heathrow airport by air between *(a)* 04.00 and 05.59 and *(b)* 06.00 and 06.29 hours were transfer and transit passengers in the last period for which figures are available. [224706]

Charlotte Atkins: The number of transit passengers arriving at Heathrow airport between 04.00–05.59 and 06.00–06.29 hours in 2004 were 434 and 3,292 respectively. In total, there were 67,343,000 passengers at Heathrow airport in 2004. Overall around 35 per cent. of passengers at Heathrow are transfer passengers. No reliable data are available on the time of arrival and departure of transfer passengers.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers arrived at Heathrow by air between 04.00 and 06.59 hours in the last period for which figures are available. [224707]

Charlotte Atkins: 5,718,000 passengers arrived at Heathrow by air between 04.00 and 06.59 hours in 2004, compared with 67,343,000 terminal and transit passengers overall in 2004.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers departed from Heathrow by air between 07.00 and 07.59 hours in the last period for which figures are available; and how many were transfer and transit passengers. [224708]

Charlotte Atkins: 1,370,000 passengers departed from Heathrow by air between 07.00 and 07.59 hours in 2004. Of these, 207 were transit passengers, resulting from a single diverted flight. There were 67,343,000 passengers at Heathrow airport in 2004. No reliable data are available on the time of arrival and departure of transfer flights, but overall 35 per cent. of passengers at Heathrow airport in 2004 were transfer passengers.

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers *(a)* departed from and *(b)* arrived at Heathrow by air between 06.00 and 06.59 hours in the last period for which figures are available; and how many were transfer and transit passengers. [224709]

Charlotte Atkins: 965,000 passengers departed from Heathrow by air between 06.00 and 06.59 hours in 2004 and 2,556,000 passengers arrived. During this period, 34,000 transit passengers arrived and no transit passengers departed. There were 67,343,000 passengers at Heathrow airport overall in 2004. 35 per cent. of all passengers at Heathrow in 2004 were transfer passengers. No reliable data are available on the time of arrival and departure of passengers on transfer flights.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many civil servants in his Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223919]

Mr. McNulty: DfT are working on the implementation of the original proposals made on Lyons relocation. These relate to civil service posts not individual civil servants. The proposals have now been developed further. Our current position is that 61 posts have been identified with 25 going to Derby, 23 to Hastings, three to Swansea and the rest to other locations outside London and the South East.

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many regulations have been repealed by his Department since 1 October 2004. [224619]

Mr. McNulty: Since 1 October 2004 six general statutory instruments for which the Department for Transport has responsibility have been repealed in their entirety. In addition, it is likely that numerous instruments have been partially repealed but details could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Dishforth-Barton Road Upgrade

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the date is for the commencement of the works to upgrade the Dishforth-Barton road to motorway status; and what the estimated duration of the works is. [224862]

Mr. Jamieson: The A1 Dishforth to Barton Improvement is scheduled to start construction in April 2008, subject to the completion of statutory procedures and the availability of funds. Construction works are programmed for a period of three years.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding has been proposed for the upgrading of the A1 between Dishforth and Barton to motorway status; and from which budget the costs of the work will be met. [224863]

Mr. Jamieson: The scheme is included within the Targeted Programme of Improvements with an approved budget of £325 million.

EU Measures (Repeals)

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many EU *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives covering matters within the responsibility of his Department have been repealed since 1 April 2004. [224571]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not hold central records of the number of EU legislation that has been repealed. The information requested can be provided only at disproportionate cost. The Commission publishes figures for European legislation repealed or expired in its annual general reports on the activities of the European Union, the latest figures published are for 2003.

Helicopter Movements (Sutton)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many helicopter movements there were in the airspace above the London Borough of Sutton in each year since 2001. [224760]

Mr. McNulty: This information is held by National Air Traffic Services Ltd. (NATS) and I have asked the Chief Executive to write to the hon. Member.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 346W, on roadside advertising, (1) if he will make a statement on the methodology used to evaluate whether roadside advertisements are a cause of road accidents; [224800]

(2) whether *(a)* car drivers, *(b)* bus drivers and *(c)* drivers of heavy goods vehicles were consulted as part of the research into whether roadside advertisements contributed to road accidents; [224801]

(3) if he will commission a full study into the potential for distraction by temporary wheeled billboards placed next to motorways. [224802]

Mr. Jamieson: Studies have been carried out into the effect of the presence of roadside advertisements and other potential distractions to road accidents. It is, however, difficult to derive a direct causal relationship because accidents are often the result of several factors. Studies have also monitored the duration of drivers' eye movements from the road to roadside distractions, including signs, which provides an indicator of accident potential. I am not aware of any specific consultation with drivers that has been undertaken as part of the research. I do not propose to commission a study on the potential for distraction of temporary wheeled billboards placed next to motorways. It is for local planning authorities to use their enforcement powers to remove unlawfully displayed advertisements.

DEFENCE

Airfield Closures

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has to close airfields; what assessment he has made of the impact of reductions in the number of airfields on Air Training Corps gliding activities; and if he will make a statement. [218236]

Mr. Caplin: We have announced that the airfield at RAF Coltishall will close in 2006 and the airfield at RAF Lyneham will close when the Hercules aircraft based there transfer to RAF Brize Norton. There is no Air Training Corps gliding activity at either of the above airfields.

Additionally, RAF Sealand is scheduled to close in 2006. The relocation of 631 Voluntary Gliding School is under consideration and full account will be taken of the impact on Air Training Corps gliding activity.

Armed Forces Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the implications applying the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Decent Homes Standard to the homes of members of the armed forces; and if he will make a statement. [214549]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 21 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 112W.

Army Complaints Procedure

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedural time limits apply for the issue of a decision by the Army Board in respect of a complaint under Army redress procedures relating to *(a)* sexual harassment, *(b)* racial harassment, *(c)* parental leave directive, *(d)* pay and *(e)* religion. [218233]

Mr. Caplin: There are no absolute time limits on the processing of redress of complaints by the Army Board.

Black Watch

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) when he will write to the hon. Member for Perth with the information on *(a)* fines and *(b)* pay

levels for soldiers of 1st Battalion Black Watch, as indicated in the answer of 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1809W; [207599]

(2) when he will write to the hon. Member for Perth with information on *(a)* fines and *(b)* pay levels for soldiers of 1st Battalion Black Watch, as indicated in the answer of 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1809W. [214811]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 7 February 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 30 January and 28 February 2005, copies of the letters are available in the Library of the House.

DARA, Fixed Wing St. Athan

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether DARA, Fixed Wing St. Athan, have confirmed their intention to participate in the competitive tender process to become a manpower service provider to BAE Systems for the *(a)* Tornado CMU and *(b)* Harrier Jump programmes. [221708]

Mr. Ingram: DARA will not participate in the tender process to become a manpower service provider to BAE Systems for either the Tornado CMU or Harrier Jump programmes.

Departmental Employees

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average number of civilian employees, including civil servants employed by his Department, has been in each year since 1998. [224117]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested is in the following table:

Ministry of Defence—Average strength 1998 to 2004

			Full time equivalent
	Total civil servants	*Locally engaged civilians*	*Total*
1998	110,560	14,960	125,510
1999	108,280	14,770	123,050
2000	106,450	14,740	121,190
2001[1]	100,040	13,290	113,330
2002	95,260	14,120	109,370
2003	92,970	13,840	106,820
2004	93,220	15,430	108,650

[1] In 2001 the QinetiQ portion of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (8,000) was established as a private company.

Note:
Figures calculated using a 13-month average.

Departmental Spending (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the Defence Analytical Services Agency spent in Scotland in (i) monetary terms and (ii) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [217964]

Mr. Caplin: Both civilian and service personnel data by agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk.

Departmental Staff

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of the staff employed by his Department have a declared disability. [205718]

Mr. Caplin: The Cabinet Office collects and publishes annually statistical information on the civil service by Department. These include data on the number of staff who have a declared disability.

The latest information at April 2004 is available in the Library and on the civil service website at the following address:

http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/management_information/statistical_information/statistics/publications/xls/disability_apr04_4nov04.xls

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of departmental staff are based in London. [208059]

Mr. Caplin: As at February 2005 the Ministry of Defence currently has 6,140 full-time equivalent staff based within the London Government Office Region, representing 5.7 per cent. of the total departmental strength of 107,980.

Disabled People (Armed Forces)

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people in the armed forces had a registered disability in each year since 1997. [224281]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Details of personnel who are classified as disabled under the terms of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 are not held centrally. The armed forces are exempt from the employment provisions of the Act.

First World War Medals

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has decided to dispose of the First World War medal index cards; and if he will make a statement. [223557]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence, together with The National Archives, has been actively seeking a suitable institution prepared to take these cards. So far, a firm offer of a home for just a small part of the collection has been made. No decision on the retention or destruction of the cards will be taken until all such avenues have been explored.

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received on the retention of First World War medal index cards; and if he will make a statement. [224454]

Mr. Caplin: Approximately 100 members of the public have made representations directly or via their MPs about the future of the index cards. In addition, a number of organisations have made formal and informal approaches about the possibility of taking them.

The Ministry of Defence, together with The National Archives, has been actively seeking a suitable institution prepared to take these cards. So far, a firm offer of a home for just a small part of the collection has been

made. No decision on the retention or destruction of the cards will be taken until all such avenues have been explored.

Gulf War Veterans

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the percentage of children born to Gulf War veterans who suffer from *(a)* deformities and *(b)* disabilities. [223889]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my right hon. Friend to the Written Ministerial Statement I made to the House on 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 51–52WS, following the publication of a paper in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*.

Hearing Loss (Armed Forces)

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many applications for war disablement pensions on grounds of deafness were made in each year since 1996; and how many were awarded. [223987]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Applications for war disablement pensions on grounds of deafness received for the following years are as follows:

	Number
1997–98	4,965
1998–99	3,380
1999–2000	2,370
2000–01	1,975
2001–02	1,650
2002–03	1,605
2003–04	1,445

Cases awarded:

	Number
1997–98	825
1998–99	330
1999–2000	330
2000–01	225
2001–02	185
2002–03	165
2003–04	160

Data prior to April 1997 are not available.

Iraq (Military Conduct)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the guidelines on pre-trial prisoners and all others under detention without sentence contained in chapter 11 of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office report, "A Human Rights Approach to Prison Management" was made available to Major Dan Taylor, Camp Commander for Camp Bread Basket near Basra, prior to the detention of local looters. [210965]

Mr. Ingram: No. Camp Bread Basket was not a prison facility.

Lance Corporal Ian Blaymire

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the transcript will be available of the court martial proceedings against Lance Corporal Ian Blaymire; and if he will place a copy in the Library. [201571]

Mr. Ingram: The Office of the Judge Advocate General, a part of the Department for Constitutional Affairs, is the custodian of all court martial papers. It is understood that they have no plans to place a copy of the transcript of this court martial in the Library of the House.

Medical Services (Cyprus)

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for New Forest, West of 13 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 908W, on medical services (Cyprus), when he plans to write to the hon. Member and place a copy of his letter in the Library. [213121]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 1 February 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member on 30 January 2005 and placed a copy of the letter in the Library of the House.

Ministerial Stationery

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips in each year since 1997. [214941]

Mr. Caplin: I presume the hon. Member is referring to items used by departmental Ministers and have therefore excluded items used solely by private office staff for their personal professional communications. The Ministry of Defence does not provide ministerial compliments slips. The cost of ministerial business cards and headed paper in each financial year since 2000–01 is shown in the following table. Figures for the previous years are not held.

Cost (£)

	Business cards	*Headed paper*[1]
2000–01	70.72	593.83
2001–02	108.00	2,432.00
2002–03	0	1,867.97
2003–04	99.88	1,304.05
2004–05	94.00	2,723.29
Total	373.90	8,921.14

[1] The figures provided for ministerial headed paper include continuation sheets which are used for ministerial correspondence. In addition, there are one or two occasions where envelopes and prompt cards have been included as the information is inseparable.

Service Redress Procedures

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints have been made under service redress procedures with respect to Queen's Regulation paragraph *(a)* 9.398, *(b)* 9.403 9, *(c)* 9.404, *(d)* 9.405, *(e)* 9.411, *(f)* 9.412, *(g)* 9.413 and *(h)* 9.414 since 1997; and how many of these complaints were (i) successful and (ii) partially successful. [201491]

Mr. Caplin: This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) on how many occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 departmental special advisers travelled *(a)* domestically and *(b)* abroad in an official capacity; what places were visited; and how much each visit cost; [202261]

(2) when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Chichester on 1 December 2004, ref 202261; [210492]

(3) on how many occasions between 31 March 2002 and 31 March 2003 his special advisers travelled abroad in an official capacity; what places were visited; and how much each visit cost. [207187]

Mr. Hoon: Ministry of Defence special advisers travelled abroad on official business between 31 March 2002 and 31 March 2003 on 13 occasions, at an average cost of £983 per trip, visiting Brussels, Paris, Warsaw, Crete, Germany, Prague, Turkey, Italy, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and the United States.

Between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, Ministry of Defence special advisers travelled abroad on official business on 10 occasions, at an average cost of £1,051 per trip, visiting Denmark, Germany, the UAE, Singapore, Malaysia, Malta, Cyprus, Italy, Iraq, Oman, Brussels and France.

Details of domestic travel by special advisers is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

All travel by special advisers is undertaken in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Management Code.

Staff Numbers

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the average number of *(a)* military and *(b)* civilian full-time equivalent staff employed by the (i) Personnel Director, (ii) Pay and Personnel Agency, (iii) Defence Vetting Agency, (iv) Defence Export Services Organisation, (v) Finance Director, (vi) Defence Analytical Services Agency, (vii) Defence Bills Agency, (viii) Chief Constable Ministry Of Defence Police and (ix) Chief Scientific Adviser management groups was in financial year 2003–04; [205471]

(2) what the average number of *(a)* military and *(b)* civilian full-time equivalent staff employed by the (i) Deputy Chief of Defence Logistics, (ii) Defence Clothing and Textiles Agency, (iii) Defence Supply Chain HQ, (iv) Defence Storage and Distribution Agency, (v) British Forces Post Office and (vi) Warship Support Agency management groups was in financial year 2003–04. [205475]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 79–80W.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Colleges for the Future Programme

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussion she has had with the Association of Colleges on its Colleges for the Future programme. [223894]

Dr. Howells: The Secretary of State has had no discussions with the Association of Colleges on its Colleges for the Future programme.

FE Funding Gap

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the funding gap between school sixth forms and further education colleges in South-East Cambridgeshire; and if she will take steps to close the gap. [224327]

Dr. Howells: The Department does not have information on what the funding gap is between school sixth forms and further education colleges in Cambridgeshire specifically.

However, we have brought up funding levels for Further Education (FE) as we said we would, without penalising schools. The Learning and Skills Council's (LSC) funding rates per course in FE have been rising faster than school sixth forms and the gap has narrowed.

Our policy has been to raise the level of funding for colleges, as and when we are able to secure the resources to do so.

Higher Education

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students attend a higher education establishment; and what estimate she has made of the number of students who will attend higher education establishments in each year to 2009–10. [223895]

Dr. Howells: The latest published projections of student numbers in English institutions are set out in Annex M of the Department Annual Report (DAR) 2004, and are reproduced in the following table.

Higher education[1] student numbers in England: Academic years 1998/99 to 2004/05

	1998/99[2]	*1999/2000*[2]	*2000/01*[2]	*2001/02*[2]	*2002/03*[3]	*2003/04*[4]	*2004/05*[4]
Home domiciled students (thousand)	1,480	1,478	1,501	1,527	1,587	1,634	1,670
Of which:							
full-time and sandwich	855	852	857	879	911	928	943
Of which:							
part time	625	626	644	648	676	706	727
EU students (thousand)	81	81	81	75	73	79	88
Other overseas students (thousand)	95	100	110	121	145	152	161
Total full-time equivalent students (thousand)	1,225	1,227	1,251	1,281	1,343	1,379	1,417
Of which:							
publicly funded by HEFCE	9851,02	1,002	1,006	1,025	1,063	1,087	1,111

Higher education[1] student numbers in England: Academic years 1998/99 to 2004/05

	1998/99[2]	1999/2000[2]	2000/01[2]	2001/02[2]	2002/03[3]	2003/04[4]	2004/05[4]
Of which:							
publicly funded by the TTA	60	56	60	59	60	63	66
Of which:							
ITT students	49	45	49	48	49	52	55

[1] Higher education in higher and further education institutions
[2] Actual
[3] Provisional
[4] Projected
Note:
Constituent parts may not sum to totals due to rounding

The planned number of student places is set during spending reviews in the light of the Government's target of increasing participation in higher education towards 50 per cent. of those aged 17–30 by the end of the decade. Planned student numbers for 2005–06 to 2007–08 were set as part of Spending Review 2004, and figures for academic year 2005/06 will be published in the Departmental Annual Report 2005.

Ian Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will include the North East Wales Institute in Wrexham in the list of higher education institutions recognised by the Chinese authorities as awarding degrees to Chinese students. [224114]

Dr. Howells: On the basis of information provided by the UK National Recognition Information Centre, the North East Wales Institute of Higher Education in Wrexham is already included in the list of 'Recognised Bodies' as a member of the University of Wales. The information was provided to the Chinese authorities on 27 August 2004 through the Chinese Embassy in London.

Medical Schools

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 690–92W, on medical schools, how many of the undergraduates *(a)* were aged under 21 years at the time of admission, *(b)* had three Cs or less at A level and *(c)* had three Ds at A level. [224231]

Dr. Howells: The tables provide information on the numbers of undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine courses within the UK, who were *(a)* aged under 21 years at the time of admission (a subset of the table provided in my previous answer), *(b)* had three Cs or less at A level and *(c)* had three Ds at A level.

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants aged under 21 years to pre-clinical medicine with less than 3 C's (or equivalent [1,2]at A level

Institution	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
King's College London	—	5	—	—	—	5	10
Queen Mary and Westfield College	—	—	5	—	—	5	5
Queen's University of Belfast	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. George's Hospital Medical School	—	5	—	—	—	—	—
University College London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Aberdeen	5	10	10	15	5	5	5
University of Birmingham	5	—	—	5	5	10	—
University of Bristol	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Brighton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Cambridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Dundee	—	10	5	10	25	5	10
University of Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of East Anglia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Edinburgh	5	—	—	—	—	5	5
University of Exeter (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Glasgow	15	10	15	10	20	10	10
University of Hull[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Leeds	—	—	5	—	15	15	10
University of Leicester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Liverpool	—	—	10	5	—	—	—
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	—	—	5	—	5	5	—
University of Nottingham	—	5	—	—	—	—	—
University of Oxford	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Plymouth (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Sheffield	5	5	10	5	5	5	5
University of Southampton	—	—	5	—	—	—	—
University of St. Andrews	—	—	15	—	10	10	10
University of Sussex	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Warwick	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Warwick	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of York[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Victoria University of Manchester	—	—	—	—	—	5	—
Total	35	50	75	45	85	95	70

'—' signifies 0, 1 or 2.
[1] Based upon students obtaining A level qualifications.
[2] For years up to and including 2001/02, figures are based upon students with A level qualifications and a points score of between 1 and 17 A level points. For 2002–03 onwards, the figures are based upon the students' tariff score from A level qualifications and includes students with 1 to 239 tariff points.

[3] Delivery of the Undergraduate Programme began in autumn 2002.
[4] First intake of students accepted in 2003.
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and are a snapshot as at the 1 December *Source:*
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants, aged under 21 years. to pre-clinical medicine with less than 3 C's (or equivalent[1,2] at A level

Institution	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
King's College London	—	10	5	10	10	10	20
Queen Mary and Westfield College	—	5	10	—	—	5	20
Queen's University of Belfast	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. George's Hospital Medical School	—	5	—	—	—	—	15
University College London	—	—	—	—	—	5	5
University of Aberdeen	10	15	10	15	10	10	10
University of Birmingham	5	—	5	5	5	15	5
University of Bristol	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Brighton	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University of Cambridge	—	—	—	—	5	—	0
University of Dundee	5	10	5	15	30	5	15
University of Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
University of East Anglia	—	—	—	—	—	5	25
University of Edinburgh	5	—	—	—	—	5	5
University of Exeter (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
University of Glasgow	20	10	15	15	20	10	15
University of Hull[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Leeds	5	5	5	5	30	30	30
University of Leicester	—	—	—	—	10	5	30
University of Liverpool	10	5	15	5	—	—	—
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	—	5	5	5	5	5	—
University of Nottingham	—	5	—	—	—	5	15
University of Oxford	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Plymouth (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
University of Sheffield	5	5	10	5	5	5	5
University of Southampton	5	—	—	—	—	5	—
University of St Andrews	5	5	20	—	10	10	10
University of Sussex	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University of Wales, Cardiff	—	5	5	10	—	—	0
University of Warwick	—	—	—	10	—	—	35
University of York[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Victoria University of Manchester	—	5	—	5	15	10	5
Total	90	85	110	105	155	160	325

'—' signifies 0, 1 or 2.
[1] Based upon students obtaining A level qualifications.
[2] For years up to and including 2001–02, figures are based upon students with A level qualifications and a points score of between 1 and 17 A level points. For 2002–03 onwards, the figures are based upon the students' tariff score from A level qualifications and includes students with 1 to 239 tariff points.
[3] Delivery of the Undergraduate Programme began in autumn 2002.
[4] First intake of students accepted in 2003
Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and are a snapshot as at the 1 December
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine with 3 D's (or equivalent)[1,2] at A level

Institution	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
King's College London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Queen Mary and Westfield College	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Queen's University of Belfast	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. George's Hospital Medical School	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University College London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Aberdeen	—	—	—	—	—	5	—
University of Birmingham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Bristol	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Brighton	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University of Cambridge	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Dundee	—	—	—	5	5	—	—
University of Durham	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of East Anglia	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University of Edinburgh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Exeter (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Glasgow	—	5	—	—	5	—	—
University of Hull[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Leeds	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Leicester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Liverpool	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

UK domiciled undergraduate entrants to pre-clinical medicine with 3 D's (or equivalent)[1,2] at A level

Institution	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
University of Nottingham	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
University of Oxford	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Plymouth (Peninsular Medical School)[3]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Sheffield	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Southampton	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of St Andrews	—	—	—	—	—		—
University of Sussex	—	—	—	—	—		—
University of Wales, Cardiff	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of Warwick	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
University of York[4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Victoria University of Manchester	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	5	5	5	10	10	10	25

'—' signifies 0, 1 or 2.

[1] Based upon students obtaining A level qualifications.

[2] For years up to and including 2001–02, figures are based upon students with A level qualifications and a points score of 12 A level points. For 2002–03 onwards, the figures are based upon the students' tariff score from A level qualifications and includes students with 180 tariff points.

[3] Delivery of the Undergraduate Programme began in autumn 2002

[4] First intake of students accepted in 2003.

Note:

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and are a snapshot as at 1 December.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

Non-vocational Adult Education

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on *(a)* provision and *(b)* funding of non-vocational adult education in 2005–06. [224732]

Dr. Howells: As reiterated in our White Paper, 'Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work', published on the 22 March, we remain strongly committed to ensuring the availability of a wide range of learning opportunities for adults, including for personal and community development.

The DfES and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will agree each year an overall indicative budget for the funds that should be used to support education and training programmes which do not lead to qualifications. Nationally, this will be based on the broad proportion of LSC funds currently spent on this type of learning. But within it, the range of provision needs to keep evolving so that it best meets changing learner and community needs.

We will therefore continue to provide significant non-vocational provision to meet the needs of a wide range of learners. However it is learning providers and local LSCs who are best placed to assess the learning needs of their communities and to prioritise funding accordingly.

School Meals

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the meetings attended by *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials in her Department with Mr. Jamie Oliver during the last two years on the subject of school dinners. [223980]

Derek Twigg *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Officials have had various contacts with Jamie Oliver's production team since January 2004. Ministers had the following contact with Jamie Oliver to discuss his TV programme and his views on school meals and also to discuss the Department's work improving children's health and diet:

telephone conversation 2 September 2004;

meeting 13 December 2004;

meeting 4 February 2005.

In addition, departmental records show that officials met with Jamie Oliver to discuss school meals issues on:

2 February 2005;

4 February 2005 with Minister.

Student Loans/Support

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the annual student loan repayment threshold is being increased from £10,000 to £15,000 from 1 April for graduates who commenced their studies on or after 1 September 1998. [224769]

Dr. Howells: The Government's 2003 White Paper "The future of higher education" set out our proposal to raise the repayment threshold for income contingent student loans from £10,000 to £15,000 a year, as part of new arrangements for student support. The change, which takes effect from 6 April 2005, will reduce annual repayments for borrowers earning £15,000 per annum or more by £450 a year; and those with earnings under the new threshold will not be required to make repayments.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what effect the change to the student loan repayment threshold from 1 April will have on the national student loan repayment book. [224770]

Dr. Howells: The impact of raising the repayment threshold for income contingent student loans from £10,000 to £15,000 per annum, which takes effect from 6 April 2005, was set out in chapter 7 of "The future of higher education and the Higher Education Bill 2004: Regulatory Impact Assessment". This is available in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much support will be available to students in the form of fee remission and

university bursaries in the case of joint family incomes of *(a)* less than £15,970, *(b)* between £15,970 and £22,270, *(b)* between £22,270 and £33,533 and *(d)* more than £33,533 for each English university in (i) 2005–06 and (ii) 2006–07; and what these figures are net of tuition fees. [224077]

Dr. Howells: The thresholds for the HE grant and tuition fee grant for 2005–06, for English and Welsh domiciled students, are as follows.

Students where there is a contribution from a parent or spouse/partner

Household income	*Fee grant* (£)	*HE grant*
£15,580 or less	1,175	1,000
£15,581 to £21,565	1,175	partial
£21,566 to £32,744	partial	none
£32,745 or more	none	none

Independent students with no spouse or partner

Household income	*Fee grant* (£)	*HE grant*
£10,250 or less	1,175	1,000
£10,251 to15,580	partial	1,000
£15,581 to 20,984	partial	partial
£20,985 to 21,565	none	partial
£21,566 or more	none	none

In 2006–07 there will be no fee remission grant for new English domiciled students; fee support will be in the form of non-means-tested loans rather than grants. Students with household income below about £33,000 will also be eligible for a new non-repayable grant of up to £2,700 a year. The exact thresholds and tapers for this grant will be confirmed in the summer but the indicative thresholds for the grant are as follows.

Household income	*Grant entitlement*
£16,000 or less	full £2,700
£16,001 to £33,000	Partial
£33,001 or more	none

In addition, individual universities may offer support; and details of the level of bursary support available to students eligible for full state support were provided in answer to Peter Bradley's question (No.223409) on 22 March 2005. Further details of the bursaries offered by individual institutions are available in their access agreements, visible on the OFFA website; in all, such support is calculated at around £300 million.

Teacher Training (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much was spent on training teachers at *(a)* University of York and *(b)* University College of York St. John in (i) 1997–98 and (ii) 2003–04; and how many trainee teachers completed their studies at each institution in each year. [224650]

Dr. Howells: The latest available figures, provided by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), are in the following table.

HEI	*Funding*[1] (£)	*Students completing (with QTS)*[2]
Academic year 1997/98		
University of York	424,177	122 (105)
College of Ripon and York St. John	1,971,178	267 (244)
Academic year 2003/04		
University of York	562,783	136 (118)
York St. John College	3,038,672	357 (335)

[1] The funding figures are on mainstream funding only.
[2] Figures for 2003/04 are provisional.

Woodcraft Folk

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will meet representatives of the Woodcraft Folk to discuss the movement's future programme and request for continued grant funding. [223449]

Margaret Hodge: I met the Woodcraft Folk on 4 April.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Bovine Artificial Insemination

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1925–26W, on bovine artificial insemination, what the reasons are for the difference in the costs of official testing of bull semen in Northern Ireland and in Great Britain. [224591]

Mr. Bradshaw: As stated in the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1925–26W in Northern Ireland, bulls are sampled by private veterinary practitioners with financial arrangements agreed between the bull owner and the veterinary practice concerned. As this cost is arranged between the bull owner and the veterinary practice concerned; it was not included in the costs given in the earlier answer. We understand that private vets typically charge £80 to £100 per bull. In Great Britain, Defra veterinarians carry out the sampling and the charge is amalgamated into a single fee.

CAP Payments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many complaints she has received concerning the decision to publish information on former details of Common Agricultural Policy payments under the Freedom of Information legislation. [224054]

Alun Michael: At close of business on 29 March the Rural Payments Agency's Access to Information Unit had received approximately 2,500 representations concerning the decision to publish information on Common Agricultural Policy payments. The great majority of these were opposed to publication. The Government takes the view that it is in the public interest and consistent with the principles on Freedom of Information, for the information to be in the public domain.

Carbon Emissions

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to ensure compliance with the Government's commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 20 per cent. [224743]

Mr. Morley: The Spending Review 2004 reconfirmed Defra's public service agreement (PSA) target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels in line with our Kyoto commitment and to move towards a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2010. The PSA target is shared jointly with the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department for Transport.

The UK Climate Change Programme published in 2000 sets out the Government's approach to tackling climate change. It contains policies and measures intended to achieve the emissions reductions necessary to deliver the UK's commitment under the Kyoto Protocol and move towards the national goal of a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. Progress towards the Kyoto Protocol commitment and our national goal are discussed by Ministers regularly, in particular through the Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN), whose Ministerial Group, which is jointly chaired by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, oversees the delivery of the Energy White Paper commitments and the current review of the UK Climate Change Programme. The review of the UK Climate Change Programme provides an opportunity for the Government to look carefully at whether to introduce new policies and measures, and/or strengthen existing ones, to put us back on track towards the national goal.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act (Yorkshire)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what parts of *(a)* York and *(b)* North Yorkshire have been opened to the public by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. [224642]

Alun Michael: The Countryside Agency, in England, is required by Part I of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (the Act) to prepare, in turn, draft, provisional and conclusive maps of open country (mountain, moor, heath and down) and registered common land to which the public will have a new right of open access on foot. In order to map such land, the Countryside Agency divided England into eight mapping areas. These mapping areas are based on national park and local authority boundaries rather than traditional county boundaries. The Countryside Agency is mapping sequentially around the eight areas and the new right of access is being introduced in each area once the mapping exercise has been completed. We are on track to introduce the new right across England by the end of this year.

The county of North Yorkshire has land included in four different mapping areas: Lower North West; Upper North West; North East; and East (which includes the City of York). To date, the new right of access has commenced in one of these areas, the Lower North West, and, as a result, the new right of access currently applies to 4,884 hectares of land in North Yorkshire. Maps showing where the right of access applies in England are displayed on the Countryside Agency's website: www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk.

Information on the amount of access land opened to the public in the rest of North Yorkshire (including the City of York) will become available once all the conclusive maps are available, later this year.

Dairy Farming (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much milk was produced in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley in each of the last three years; and how much was (i) sold as milk and (ii) processed for cheese in each case. [223794]

Alun Michael: Precise estimates of milk production in Lancashire and Chorley are not readily available. The milk production figures given in the table provide broad estimates based on multiplying the average UK milk yield per cow by the number of cows in the specified region. The cow numbers for 2004 are not yet available.

Milk utilisation figures are only available at national level. Therefore the proportion of milk produced in Lancashire and Chorley sold as liquid milk and processed for cheese is not available.

Estimated milk production

Region	*Number of dairy cows*	*Average yield per cow (UK) litres*	*Estimated milk production m/ litres*
2003	—	6,634	—
Lancashire CC[1]	77,145	—	512
Chorley	4,429	—	29
2002	—	6,494	—
Lancashire CC[1]	78,498	—	521
Chorley	4,628	—	31
2001	—	6,346	—
Lancashire CC[1]	83,402	—	553
Chorley	4,748	—	31

[1] The figures for Lancashire CC includes Chorley, but excludes Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for her Department is for 2011–12. [223439]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Departmental Policies (Pendle)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Pendle constituency, the effects on Pendle of her Department's policies and activities since 2 May 1997. [215009]

Alun Michael: Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate

change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. A summary of our achievements to date can be found at http://defra/corporate/achievements.htm. I am confident that the Pendle constituency will have benefited from these. Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04 and 25 per cent. by 2005–06.

Since 2001, Defra has established a number of funding mechanisms to help local authorities achieve their targets. As a result of allocations from these funds the residents of Pendle should reap the benefits over the next few years. Since 2001 a total of £723,436 has been awarded to the borough to expand kerbside recycling schemes.

In March 2005 we announced that Lancashire is to be as one of eight rural pathfinders in England. The pathfinder initiative is a key part of the Government's Rural Strategy and reflects the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making and resources to the local level. The Lancashire rural pathfinder will ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses.

Defra provides comprehensive statistical information. The following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp

Environmental Standards

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are being taken to ensure that high environmental standards do not conflict with industrial competitiveness. [222384]

Mr. Morley: Contrary to some views, there is no need for high environmental standards to conflict with industrial competitiveness or economic success. In many cases, high environmental standards can bring both the benefits of a good environment and direct economic benefits to sectors of industry. Well designed environmental regulation can be a stimulus to innovation and industrial efficiency.

Defra's aim is sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone. We understand that quality of life is dependent on a strong, fair society, economic prosperity and the quality of people's current and future environment.

In all the policy making that we undertake, we therefore attempt to properly balance the effects of our policies on each of the social, economic and environment areas and to maximise the net benefit—so that each of our policies take the country closer to sustainable development. Ensuring the UK has industries that can trade competitively in international markets is a key part of maintaining economic prosperity in the UK.

Policy proposals pass through an option appraisal,—the regulatory impact assessment—looking at the net costs and benefits of each option proposed. This includes the benefits and costs which do not have a market value (for example, ecosystems) and will include the impacts on competitiveness. In many cases, the benefits of policy in one area—for example an improvement of people's environmental quality—are traded off against smaller costs in others, for example costs to consumers to particular service. That is very different to an impact on the UK's competitiveness.

The Government take the issue of impacts on competitiveness very seriously. Nevertheless, it is not easy to predict the impact of any policy on competitiveness of the UK as a whole—the dynamic effects of any stimulus rely on complex interactions. To appraise impacts on competitiveness—rather than just the static impacts on any industry which are already appraised—the Government are developing a methodology for use in cost-benefit analysis. Defra is fully committed to using this methodology to take better account of any impacts, good or bad, or our policy on competitiveness.

Defra therefore is serious about setting goals with net benefits for the UK and achieving those goals in the most efficient way, maximising benefits and reducing costs.

Most environmental legislation comes from Brussels. We are influential in shaping that policy to meet our broad sustainable development goals. Pushing the better regulation agenda—to increase the efficiency of policy, set appropriately balanced goals and reduce unnecessary burden on business—is one of our five priorities for our presidency of the Council during 2005. We are already seeing success in the use of better impact assessments and simplification of existing measures.

Further, my Department is leading the way in Whitehall in reducing the administrative burden of regulation, something that may impact on the UK's competitiveness. We have committed to reducing the information and form filling burden on those industries we regulate by 25 per cent. of the next five years.

The impacts of policy on industrial sectors depend significantly on the regulation and inspection of firms and individuals by the agencies and bodies responsible for that task. My Department continues to work with its sponsored delivery bodies to cut unnecessary administrative burden, a process which will lead, amongst other things, to a consolidation of functions over the next four years.

These are only some of the steps that my department will be taking to meet the joint goals of economic prosperity and high environmental standards.

Fisheries

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much EU aid was paid to the fishing industries of *(a)* Spain, *(b)* France and *(c)* Denmark in each of the last eight years for which figures are available. [218128]

Mr. Bradshaw: The current EU fisheries grants scheme covers the period 2000–2006. The EU aid planned in that period for those countries was *(a)* Spain £1,076.4 million *(b)* .France £145.9 million and *(c)* Denmark £127.7 million. The comparable figure for the UK is £136.4 million. We do not know what has been spent to date in other member states. However since 1 January 2005 there has been a level playing field in that no member state has been able to give aid for the construction of new vessels and only for modernisation if vessel capacity is not altered. In addition to the grants scheme various other sources of help for those fishing industry will exist in those member states as it does in the UK.

Hazardous Waste

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how much contaminated soil has been disposed of to landfill since the coming into force of regulations implementing the EU Waste Framework Directive; and what the figure was in the equivalent period prior to the coming into force of those regulations; [224558]

(2) how many movements by lorry of hazardous waste there have been since the coming into force of regulations implementing the EU Waste Framework Directive. [224559]

Mr. Morley: I have referred these questions to the Environment Agency. The Agency will take some time to collate the information requested and my noble Friend, The Baroness Young, will write to the hon. Lady directly when they have done so.

Radioactive Sources

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to change the policy on management of high activity radioactive *(a)* sealed sources and *(b)* orphan sources. [224716]

Mr. Morley: The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the devolved administrations published a consultation paper on 18 March. This set out proposals for implementing Council Directive 2003/122/Euratom on the control of high-activity sealed sources and orphan sources. The consultation paper included draft regulations to amend existing legislation in this area. Copies of the consultation paper have been placed in the Library.

Raptors

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to examine methods of control of peregrine hawks and sparrow hawks, with particular reference to their impact on other bird species. [224806]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have no plans to examine methods of control of birds of prey. We are aware of increasing concerns from grouse moor owners, racing pigeon fanciers over the impact of rising raptor populations on bird numbers, including songbirds. A Raptor Working Group was set up in 1995, jointly chaired by the DETR and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. The recommendations from the Raptor Working Group's final report, published in 2000, provides the basis for and inform efforts to find an effective and acceptable solution to the problems caused by birds of prey.

Work is now being taken forward by the country conservation agencies, and other organisations. In addition, English Nature has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Moorland Association on addressing the issue of raptor predation in the uplands.

A paper on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Raptor Working Group Report was presented to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, and noted by them, in September 2003. The paper is publicly available on their website at: http://www.incc.gov.uk/management/committee/papers03–09/incc03N06.pdf. Copies of the Raptor Working Group report are available from the Library of the House.

Birds of prey are usually the top predators in their food chains. As with other predatory species, populations of birds of prey are normally heavily influenced by their prey populations rather than the other way around. The available evidence suggests that recovering populations of birds of prey are not responsible for recent declines in some songbirds and that other factors related to habitat change and the intensification of farming are mainly to blame.

Recycling Targets

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much in fines the UK has paid to the EU for failing to meet recycling targets in each year since 2001. [224761]

Mr. Morley: The UK has not paid any money to the EU for fines in 2001 or in subsequent years.

The UK narrowly failed to meet the packaging directive's recovery target in 2001, but did meet the recycling target and material-specific recycling targets for all materials. In each year since 2001, the UK has continued to meet the required targets.

Sewers and Drains

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what *(a)* consultation and *(b)* research has been done to assess the effects of proposed changes of ownership of private sewers and lateral drains on the sector, with particular reference to companies working in drain services. [224859]

Mr. Morley: The Department published the Review of Existing Private Sewers and Drains in England and Wales consultation paper in 2003. A range of organisations was consulted, representing many different stakeholder groups. The consultation paper was also publicised in the trade press.

Key stakeholders, including the drain repair industry, were invited to a private sewers seminar in January this year. This included a workshop looking at the potential impacts on small businesses.

The Department has also undertaken further research to identify the potential impacts any transfer may have on drain repair companies. This involved contacting over 130 companies. A small firms impact test and

competition assessment will be included in the updated regulatory impact assessment. This will accompany the decision paper intended for publication in the summer.

Water Supplies

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likelihood of water shortages in 2005. [224061]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales and it advises the Secretary of State accordingly. The agency's current assessment is that even with average rainfall over the next six weeks there may still be some localised water supply problems in southern England this summer. Below average rainfall is likely to result in more serious problems for water companies in the South and this may extend towards the South-West and into the Midlands and East Anglia. Water companies may need to activate the measures in their drought plans, such as hosepipe bans, if the rainfall deficit does not diminish.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with water companies on the adequacy of future supplies; and if she will make a statement. [224062]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body which has a duty to secure the proper and efficient use of water resources in England and Wales and it advises the Secretary of State accordingly. Each water company in England and Wales produces a water resources plan setting out how it proposes to maintain the supply and demand balance of water for the next 25 years. The plans are assessed by the Environment Agency and reviewed annually.

The plans were updated as part of the recent periodic review of water company prices. The agency reported to Ministers, in July 2004, on these plans in "Maintaining Water Supply", which is available on its website.

The agency concluded that all water companies should be able to meet their customers' needs in the short term, although some companies need to work quickly to address security of supply issues. It believes that greater attention to demand management measures could offset the need, identified by some companies, for new or enlarged reservoirs that are expensive and potentially damaging to the environment.

NORTHERN IRELAND

A2

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when consultants will be appointed by his Department to make recommendations on the upgrading of the A2, Carrickfergus Belfast Road at Jordanstown and Green Island. [224481]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Beggs, dated 6 April 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question asking when consultants will be appointed to make recommendations on the upgrading of the A2, Carrickfergus Belfast Road at Jordanstown and Green Island. [224418]. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

I can advise you that consultants Scott Wilson/Ferguson McIlveen were appointed on 18 March this year.

Since appointment the consultants have been mobilising their resources and reviewing existing information and I do not as yet have a detailed programme for their work.

However, this scheme is included in the Roads Service Preparation Pool, which is a list of road improvement schemes that are to be developed and taken through the Statutory Procedures with the expectation of progressing to construction within the next five years, subject to the availability of the necessary funds at that time.

I hope this information is helpful.

Aircraft Charters

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money his Department has spent on chartering aircraft in each of the past five years. [213720]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Northern Ireland Office (excluding its Agencies and NDPBs) has spent the following on chartering aircraft in each of the past five years:

	£
1999–2000	657,323
2000–01	729,369
2001–02	622,972
2002–03	599,105
2003–04	546,372

Andersonstown News Group

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money the Andersonstown News Group has received from *(a)* the Northern Ireland Office, *(b)* departments, agencies and non-departmental public bodies within the Northern Ireland Civil Service and *(c)* Invest Northern Ireland since May 1997; how many applications remain to be determined; and if he will make a statement. [208674]

Mr. Gardiner: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Northern Ireland Office has not provided funding to the ANG.

(b) and *(c)* I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given on 11 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1016W. Details of funding provided to ANG for the period 1 April 1999 to 31 December 2004 are included in that response (information prior to 1 April 1999 is not readily available). Funding for ANG is listed under the company names of Andersonstown News and Preas an Phobail Ltd.

There are no current ANG applications for funding remaining to be determined. However, DCAL, via Foras na Gaeilge, has agreed to provide funding of £21,250 in respect of the six months ending June 2005.

Departmental Budget/Expenditure

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223437]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department spent on lawyers in each year since 1997; how many *(a)* actions, *(b)* settlements and *(c)* court cases there were in each year; and what the costs were of each settlement. [206455]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information requested by the hon. Member is not readily available and to do so would be at disproportionate cost.

Electoral Register

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list by constituency the numbers of eligible voters who failed to re-register in the 2004 annual canvass. [215158]

Mr. Spellar: The following table lists by constituency the number of eligible electors who failed to re-register following the annual canvass and so did not appear on the register published on 1 December 2004.

Constituency	*Total*
Belfast East	4,028
Belfast North	5,440
Belfast South	4,986
Belfast West	5,509
East Antrim	4,240
East Londonderry	3,480
Fermanagh/South Tyrone	3,887
Foyle	6,270
Lagan Valley	4,198
Mid Ulster	3,464
North Antrim	3,667
North Down	4,023
Newry and Armagh	4,387
South Antrim	5,345
South Down	4,653
Strangford	4,325
Upper Bann	4,611
West Tyrone	4,420
Total	80,933

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the reasons why eligible voters failed to re-register in the 2004 annual canvass; and if he will make a statement. [215159]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Office has not conducted detailed research in this area. However, I understand that the Electoral Commission will be continuing to monitor the levels of registration and the reasons regarding why eligible voters failed to register.

Electoral Registration Bill

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from *(a)* political parties, *(b)* the Electoral Commission and *(c)* the Northern Ireland Electoral Office about the Electoral Registration (Northern Ireland) Bill. [215254]

Mr. Spellar: The Government consulted with the Northern Ireland political parties last November. None of the parties opposed introducing the measures in the Bill. Both the Electoral Commission and the Chief Electoral Officer were consulted about the measures contained in the Bill.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public money has been spent in each of the last three years on offering assistance to representatives of companies in Northern Ireland at the invitation of Invest Northern Ireland, broken down by constituency. [213972]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table provides information relating to offers made to clients by parliamentary constituency area during the three years up to end March 2004. Included is the total amount of planned investment to which these offers contributed. Invest NI's information is provided for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04. Information for 2001–02 is based on funding provided by two of Invest NI's legacy agencies—the Industrial Development Board and the Local Enterprise Development Unit.

Parliamentary constituency area	*2001–02*			*2002–03*		
	Number of offers	*Assistance (£)*	*Investment1 (£)*	*Number of offers*	*Assistance (£)*	*Investment1 (£)*
Belfast East	46	5,760,102	29,021,415	58	2,103,025	8,512,108
Belfast North	58	5,670,981	14,380,030	45	7,565,191	20,071,672
Belfast South	78	5,780,647	33,336,606	137	15,943,868	38,581,673
Belfast West	29	4,978,855	26,254,575	47	4,154,127	16,518,873
East Antrim	46	1,633,322	11,499,761	66	6,249,254	21,210,100
East Londonderry	44	2,006,291	6,984,996	59	4,168,042	13,950,428
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	70	4,660,406	28,325,773	69	5,720,677	22,971,162
Foyle	69	5,230,250	20,922,057	94	14,414,920	105,655,505
Lagan Valley	64	1,385,337	7,418,796	54	1,462,738	6,682,614
Mid Ulster	111	3,596,184	18,695,873	143	4,056,819	20,082,706
Newry and Armagh	98	2,460,108	14,561,864	84	6,258,098	22,320,265
North Antrim	68	2,261,799	12,919,845	72	2,387,964	14,215,617
North Down	43	960,839	4,989,873	44	1,347,025	6,467,355
South Antrim	72	7,033,902	76,712,254	86	22,877,977	142,862,810
South Down	63	5,417,186	20,525,114	70	2,439,960	12,649,429
Strangford	46	2,277,552	10,315,133	62	2,148,990	9,258,178

Parliamentary constituency area	Number of offers	2001–02 Assistance (£)	Investment1 (£)	Number of offers	2002–03 Assistance (£)	Investment1 (£)
Upper Bann	67	5,061,360	26,992,790	78	16,626,275	73,276,818
West Tyrone	52	4,348,708	31,648,319	52	4,786,843	20,172,661
Yet to be determined[2]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand total	1,124	70,523,829	395,505,074	1,320	124,711,793	575,459,974

Parliamentary constituency area	Number of offers	2003–04 Assistance (£)	Investment1 (£)
Belfast East	153	15,781,519	59,561,789
Belfast North	111	4,491,136	24,863,957
Belfast South	268	25,744,481	106,565,647
Belfast West	96	8,083,963	26,637,704
East Antrim	175	3,895,611	12,601,313
East Londonderry	116	5,515,632	10,952,580
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	211	4,330,331	16,063,338
Foyle	232	7,590,869	27,306,606
Lagan Valley	189	1,701,255	5,865,880
Mid Ulster	318	5,610,090	25,338,036
Newry and Armagh	188	2,126,189	8,466,145
North Antrim	194	5,261,235	31,305,993
North Down	97	5,051,236	15,224,274
South Antrim	216	4,533,953	15,122,204
South Down	160	1,244,825	4,201,426
Strangford	121	1,641,799	5,431,651
Upper Bann	240	6,995,359	31,978,233
West Tyrone	194	7,314,505	35,664,802
Yet to be determined[2]	2	240,000	4,769,000
Grand total	3,281	117,153,988	467,890,578

[1] Investment totals include assistance offered.
[2] "Yet to be determined" relates to offers made to businesses which have not as yet determined a precise location.

An additional £21,211,335 was offered in 2002–03 that could not be allocated by area.

Lighthouse Fund

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has received from other Government Departments regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [224599]

Mr. Spellar: I am unaware of any representations on this matter.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Irish Government regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [224600]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

We recognise that the current funding arrangements set out in the 1985 Agreement are increasingly inappropriate for today's political and commercial context. Following discussions at official level between the two Governments, the Irish Government's Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources have now stated that they have no objection in principle to participating in a review of the Agreement. We are now developing proposals for their consideration as a matter of priority.

Milk Prices

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on milk prices in Northern Ireland. [223279]

Mr. Pearson: The average producer milk price in Northern Ireland was 18.26 pence per litre in 2004, which was an increase of 0.26 pence per litre (+ 1.5 per cent.) on the previous year. This compares with an average milk price for the UK as a whole of 18.56 pence per litre in 2004.

The milk price in Great Britain is slightly higher because around 50 per cent. of total milk production goes into the higher priced liquid market. In comparison, around 85 per cent. of milk produced in Northern Ireland is processed into commodities such as butter, cheese and milk powders.

Detailed information on milk prices and on the value of milk production is given in the 'Statistical Review of Northern Ireland Agriculture, 2004', which was published on 24 March 2005 and is available on the DARD website at www.dardni.gov.uk.

Patten Report

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many officers *(a)* were employed by the Special Branch of the Police Service of Northern Ireland immediately before the implementation of the Patten Report and *(b)* are serving in PSNI Special Branch. [223687]

Mr. Pearson: The information is as follows.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

	Number
1 January 2001	
E dept. (including HMSU)	855
Total	855
18 March 2005	
C3 intelligence	433
C4 crime support	281
Total	714

Police

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many police officers were on duty during the weekends of *(a)* 1 and 2 January and *(b)* 7 and 8 January in (i) Garvagh, (ii) Kilrea, (iii) Coleraine, (iv) Portrush and (v) Portstewart police stations. [224209]

Mr. Pearson: The number of officers deployed on duty per shift during the weekends of *(a)* 1 and 2 January and *(b)* 7 and 8 January 2005 in Coleraine DCU was as follows:

	Coleraine DCU personnel		*Tactical support group*	
	Early[1]	*Night*[2]	*Early*[1]	*Night*[2]
1 January 2005	23	37	24	0
2 January 2005	20	21	21	0
7 January 2005	30	26	0	0
8 January 2005	20	29	0	0

[1] Early shift 0700 to 1900 hours.

[2] Night shift 1900 to 0700 hours.

Notes:

1. Tactical Support Group are available to provide support anywhere in the District Command Unit.
2. Any shortfall in resource in one station will be supplemented by resources from another.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when Police Service of Northern Ireland candidates processed under Campaign 8 will be informed of the outcome; how many candidates there were, broken down by *(a)* religion and *(b)* gender; and if he will make a statement. [222877]

Mr. Pearson: Applicants to a PSNI trainee constable competition have to pass through two stages, an initial selection test and an assessment centre, before progressing into a merit pool of suitably qualified candidates from which they are then appointed at an equal ratio of those determined to be from a Catholic background and those from a non-Catholic background.

Candidates are informed of the result of the assessment centre and whether or not they have been successful in entering the merit pool as the process rolls forward.

With regards to Campaign 8, I am advised PSNI will make contact with all on the merit list in July 2005. Of the 5,695 candidates applying for Campaign 8, 1,342 and 644 were male and female respectively from a Catholic background, and, 2,372 and 1,337 were male and female respectively from a non-Catholic background.

Pollution

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the public health implications of the untreated waste and sewage washed up at Orlock, County Down. [224257]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Lady Hermon, dated 6 April 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about the public health implications of the untreated waste and sewage washed up at Orlock, County Down (224257). I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of Water Service.

Water Service regrets the problems that have arisen due to the failure of the screening plant at Briggs Rock, Orlock. The Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety, which is responsible for policy on public health matters, has advised that, while it is understood that the North Down borough council has assessed the situation at Orlock from a public health perspective, the Public Health Department of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board has been asked to liaise with North Down borough council to determine if there is any risk to public health from this situation, and if so, to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to deal with it.

DHSSPS will advise you of the outcome of these investigations.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects the Environment and Heritage Service to complete its investigation into the unregulated waste management activity found at Geddis farm on the outskirts of Helen's Bay in County Down; and when he expects the Environment and Heritage Service to publish the findings of its investigation. [224626]

Angela Smith: The Environment and Heritage Service anticipates that investigations will be completed by June 2005, when the finding will be made available, unless legal action is instigated by the Department.

Queen's Flight

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on how many occasions the Department's Ministers used the Queen's Flight in each of the past five years. [213443]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Travel by Ministers makes clear that special flights may be authorised when a scheduled service is not available, or when it is essential to travel by air, but the requirements of official or parliamentary business or security considerations or urgency preclude the journey being made by a scheduled service. In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list published in 1999 covers the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 1999. Where RAF/Private Charter aircraft are used this is shown in the list. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House. Information for 2004–05 will be published in due course.

School Meals

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has for additional funding to improve school meals in Northern Ireland. [224736]

Mr. Gardiner: I am committed to taking action that further improves the nutritional value of school meals here. I intend therefore to make additional funding available to improve school meals from September 2005. The arrangements for this will be finalised in light of evaluation of the outcomes of the Department's Nutritional Standards pilot scheme, involving 100 schools, which ended in March 2005.

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what plans he has to allocate additional funds for school dinners in schools in the Province. [224818]

Mr. Gardiner: I am committed to taking action that further improves the nutritional value of the school meals here. I intend therefore to make additional funding available to improve school meals from September 2005. The arrangements for this will be finalised in light of evaluation of the outcomes of the Department's nutritional standards pilot scheme, involving 100 schools, which ended in March 2005.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) if he will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which ministers were not present; [210545]

(2) if he will list the speeches his special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210562]

Mr. Paul Murphy: All meetings held by special advisers and all speeches given by special advisers are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

Staff Training

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the costs of departmental *(a)* staff training days and *(b)* staff development days held away from the Department were in each year since 1997. [213792]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information requested by the hon. Member is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Stationery

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips in each year since 1997. [214947]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information is not held in the format requested by the hon. Member.

The Northern Ireland Office's (excluding its Agencies and NDPBs) expenditure on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips is recorded under general printing expenditure codes which cover a vast range of items. To provide this information would be at disproportionate cost.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much the Department spent on *(a)* stationery and *(b)* office supplies in each year since 1997. [213842]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information is not held in the format requested by the hon. Member.

The figures provided in the table incorporate both the amounts spent on *(a)* stationery and *(b)* office supplies by the Northern Ireland Office (excluding its Agencies and NDPBs) in each year since 1997:

	£
1997–98	354,367
1998–99	424,354
1999–2000	356,736
2000–01	336,629
2001–02	224,796
2002–03	323,852
2003–04	309,062

TK-ECC

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much of the grant assistance which was offered to TK-ECC in 1999 has been clawed back since its closure; and if he will contribute funds clawed back to the company's pension fund. [213549]

Mr. Gardiner: Under the terms of a Financial Assistance Agreement dated 4 June 1999, between TK-ECC Ltd. and the then Industrial Development Board (IDE), a total of £2,000,000 was made available to the company and £800,000 of this was drawn down. Following the closure of the company, Invest NI determined that £275,000 was recoverable under the terms of the Financial Assistance Agreement. This amount was repaid in full by the company on 4 October 2004. There is no provision that would allow funds recovered to be made available to the TK-ECC Ltd. Pension Fund.

HEALTH

A and E Departments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of *(a)* NHS Direct, *(b)* the new general medical services contract and *(c)* the four-hour accident and emergency waiting time target on attendances at accident and emergency departments. [222807]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Our assessment is that the key factors contributing to the rise in reported attendances at accident and emergency departments since 2002–03 have been better reporting, increased availability and use of walk-in centres and minor injury units, which are classified as type two and three A and E departments, and increased public satisfaction with A and E services linked to improved performance against the four-hour target.

We have found no evidence that NHS Direct or the new general medical service (QMS) contract have contributed to the rise in attendances. The start of the current trend of increased attendances pre-dated the implementation of the GMS contact by around a year.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact of the four hour accident and emergency waiting time target on patient outcomes. [222809]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have not undertaken a formal assessment, but the significantly increased number of accident and emergency patients now seen within four hours (96.8 per cent. in the third quarter of 2004–05, compared with 78 per cent. in the same quarter of 2002–03) can reasonably be expected to have improved patient outcomes. We have also received no evidence of any instances where the operation of the target has detracted from the quality of patient care.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many accidents occurred at his departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of his Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222568]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There were 83 accident book entries in 2000, 47 accident book entries in 2001, 83 accident book entries in 2002, 102 accident book entries in 2003 and 100 accident book entries in 2004. There are no accident figures held separately for members of the public.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he publishes data for the number of accidents at work involving employees of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [222582]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Accident figures have been published in the Department's annual reports since 2003.

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what arrangements for monitoring accidents at work involving members of staff of his Department are in place; and if he will make a statement. [222633]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All reported accidents and incidents are scrutinised initially by the Department's building services section, which also maintains reports, records and statistics.

Any serious event is notified to the building services, health and safety audit manager, who will initiate appropriate remedial action. The building services, health and safety audit manager will conduct necessary investigation and, where it applies, will report them under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

Acute Beds

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many acute beds there are for each 100,000 of population in each strategic health authority. [224631]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Strategic health authority	*Acute beds per 100,000 population*
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	244
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire	129
Birmingham and the Black Country	262
Cheshire and Merseyside	271
County Durham and Tees Valley	246
Cumbria and Lancashire	230
Dorset and Somerset	223
Essex	153
Greater Manchester	282
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	200
Kent and Medway	155
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	195
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	219
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	196
North Central London	277
North East London	227
North West London	215
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	275
Shropshire and Staffordshire	185
South East London	209
South West London	211
South West Peninsula	261
South Yorkshire	297
Surrey and Sussex	192
Thames Valley	185
Trent	194
West Midlands South	208
West Yorkshire	229
England	220

Sources:

1. Beds data—KH03 2003–04.
2. Population figures—Office for National Statistics mid-2003 estimates.

Alzheimer's Disease

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish his directions to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on determining the cost effectiveness of treatments; and if he will make a statement on the application of those directions to the evaluation of treatments for Alzheimer's disease. [224526]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All directions made under article 3 of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) Establishment and Constitution Order 1999 and regulation 9 of the Order are available in the Library. None relate to evaluation of treatments of Alzheimer's disease.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish his Department's submission to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence review of treatment for Alzheimer's disease. [224731]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government's response to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence consultation document, "Donepezil, Rivastigmine, Glanatamine and Memantine for the treatment of Alzheimer's Disease", was published on 22 March 2005 and is available in the Library and on Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk.

Cancelled Operations

Miss Kirkbride: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were cancelled at the Worcestershire NHS Trust hospital *(a)* for medical reasons and *(b)* because of a lack of beds in each year between 1997 and 2005. [224821]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows cancelled operations for non clinical reasons at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust for the years 2001–02, 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05[1].

	Org. ID	*Name*	*Number of last minute cancellations for non clinical reasons*
2004–05	RWP	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	560
2003–04	RWP	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	1,073
2002–03	RWP	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	856
2001–02	RWP	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	459

[1] For the three quarters only to December of the financial year.

Notes:

1. Data prior to 2001–02 were only collected at health authority level. There is no breakdown by trust.
2. A last minute cancellation is one that occurs on the day the patient was due to arrive, after they have arrived in hospital or on the day of their operation. This includes patients who have not actually arrived in hospital and have been telephoned at home prior to their arrival.
3. Non-clinical reasons for cancellations by the hospital include: ward beds unavailable; surgeon unavailable; emergency case needing theatre; theatre list over-ran; equipment failure; admin. error; anaesthetist unavailable; theatre staff unavailable; and critical care bed unavailable. These examples are based on information from the Modernisation Agency's theatres project and do not necessarily cover all non-clinical reason.

Source:

Department of Health dataset QMCO and QMNG (2001–02).

Chronic Disease Management

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to incorporate chronic kidney disease management in primary care services. [224718]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Part two of the national service framework for renal services was published in February 2005. It sets out new quality requirements for the identification and early management of people with, or at risk of, chronic kidney disease. It also identifies considerable scope for integrating care pathways for people with chronic kidney disease coronary heart disease and or diabetes, to reduce the impact of these interacting long-term conditions.

Clostridium Difficile

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to publish the results of the most recent quarterly collection of statistics on clostridium difficile. [224596]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The collection of data on clostridium difficile under the mandatory surveillance scheme started on 1 January 2004. The Health Protection Agency will be publishing annual data when a full year's data has been analysed later this year.

Cumulative data from the Health Protection Agency's voluntary reporting scheme on clostridium difficile are published regularly. Data for 2003 was published in February 2005 in the Communicable Disease Report (CDR) Weekly at: http://www.hpa.org.uk/cdr/archives/2005/cdr0705.pdf.

Dentistry

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been spent on helping dentists to set up NHS practices in each year since 1999. [223797]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Primary care trusts (PCTs) help dentists to set up national health service practices in a variety of ways. We do not hold records centrally of all their initiatives. In helping dentists, PCTs have been able to draw on the £59 million we made available in 2004–05, of which £35 million was for grants to improve facilities, £15 million for local access initiatives and £9 million for use by the NHS dentistry support team to target assistance to PCTs with some of the most pressing access problems. PCTs can also offer dentists a personal dental services contract to set up a new practice. Under the terms of these contracts, dentists have a guaranteed level of earnings provided that they meet the agreed service requirements.

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1976W, on dentistry, whether Methods Consulting is under a contractual obligation to his Department to meet the target recruitment figure of 230 Polish dentists by October 2005; and what steps will be taken to meet any shortfall in the target figure. [223971]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Methods Consulting has been contracted by the Department to recruit up to 230 dentists from Poland by the end of October 2005 to work in the national health service. The Department and Methods Consulting expect this figure to be achieved and Methods Consulting is managing the process accordingly.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received NHS dental treatment in Coventry, South in each year since 1997. [224086]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, Coventry, South is served by Coventry primary care trust (PCT). The number of people in the PCT area that were registered with a national health service dentist for the years 1997 to 2004 are as shown in table 1.

Table 1

	Child	*Adult*	*Total*
1997	46,543	133,355	179,898
1998	42,479	108,322	150,801
1999	43,940	112,104	156,044
2000	43,351	108,255	151,606
2001	42,472	106,646	149,118
2002	41,425	106,877	148,302
2003	41,876	107,265	149,141
2004	39,490	99,026	138,516

Source:

Dental Practice Board.

The drop in registrations between 1997 and 2004 is mostly attributable to the reduction in the re-registration period for patients from two years to 15 months. The figures also exclude the five dentists in personal dental service (PDS) schemes with 2,948 patients listed with them. The figures also exclude patients treated in dental access centres (DACs) who are

not registered. In 2004, there were some 375,000 episodes of treatment in the 48 DACs then in operation in England.

Table 2 shows the breakdown of patients seen and treatments completed at the Warwickshire DAC, which opened in December 2001—up to and including data as of 31 January 2005.

Table 2

	Number of patients seen	*Number of courses completed*
2000–01	—	—
2001–02	1,140	1,288
2002–03	2,107	2,812
2003–04	1,883	2,572
(year to date)	1,634	2,142

Source:
Dental Practice Board.

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists in Gosport are accepting new NHS adult patients. [224881]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are 80 dentists practising in the Fareham and Gosport Primary Care Trust (PCT) area as at 31 December 2004. Latest information from the national health service's website shows that there are currently no dentists accepting new NHS adult patients.

The NHS dentistry support team has been working with Fareham and Gosport PCT to assist it in tackling problems of local dental access. The PCT agreed a dental action plan with the support team, in August 2004, which it is now implementing. The plan will create in excess of 20,000 new NHS patient places together with 25,000 access session appointments. The PCT has received additional recurrent funds from the support team of £310,000 to support the delivery of the plan.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in the Romsey constituency have been registered with an NHS dentist in each of the past 10 years. [224729]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Table 1shows the number of people in the Romsey constituency registered with a national health service dentist in the last 10 years.

Table 1: NHS dentist registrations in Romsey, 1995 to 2004

	Number registered
1995	42,792
1996	37,587
1997	34,278
1998	30,965
1999	30,212
2000	28,790
2001	30,059
2002	28,663
2003	31,010
2004	28,727

Information has been provided by the dental practice board (DPB). The DPB defines areas based on dental practice postcodes within the current constituency boundaries. There are a small proportion of registrations nationally which could not be allocated to a constituency. The drop in registrations between 1997 and 2004 is mostly attributable to the reduction in the re-registration period for patients from two years to 15 months.

Unregistered patients in Romsey can obtain treatment from the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire dental access centre, which opened in 2001. Table 2shows the breakdown of patients seen and treatments completed at the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire dental access centre in each year since it opened.

Table 2: Number of patients seen and courses completed at Portsmouth and South East Hampshire dental access centre

	Number of patients seen	*Number of courses completed*
2001–02	1,120	1,287
2002–03	2,156	2,437
2003–04	2,456	3,041
1 April 2004 to 31 January 2005	1,849	2,233

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many regulations have been repealed by his Department since 1 October 2004. [224620]

Ms Rosie Winterton: 37 statutory instruments, including both regulations and orders, have been revoked from 1 October 2004 to date. In addition, there were 10 statutory instruments in which provisions were revoked but the whole of the instrument was not.

Dermatology

Mr. Bruce George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* indirect and direct funding and *(b)* other support he provided to dermatology research in each of the last five years. [223932]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body funded by the Department of Trade and Industry via the Office of Science and Technology.

The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service.

Both the MRC and the Department are currently supporting skin research. Past expenditure on such research is shown in the table.

Expenditure on skin research 1999–2000 to 2003–04

	MRC	*Department's national research programmes (£000)*
1999–2000	0.342	301
2000–01	0.548	452
2001–02	1.17 million	300
2002–03	1.58 million	283
2003–04	1.8 million	613

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. Details of completed and ongoing projects, including a significant number concerned with dermatology, can be found on the national research register at www.dh.gov.uk/research.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the Government's policy is on supplying digital hearing aids to those who have been diagnosed to be in need of them; [220636]

(2) what the Government's timetable is for providing digital hearing aids to those diagnosed to be in need of them. [220708]

Dr. Ladyman *[pursuant to the reply, 9 March 2005, Official Report, c.1907W]:* I regret that my previous reply was incorrect. The final paragraph should read as follows:

"By 2008, no one will wait longer than 18 weeks from general practitioner referral to hospital treatment."

Domiciliary Care Workers

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will introduce a system of registration for paid domiciliary care workers. [224823]

Dr. Ladyman: The Secretary of State for Health is required by the Care Standards Act 2000 to consult the General Social Care Council (GSCC) before making any order to extend the register to social care workers, including domiciliary care workers. He did so in 2004, following which the GSCC undertook an open consultation in England last autumn and recommended the following order for the next groups for registration:

Outreach and domiciliary care workers, residential child care workers and those working in residential family centres, and social care.

Other residential care workers and those working in day services.

Staff working in adoption and fostering agencies and adult placement services.

Inspection and training staff in social care.

Ministers have accepted in principle the recommendations of the GSCC. Detailed plans for the implementation of these recommendations are being prepared and an announcement will be made in the coming months.

Dr. Wilmshurst (Royal Shrewsbury Hospital)

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information the Chief Medical Officer has received from Dr. Wilmshurst, consultant cardiologist at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital; what action he has taken as a result; and if he will place copies of the correspondence in the Library. [224265]

Dr. Ladyman: This information cannot be released without compromising the privacy of a number of third parties. Release would contravene the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Drug Treatment (Appraisals)

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will review the National Institute for Clinical Excellence appraisals of drug treatments to ensure that all important health effects have been taken into account in each case. [224564]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The process by which the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) appraises drugs and their treatment is a matter for NICE itself. NICE consults periodically in its appraisal process. The latest consultation was in 2004, details can be found on the NICE'S website www.nice.org.uk.

NICE is an independent organisation, which has gained an international reputation for its work on clinical and cost effectiveness of treatment and healthcare. NICE'S methodologies have also been commended by the World Health Organisation.

Elderly People (Falls)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the number of persons aged *(a)* over 65, *(b)* over 75 and *(c)* over 85 years of age resident in (i) residential care homes, (ii) nursing homes and (iii) their own homes and receiving domiciliary care; and what the (A) suicide rate, (B) number of reports to the police of missing persons, (C) number of admissions to hospital following falls and (D) number of deaths as a result of accident was in each group in the latest period for which figures are available. [224262]

Dr. Ladyman: The estimated numbers of people aged 65 and over, 75 and over and 85 and over reported to be living in residential and nursing care homes in England from the 2001 census are shown in Table 1. The table also shows the estimated number of people receiving domiciliary care provided or commissioned by councils with social service responsibilities in England at 31 March 2004.

The Office for National Statistics does not hold information on suicide rates in residential care homes, nursing homes and homes that receive domiciliary care.

Table 2 shows the number of finished admissions to national health service hospitals following a fall by age group in England in 2003–04. The breakdown specified is not available.

Table 3 shows the number of registered deaths from accidental injury, by place of occurrence in England in 2003. The breakdown specified is not available.

Information on missing persons is a matter for the Home Office.

Table 1: Estimated number of people by age group in residential and nursing care homes and those receiving domiciliary care in England

	As at 31 March	65 and over	75 and over	85 and over
Residential care	2001[1]	162,800	147,700	95,800
Nursing care	2001[1]	116,700	102,200	60,400
Domiciliary care	2004[2]	318,000	263,000	n/a

n/a—Data not available.

Source:

[1] Office for National Statistics (2001 Census Table S126).

[2] Department of Health RAP return P2s.1 2003–04.

Table 2: Count of finished admissions to NHS hospitals following falls in England, 2003–04

Age	Admissions
65 and over	116,500
75 and over	92,800
85 and over	44,600

Notes:

1. Ungrossed data—figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data.

2. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Table 3: Number of registered deaths[1] from accidental injury in England, 2003

Place of occurrence[2]	All ages	65 and over	75 and over	85 and over
All accidents	10,500	5,800	5,000	2,900
Transport accidents	3,000	600	400	100
Non-transport accidents	7,500	5,200	4,600	2,800
of which				
occurring at home	2,900	1,500	1,200	600
occurring in residential institution[3]	500	400	400	300
with place of occurrence unspecified	3,100	2,900	2,700	1,800

Notes:

[1] Figures are for death registrations, not occurrences.

[2] Place of occurrence breakdown refers to where the accident occurred, not the place of usual residence of the casualty.

[3] Residential institution covers: children's home, dormitory, home for the sick, hospice, military camp, nursing home, old people's home, orphanage, pensioner's home, prison, reform school.

Data is based on ICD10 codes V01-X59, V01-V99, W00-X59, W00-X59 (4th digit 0, 1 and 9).

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Health Statistics (Shrewsbury and Atcham)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many MRSA infections there were in the Royal Shrewsbury hospital in each year since 1997. [223179]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested. The Royal Shrewsbury hospital was a separate acute trust until October 2003, when it merged with the Princess Royal hospital to form the Shrewsbury and Telford hospitals national health service trust. From October 2003 onward, data for the Royal Shrewsbury hospital alone is not available.

The mandatory surveillance system which collects data on methicillin resistant "Staphylococcus aureus" (MRSA) bloodstream infections commenced in April 2001 and gives data by NHS trust only and not hospital.

The table shows relevant data for the years 2001–02, 2002–03, 2003–04 and the first six months of the reporting year 2004–05.

	Number of MRSA bacteraemia reports	MRSA rate per 1,000 bed days
Royal Shrewsbury hospital		
April 2001 to March 2002	18	0.11
April 2002 to March 2003	20	0.12
Shrewsbury and Telford hospital NHS trust		
April 2003 to March 2004	58	0.20
April 2004 to September 2004	24	0.16

Healthcare Commission

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many representations he has received from private and voluntary healthcare providers on fees for inspection by the Healthcare Commission; and if he will place copies in the Library. [224766]

Dr. Ladyman: On 8 February, increases in the regulatory fees payable to the Healthcare Commission were announced. The increases came into effect on 1 April and are in line with Government policy of moving to a position where the recurrent costs of providing regulation are fully recoverable from service providers.

Since the revised fees were announced, the Department has received a number of representations from private and voluntary healthcare providers. My noble Friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, met representatives of the independent healthcare forum on 16 March. Ministerial correspondence is not routinely placed in the Library.

Healthcare/Social Care Commissions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to publish his plans for merging the Healthcare and Social Care Commissions. [224538]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The decision to merge the Commission for Social Care Inspection with the Healthcare Commission was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer during his budget statement on 16 March 2005.

Further details of the planned merger will be confirmed following consultation with both Commissions, taking account of a proposed wider review of regulation in social care and health.

Klinefelter Syndrome

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy that those with Klinefelter syndrome should be exempt from prescription charges. [224913]

Ms Rosie Winterton: We have no plans to extend the existing list of medical conditions that give exemption from prescription charges. The list has been reviewed on a number of occasions but no clear cut case for extending it has emerged. There is no consensus on what additional conditions might be included in any revised list of medical exemptions, or how distinctions could be drawn between one condition and another.

McKinsy and Co

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been paid by Monitor to McKinsey and Co. since it was established. [223698]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* This is a matter for Monitor, the statutory name of which is the independent regulator of national health service foundation trusts. The Chairman will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Medical Staff (Assaults)

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many assaults have there been on *(a)* doctors, *(b)* nurses, *(c)* midwives and *(d)* ambulance crews in each year since 1997; and what proportion of those assaults led to a prosecution in each year. [224113]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The information requested has not been collected centrally hitherto but a new national reporting system for physical assaults against national health service staff is being put in place and this will be fully operational by summer 2005.

Mental Health

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent steps have been taken to improve mental health services provided to the black and ethnic minority community. [224872]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government are committed to equality of access to mental health services, equality of experience of those services, and equality of outcome from services. On 11 January 2005, we published "Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care", combined with our response to the independent inquiry into the death of David Bennett. Together, they represent a comprehensive five-year action plan for tackling inequalities and discrimination in services for black and minority ethnic communities.

The action plan is based on three building blocks:

better, more responsive services—for example through training in cultural awareness for all mental health staff;

better engagement of local services with black and minority ethnic communities, supported by the recruitment of 500 new community development workers; and

better information about service use and experience, including a new annual national census of mental health patients. The first census took place on 31 March 2005.

Implementation of the action plan is being led by Professor Kamlesh Patel QBE, head of the centre for ethnicity and health at the university of central Lancashire and chair of the Mental Health Act Commission. To support implementation, sites within 17 strategic health authorities across England have been selected to help identify and spread best practice.

"Delivering Race Equality in Mental Health Care" is available on the Department's website.

The objectives of "Delivering Race Equality" are supported by the Department's wider equality and human rights programme and by a 27-point cross-Government action plan on mental health published by the social exclusion unit (SEU) in June 2004. The SEU plan recognises that people with mental health problems are among the most excluded in society; its implementation is being led by the National Institute for Mental Health in England, in collaboration over 20 Government Departments and other organisations at national level.

MRSA

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the results were of the mandatory MRSA bloodstream infection count for the quarter October to December 2004. [223856]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* From March 2005, data on methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bloodstream infections have been published by six monthly intervals. The information for October 2004 to March 2005 will be published once the data has been compiled by the Health Protection Agency.

National Electronic Library for Health

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the reasons are for the decision to terminate access to treatment notes on the national electronic library for health in May 2005; and if he will make a statement. [221863]

Mr. Hutton: The Consumers Association was funded for one year to supply an electronic version of treatment notes to the national health service, to complement the paper copies sold to NHS organisations. The contract for this service expired on 31 March 2005.

NHS Direct

Mr. Dobson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report,* column 436W, on NHS Direct, what the intended new status of NHS Direct is; and what assessment he has made of its likely impact on the *(a)* financing, *(b)* status of the staff and *(c)* accountability of NHS Direct. [223969]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* As part of the arms length body review, the Department is assessing the future status of NHS Direct, with a view to it becoming a new organisation from April 2006. Financing, the status of staffing and accountability will feature in the evaluation of the new organisation.

NHS Finances

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the level of NHS income from charges was in each year since 1990–91, broken down by income from *(a)* fees and charges from health authorities, *(b)* fees

and charges from district health authorities, *(c)* road traffic accident income, *(d)* fees and charges from NHS trusts, *(e)* NHS Supplies Authority fees, *(f)* dental charges, *(g)* prescription charges, *(h)* nursing home inspection fees, *(i)* subsidised dried milk, *(j)* Medicines Control Agency: licences and inspections, *(k)* youth treatment service income, *(l)* NHS Pensions Agency fees, *(m)* Medical Devices Agency fees, *(n)* Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority: licences fees, *(o)* English National Board for Nursing registration fees and *(p)* other charges. [222805]

Mr. Hutton: National health service income figures from fees and charges are shown in the table. The table includes fees and charges to bodies outside the NHS, charges to private and overseas patients and charges to NHS patients.

The only charges to NHS patients are those for dental and prescription charges. The proportion of charges to NHS patients compared with the total fees and charges income has fallen from 54.4 per cent. in 1997–98 to 45.9 per cent. in 2003–04.

Breakdown of NHS income from charges by charge type 1990–91 to 2003–04

Charges	1990–91	1991–92	1992–93	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	£ million 1996–97
(a) Health authority —fees and charges[1, 2]	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.3
(b) District health authorities[3,4]	—	—	—	—	—	2.3	—
(c) Road traffic accident income[5]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(d) NHS trusts—fees and charges[6]	—	5.0	29.8	55.5	110.3	123.4	152.4
(e) NHS supplies authority fees[7]	—	—	—	—	—	50.1	44.1
(f) Dental charges[8]	—	—	—	367.0	383.3	381.2	383.0
(g) Prescription charges[8]	—	—	—	265.3	287.2	298.7	295.7
(h) Nursing home inspection fees[9,14]	—	—	—	—	—	4.6	5.0
(i) Subsidised dried milk	—	—	—	1.0	1.3	1.6	2.2
(j) Medicines Control Agency—licences and inspections	—	—	—	24.1	25.6	22.4	26.8
(k) Youth treatment service income	—	—	—	4.1	3.5	3.7	3.5
(l) NHS Pensions Agency fees[10]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(m) Medical Devices Agency Fees[11]	—	—	—	—	1.2	1.5	2.5
(n) Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority: licence fees	—	—	—	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.5
(o) English National Board for Nursing (ENB): registration fees[12,13]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(p) Other[15]	116.2	140.8	157.3	182.0	197.1	211.7	238.2
Total	116.2	145.8	187.1	899.8	1,010.4	1,102.2	1,161.2

Breakdown of NHS income from charges by charge type 1990–91 to 2003–04

Charges	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	£ million 2003–04
(a) Health authority —fees and charges[1, 2]	67.7	90.1	92.0	113.8	65.8	44.8	29.4
(b) District health authorities[3,4]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Road traffic accident income[5]	—	—	30.0	75.8	98.3	105.0	117.6
(d) NHS trusts—fees and charges[6]	169.6	216.7	224.2	266.0	268.2	386.1	531.7
(e) NHS supplies authority fees[7]	39.1	36.1	20.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.8
(f) Dental charges[8]	388.4	419.6	431.2	453.1	472.1	486.7	483.6
(g) Prescription charges[8]	320.9	341.3	366.7	386.9	413.1	425.4	428.3
(h) Nursing home inspection fees[9,14]	4.8	8.8	9.5	9.8	6.2	—	—
(i) Subsidised dried milk	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.3	3.0	2.9	—
(j) Medicines Control Agency—licences and inspections	28.1	26.6	29.4	34.1	36.7	41.3	—
(k) Youth treatment service income	4.5	4.7	4.6	0.1	—	—	—
(l) NHS Pensions Agency fees[10]	2.3	6.2	2.2	1.8	1.6	0.9	0.1
(m) Medical Devices Agency Fees[11]	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	—
(n) Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority: licence fees	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.6	2.5	3.5
(o) English National Board for Nursing (ENB): registration fees[12,13]	—	1.6	1.6	1.6	—	—	—
(p) Other[15]	275.0	296.6	315.3	320.3	347.2	372.8	391.1
Total	1,304.4	1,452.5	1,531.3	1,667.5	1,714.4	1,869.0	1,986.0

[1] Figures from 2000–01 include charges for primary care trusts (PCTs).
[2] Health authorities were established on 1 April 1996 and strategic health authorities on 1 October 2002.
[3] Figures were not collected prior to 1995–96.
[4] District health authorities ceased to exist after 1 April 1996.
[5] Figures were not collected prior to 1999–2000.
[6] Figures from 2001–02 includes charges from PCTs.
[7] From 2000–01 NHS Supplies Authority split into NHS Purchasing and Supplies Agency and NHS Logistics. All fees for forward years score against the NHS Logistics.
[8] Dental and prescription charge income prior to 2001–02 drawn from cash data in appropriation accounts. 2001–02 and subsequent years' data drawn from resource data in Summarised Accounts.
[9] Figures not collected on a consistent basis prior to 1996–97.
[10] No income generated prior to 1997–98.
[11] The Agency was established in September 1994.
[12] Figures prior to 1998–99 are not available.
[13] In 2001–02 the Department has directed that no ETR fees should be charged and that ETR fees held in reserve should be utilised to fund the ENB's on-going students record function for the final year of its operation.
[14] From April 2002, the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) regulated nursing homes; health authorities no longer collect the fee income.
[15] "Other" contains mainly charges for private patients and overseas visitors but also special health authority fees and charges.

Notes:
1. Information on fees and charges in *(a)* to *(o)* has been provided from the audited accounts of NHS bodies and specified NDPBs.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

2. Information in *(p)* has been provided for NHS trusts, PCTs and special health authorities.
3. Information has not been provided for other non-departmental public bodies as accounts for the period are not readily available.
4. The presentation of fees and charges in accounts is not necessarily consistent between years and therefore direct comparisons may not be relevant.
5. The NHS and a number of listed bodies have been subject to reorganisations over the period under question, therefore figures may only be available for limited years.

NICE Representations

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence about the provision of *(a)* Reminyl, *(b)* Aricept, *(c)* Exelon and *(d)* Ebixa treatments by the NHS. [224824]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Ministers have not received any representations from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) about these drugs. The Department has, along with other stakeholders, commented on NICE'S recent draft technology appraisal of these drugs. The Department's response was published on 22 March and is available on the Department website (www.dh.gov.uk) and in the Library.

Nurses (Hampshire)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses were employed in Hampshire in each of the past 10 years. [224730]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff within Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority area for respective years

	Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority total	*Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff*	*Headcount General practitioner practice nurses*
1995	9,734	8,977	757
1996	9,663	8,929	734
1997	9,653	8,914	739
1998[1]	10,052	9,350	702
1999[1]	10,417	9,719	698
2000	10,727	9,903	824
2001	11,393	10,571	822
2002	11,658	10,791	867
2003	13,431	12,564	867
2004	12,603	11,738	865

[1] Headcount practice nurse figures are estimated for these years.

Note:
Practice nurse data as at 1 October 1994 to 1999 and 30 September 2000 to 2004

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

Operations

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were contracted for in each of his Department's contracts with independent sector firms to provide NHS operations; how many operations have been completed under each contract; and how many operations have been paid for but were not completed within the contracted time scale. [223254]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* All wave 1 contracts with independent sector (IS) providers are for fixed terms (usually five years) and set numbers of procedures. IS providers are required to treat patients referred to them in order to be paid and it is the responsibility of the national health service to ensure that appropriate numbers of patients are referred to ensure that resources are not wasted and that patients receive treatment as quickly as possible. The number of patients treated under the schemes that are currently operational is shown in the tables

Five year contracts at full service

	Number/commencement date
Daventry[1]	
Total number of procedures	6,075
Total completed to date	3,783
Service commenced	1 October 2004
Mobile cataract units	
Total number of procedures	44,737
Total completed to date	11,687
Service commenced	26 January 2004
Kidderminster	
Total number of procedures	33,817
Total completed to date	109
Service commenced	1 February 2004

[1] 36 month contract spread over four financial years.

Contracts at interim service

	Number/commencement date
Brighton and Mid-Sussex (GC8)	
Total number of procedures	81,178
Total completed to date	77
Service commenced	1 February 2005
Southampton (GC4)	
Total number of procedures	95,137
Total completed to date	250
Service commenced	1 September 2004
Trent and South Yorkshire	
Total number of procedures	22,000
Total completed to date	2,196
Service commenced	13 April 2004
Bradford	
Total number of procedures	[1]27,415 [2]73,750
Total completed to date	600
Service commenced	23 February 2004
General supplementary procurement 1—one year	
Total number of procedures	25,000
Total completed to date	[3]16,000
Service commenced	June 2004

[1] Procedures
[2] Diagnostics
[3] Approximately

Premature Babies

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the survival rate of premature babies born at *(a)* 20, *(b)* 21, *(c)* 22, *(d)* 23 and *(e)* 24 weeks gestation was in the last year for which figures are available; and what proportion of surviving babies experienced long-term severe disability. [224726]

Dr. Ladyman: This data is not collected centrally.

A recent study of survival and disability in children born at 25 or fewer completed weeks of gestation confirms the association with mortality, and with morbidity and disability for survivors, which may persist into later life. It also notes that the greater introduction of antenatal treatment with corticosteroids and surfactants are important determinants of the increased survival of extremely preterm infants and observes that this may have some bearing on long-term outcomes. The study, entitled EPICure, is available on the following website: http://www.nottinaham.ac.uk/human-development/EPICure/.

Private Operations

Ms Munn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on whether patients who are being treated privately for a hospital operation may receive public funding to meet part of the cost. [224765]

Mr. Hutton: There is no statutory power under existing legislation, which would enable patients to receive public funding, in whole or in part, for private treatment in such circumstances.

Current legislation makes provision for a national health service which is delivered free of charge, except where there is a statutory basis for making a charge. Any other charge for a NHS service would be unlawful. We have no plans to introduce legislation to change this, and remain committed to a free NHS.

There is no statutory provision for charging United Kingdom residents for their hospital operations funded by the NHS, whether they are carried out by an NHS organisation or through the independent sector. Nor is there any statutory provision for such services to be part funded in this way by the NHS. If they are funded by the NHS they must be free of charge to the patient and funded in full.

Renal Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding he has made available for research into kidney disease in each year since 1997. [222830]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department funds research to support policy and to provide the evidence needed to underpin quality improvement and service development in the national health service through its national research programmes. Expenditure on research into kidney disease supported by these programmes is shown in the table.

	Amount (£000)
1997–98	0
1998–99	44
1999–2000	94
2000–01	102
2001–02	138
2002–03	224
2003–04	284

Over 75 per cent. of the Department's total expenditure on health research is devolved to and managed by NHS organisations. The NHS has reported spending from this funding in support of renal disease as follows:

	Amount1 (£ million)
2002–03	11.1
2003–04	10.6

[1] The figures represent the aggregate sum as reported by some 280 Individual research-active NHS organisations in the appropriate year.

This expenditure data was not collected centrally prior to 2002.

Sane

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the impact on services provided by SANE of changes in central Government funding over the next three years. [216433]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Currently, the Department has made no formal assessment of the effectiveness of SANELINE service. The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two-year contract for the SANELINE service. The contract comes to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

The chair of the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP), of which SANE was until recently a member, has written to SANE offering the partnership's support. The Department has indicated to the chair of the MHHP that it would offer advice and support to the partnership in this matter.

SANE is eligible to apply for Government funding streams aimed at the voluntary and community sector.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the service provided by SANELINE. [221992]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Currently, the Department has made no formal assessment of the effectiveness of the SANELINE service. However, on previous occasions when SANE has said it would need to close the SANELINE service, the Department conducted discussions with other helpline mental health providers to support SANELINE callers, who would have been affected.

The Chair of the Mental Health Helplines Partnership (MHHP), of which SANE was until recently a member, has written to SANE offering the Partnership's support. The Department has indicated to the Chair of the MHHP that it would offer advice and support to the Partnership in this matter.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department decided to withhold payments on its contract with SANE to provide the SANELINE service in 2004–05; and for what reason the decision was taken. [221993]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not consider that it withheld payments from SANE in respect of the contract for the SANELINE service. The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two year contract for the SANELINE service. The contract came to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional payments because it alleges

that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of whether his Department has fulfilled the undertakings and requirements of the compact on relations between government and the voluntary and community sector in its relations with SANE. [221994]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two year contract for the SANELINE service. The contract came to an end on 31 March, 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

The Department is fully committed to consolidating and developing partnership working with the voluntary and community sector and to supporting the COMPACT agreement.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department agreed a resolution on the partnership between the Department and SANE. [222686]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two-year contract for the SANELINE service. The contract comes to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what disagreements regarding grant funding remain outstanding between his Department and SANE. [222711]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the contract for the SANELINE service. The contract came to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when his Department will pay the interest owed to SANE on its contract to provide the SANELINE service. [222664]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has paid SANE £2 million in respect of the contract for the SANELINE service. The contract comes to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what reasons he is proposing not to renew funding for SANELINE. [222666]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has paid SANE a total of £2 million in respect of the two-year contract for SANELINE service. The contract comes to an end on 31 March 2005. SANE is seeking additional unqualified payments because it alleges that some of the payments were delayed. The Department will continue to seek to resolve this matter with SANE. SANE is eligible to apply for Government funding streams aimed at the voluntary and community sector.

Sir Derek Wanless

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when *(a)* he, *(b)* other Ministers in his Department and *(c)* officials in his Department last met Sir Derek Wanless. [224038]

Ms Rosie Winterton: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health, last met Sir Derek Wanless on 12 November 2003. My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Public Health (Miss Melanie Johnson) met him on 12 December 2004. Officials have met Sir Derek on numerous occasions in the course of his work on public health and in relation to the "Choosing Health" White Paper.

Speech/Occupational Therapists

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* speech therapists and *(b)* occupational therapists have been employed by the NHS in Hampshire in each of the past 10 years. [224727]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

National health service hospital and community health services: Qualified occupational therapy staff and qualified speech and language therapy staff within Hampshire and Isle of Wight strategic health authority area

As at 30 September each year	Qualified occupational therapy staff	Headcount Qualified speech and language therapy staff
1995	346	128
1996	355	127
1997	340	129
1998	312	128
1999	354	138
2000	361	143
2001	413	145
2002	436	185
2003	478	190
2004	490	196

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 7 April 2005

WALES

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223435]

Mr. Hain: Resource and capital departmental expenditure limit (DEL) budgets beyond 2007–08 will, as normal, be determined in future spending reviews.

Public Transport (Disabled Access)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Secretary for Transport on disabled access on Welsh public transport. [224100]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with Assembly Ministers on matters affecting Wales. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 transport providers must take reasonable steps to remove physical barriers, to make their services accessible. As part of the Assembly's longer distance bus and coach strategy a number of long-distance routes now operate accessible buses, as do many local services: buses with poor accessibility are to be phased out by 2017, and rail vehicles by 2020.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"Millennium Ecosystem Assessment"

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department of the study, "Millennium Ecosystem Assessment", published by the United Nations and the World Bank on 30 March; what plans he has to liaise with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on the impact of the report on the implementation of climate change and sustainable development strategies; and if he will make a statement. [224695]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) welcomes the launch of "Millennium Ecosystem Assessment" (MA). The report provides a useful and comprehensive overview of recent trends in ecosystem function. The detailed findings of the MA will further strengthen the evidence base for addressing the linkages between poverty and environment. This includes specific consideration of the role of ecosystems in supporting the livelihoods of the poor and the implications of changes in ecosystem function for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

DFID officials have reviewed the main findings of the MA Synthesis Report. They welcome the MA's detailed overview of the status of ecosystems and the consideration of change under different scenarios. DFID's interests primarily relate to policies and actions that respond to environmental challenges while bringing financial and livelihood benefits to the poor. The MA responses of particular interest to DFID include those on: strengthening the integration of environmental considerations in development co-operation; developing markets and economic based incentives for more sustainable ecosystem use; and the research and application of appropriate technologies. This will support development and improvement of tools to better integrate environmental considerations into development co-operation. DFID is already active in many of these areas, for example in taking forward our commitments to support developing countries to integrate environmental considerations into Poverty Reduction Strategies; and work on payment for ecosystem services.

DFID will encourage the agencies involved in commissioning the report, including the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Secretariats of the Conventions (in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change), to use the MA's analyses and results to inform their policy and implementation work.

DFID maintains strong working relationships with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, especially in the areas of climate change, biodiversity and sustainable development. DFID officials will continue to work closely with DEFRA on these issues, taking account of the relevant findings of the MA.

Aid Suspension

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development in relation to which countries the UK has suspended aid in the past four years; and what the reasons were in each case. [224693]

Hilary Benn: The only instance since 2001–02 where the UK has suspended its bilateral aid programme is in Zimbabwe. DFID, in line with most other donors, suspended traditional development assistance programmes in late 2001 because of the poor policies of the Government and their unwillingness to engage constructively with the international community on crucial issues of political and economic governance. Our assistance has been confined to humanitarian assistance and support for civil society and United Nations programmes to tackle HIV and AIDS.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223442]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Iraq

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many attacks there have been on British forces in Iraq in each month since April 2003. [210612]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2005]:* I have been asked to reply.

The best data available giving the breakdown of attacks against UK forces are set out in the table:

Year/Month	*Troops*	*Infrastructure*	*Total*
2003			
Jun	5	0	5
Jul	3	1	4
Aug	18	3	21
Sep	8	0	8
Oct	21	4	25
Nov	9	0	9
2004			
Dec	19	1	20
Jan	6	2	8
Feb	10	2	12
Mar	18	2	20
Apr	55	41	96
May	88	91	182
Jun	31	40	71
Jul	7	18	25
Aug	109	316	425
Sep	42	34	76
Oct	22	17	39
Nov	8	8	16
Dec	6	9	15
2005			
Jan	13	7	20
Feb	3	0	3
Mar	1	0	1

Consolidated data are not available for April and May 2003.

Tuberculosis

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the outcome of his Department's work with the World Health Organisation on the launch of the Global Tuberculosis Control Report. [224809]

Hilary Benn: The Global Tuberculosis Control Report was launched on 23 March by the Director General of the World Health Organisation at a press briefing in London co-hosted by DFID. The Report for 2005 says that global Tuberculosis (TB) prevalence has declined by more than 20 per cent. since 1990 and that incidence is now falling or stable in five of the six regions of the world. The exception is Africa, where TB is one of the most common illnesses among people with AIDS. TB incidence has tripled since 1990 in countries with high HIV prevalence and are still rising across the continent at a rate of 3–4 per cent. annually.

DFID supports bilateral TB programmes in some countries and sector support in others. On 23 March, DFID also pledged £5 million over the next three years to the Stop TB partnership, this will provide technical support to expand TB programmes in recipient countries. The UK will work through our presidencies of the G8, and the EU to secure the international commitment needed to scale up TB control. DFID has commenced a consultation on TB with NGOs, academic institutions and others with expertise on how the UK can best do this.

World Bank

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the World Bank projects and programmes which his Department is co-financing relating to *(a)* privatisation, *(b)* public sector restructuring and *(c)* agricultural liberalisation in (i) Mozambique, (ii) Uganda, (iii) Ghana, (iv) Tanzania, (v) India, (vi) Jamaica and (vii) Kyrgyzstan. [224692]

Hilary Benn: DFID is currently co-financing with the World Bank the following projects/programmes in the areas of privatisation, public sector restructuring and agricultural liberalisation:

Country	*Project/Programme title*
Ghana	Land Administration Project
Ghana	Multi-Donor Budget Support Programme
Ghana	Support to Government of Ghana Private Sector Development Strategy and Trade Programme
India	Andhra Pradesh Economic and Public Sector Reform Project
Jamaica	No projects/programmes currently being co-financed
Kyrgyzstan	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project
Mozambique	Reform of the Public Service
Mozambique	Support to Reforms in Public Expenditure Management
Tanzania	Selective Accelerated Salary Enhancement Project
Tanzania	Integrated Support to the Public Service Reform Programme
Tanzania	Commission for Parastatal Sector Reform
Uganda	Decentralisation Support Programme

TRANSPORT

A3 (Hindhead)

Virginia Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the need for improvements to the A3 at Hindhead. [224954]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency gave a full assessment of the need for improvements to the A3 at Hindhead to the recent public inquiry into the published proposals for the scheme. The Inspector's Report is expected later this year.

Operation Stack

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the economic effects on *(a)* the road haulage industry and *(b)* the Kent economy of the implementations of Operation Stack on the M20 between 17 March 2004 and 17 March 2005; [224455]

(2) what representations he has received on the effects of Operation Stack on the M20; and if he will make a statement. [224456]

Mr. Jamieson: No economic assessment of the effects of Operation Stack between 17 March 2004 and 17 March 2005 on either the road haulage industry or the Kent economy has been undertaken by the Department or the Highways Agency.

The Department and the Highways Agency have received a number of representations from local residents, the Road Haulage Association, the Freight Transport Association and hon. Members, expressing their concerns about the impact of Operation Stack on the M20 and the local road network.

The Highways Agency is currently considering what alternative arrangements might be possible, both in the short and longer term, to reduce the delay for travellers.

PRIME MINISTER

Ministerial Visits

David Burnside: To ask the Prime Minister what plans he has to visit the Province during the period between the dissolution of Parliament and the date of the next general election. [224817]

The Prime Minister: For security reasons, my future engagements are announced as and when appropriate.

UK Trade

Mr. Brady: To ask the Prime Minister what discussions he has had with the EU Trade Commissioner since his appointment relating to *(a)* trade policy and *(b)* UK domestic policy; what the dates were of each meeting and who was present at each. [224896]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Stroud (Mr. Drew) on 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 93–94W.

Nagasaki

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister when he received a letter from Sakve Shimohira on behalf of the Association for the Bereaved Families of the Atomic Bomb Dead in Nagasaki; and what response he has made. [221735].

The Prime Minister: *[pursuant to his answer, 21 March, Offical Report, c. 569W]:* I have received a letter in the form of a petition. I have asked the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to reply to the organisation via my hon. Friend the Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llew Smith).

TREASURY

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many civil servants in his Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223901]

Mr. Boateng: The Departments for which the Chancellor is responsible, including HM Treasury, HM Revenue and Customs and Office of National Statistics, have a target to relocate 5,050 posts out of London and the South East by 2010. HM Revenue and Customs will contribute over 80 per cent. towards this target.

In 2004–05, HM Revenue and Customs relocated 249 posts mainly to Cardiff, Bournemouth and Truro, and Office of National Statistics 12 posts to Newport.

Crown Estate

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate has raised from rents levied on salmon farmers in *(a)* Orkney and *(b)* Shetland in each of the last 10 years. [224944]

Mr. Timms: The information is as follows:

£000

Financial year	*Orkney rent*	*Shetland rent*	*Total*
1996	46	435	481
1997	53	488	540
1998	33	280	313
1999	81	790	872
2000	112	725	837
2001	121	800	921
2002	138	748	886
2003	33	350	384
2004	67	586	653

Note:
Figures for the financial year ending 31 March 2005 are not yet available.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate has raised from charges levied on marinas and piers in Orkney and Shetland in each of the last 10 years. [224945]

Mr. Timms: The information requested is not available.

Customs and Excise (Droitwich Spa)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether payment of excess fares to staff currently employed at the Customs and Excise office in Droitwich Spa and who are transferred to other offices will be subject to income tax. [224520]

Dawn Primarolo: The excess fares allowance (EFA) is designed to assist with the additional travelling costs staff incur when they are transferred to another workplace at public expense. The allowance is taxable and staff are personally liable for the tax. The Department will not gross up the allowance for tax since EFA payments assist staff with their personal liability: that is, their journey to and from their place of work.

EU Regulations

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) pursuant to his oral statement of 16 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 262, that half of major new regulations are from the European Union, on

what data this assessment was based; and if he will make a statement on the new guidelines for the implementation of EU law in the UK; [224994]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* regulations and *(b)* the cost of regulation was accounted for by legislation wholly or partly implementing EU legislation in the last 10 years, according to (i) regulatory impact assessments carried out by the UK Government and (ii) assessments carried out by institutions of the European Union. [224995]

Mr. Timms: The Cabinet Office's Regulatory Impact Unit, who monitor compliance with the Regulatory Impact Assessment Process, estimate that around half of all new legislation with a significant impact on business, charities and the voluntary sector emanates from the EU.

From the beginning of 2005, the European Commission is submitting all legislation in its work programme to an impact assessment. Furthermore, under the UK Presidency of the European Union, the European Commission will launch pilots in order to develop a common methodology for the measurement of the administrative burden associated with new and existing EU laws. These initiatives should allow such impacts to be more accurately measured in the future.

With regards to the new guidelines for implementation of EU law in the UK, I would refer the hon. Member to paragraph 3.25 in Budget 2005, a copy of which can be found in the House of Commons Library and on the HM Treasury website.

Financial Ombudsman Service

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will require pensions advisers to comply with compensation assessment findings by the Financial Ombudsman Service; and if he will make a statement. [224947]

Mr. Timms: Under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, all authorised firms and persons are required to comply with the decisions of the Financial Ombudsman Service. Under the Act, if the complainant notifies the ombudsman that he accepts the determination, it is binding on the respondent and the complainant and is final.

Iraq

Annabelle Ewing: To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he had a role in the *(a)* framing, *(b)* drafting and *(c)* drawing up of the answer given by the Attorney-General on 17 March 2003 on Iraq.[218596]

Mr. Timms: The Chancellor of the Exchequer had no role in framing, drafting or drawing up the answer.

MOD Land (Purchases)

Mr. Luff: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to buy the site of the Army Medal Office, Ordnance Survey Office and Customs and Excise Office from the Ministry of Defence. [224568]

Dawn Primarolo: HM Customs and Excise have a strategy to concentrate non-location specific work such as the majority of work carried out in the Droitwich into principal office sites. In the West Midlands these are located in Birmingham and Wolverhampton. The formation of HM Revenue and Customs requires savings to be made on accommodation costs, to achieve this Customs are seeking to maximise use of their existing accommodation at these principal offices.

Mortgages

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the current average outstanding balance on mortgages for homes in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Yorkshire and *(c)* York; what the typical month's interest payable on each of those balances was at the latest date for which figures are available; and what estimate he has made of what the interest on each balance would have been (i) in May 1997 and (ii) immediately after the pound fell out of the exchange rate mechanism in 1992. [224812]

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent estimate he has made of the average size of mortgages in *(a)* Bassetlaw and *(b)* the East Midlands. [225027]

Mr. Timms: An approximate estimate for the current UK average outstanding mortgage balance is £77,000, based on Bank of England and Council of Mortgage Lenders' data. No geographic breakdowns of the data are provided. The average mortgage interest rate, based on National Statistics data, was 5.2 per cent. in January 2005, 6.7 per cent. in May 1997 and 10.6 per cent. in September 1992.

National Insurance

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many telephone calls have been made by officials in his Department to persons concerning deficiencies in their national insurance contribution records in each of the past five calendar years; and what advice was tendered by officials to persons in this position. [224935]

Mr. Timms: Deficiency notices are issued to individuals with a gap in their national insurance contributions record. The notice gives them the opportunity to query their record or to pay voluntary contributions to make up the record. Individuals can ring a dedicated helpline for information to enable them to decide what to do. They will only receive a telephone call if they ask to be rung back. No records are kept of the calls made.

No. 11 Downing Street (Entertaining)

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the individuals who were entertained at 11 Downing street in 2004. [223764]

Mr. Timms: A wide range of individuals and organisations attend official functions at No. 11 Downing street. All such functions are held in accordance with the provisions of the Ministerial Code.

Patient Numbers (Southend)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions the Office for National Statistics has had with Southend primary care trust on the number of patients registered in Southend. [224918]

Mr. Timms: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician. I have asked him to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 7 April 2005:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what discussions the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has had with Southend Primary Care Trust on the number of patients registered in Southend. (224918)

ONS has not had any discussions with Southend Primary Care Trust regarding the number of patients registered in Southend. ONS have had several meetings with representatives of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council since Southend-on-Sea was one of the areas that was selected for study as part of the 2004 Local Authority Studies. These studies were carried out to improve population estimates in the areas that proved hardest to count in the 2001 Census in England and Wales. The results of these studies showed that better estimates of the population could be made in 15 areas, however for the great majority of areas, including Southend-on-Sea, the previously published 2001 Census based population estimate remains the best estimate of the population.

As part of these studies ONS reviewed the evidence for all 376 Local Authorities to identify where population estimates may have been at risk. Patient registers were one of several administrative data sources that were used as part of the process to select areas for study.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council have provided analysis to ONS which includes comparisons between the number of patients registered with a doctor in Southend-on-Sea and the population estimates. We would not expect these two data sources to be the same since patient registers are not designed to measure population.

Pensioner Households (Additional Payments)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 706W, on Northern Ireland, what the duration in Northern Ireland will be of the additional £200 payment to over-65 pensioner ratepayer households equivalent to that in Great Britain. [224175]

Mr. Timms: The one-off additional payment of £200 to be paid to council tax (or rate) paying households with someone aged 65 and over announced in Budget 2005 will be made alongside the 2005 winter fuel payments in Great Britain, i.e. before the end of December 2005.

Northern Ireland Ministers will be introducing similar arrangements to those being introduced in Great Britain. The details are matters for Northern Ireland Ministers.

Rateable Values (Stables)

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the system of assessing rateable values of properties with stables where the stables are used entirely for non-commercial gain. [224875]

Mr. Timms: No such assessment has been undertaken.

Tax Credit

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the tax credit case of Simone Farrell of Bircotes in Bassetlaw constituency to be resolved. [225025]

John Healey: I understand that the Tax Credit Office advised the hon. Member earlier today that they would be writing to his constituent about this matter very shortly.

Taxes and Benefits

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the average effect of taxes and benefits in *(a)* 1979, *(b)* 1997, *(c)* the current financial year and *(d)* five years' time on each decile of (i) individuals and (ii) household incomes for (A) pensions and (B) families with children. [225022]

John Healey: The detailed analysis requested cannot be undertaken in the time available before Parliament is Prorogued later today.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Burmese Teak

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what policy direction she has given to lottery distributors regarding the use of Burmese teak. [224767]

Estelle Morris: I have issued no such policy direction. The policy directions issued to the lottery distributors set out the framework for the wider aims of lottery funding, and do not specify detailed criteria.

The directions do include the need for the distributing bodies to further the objectives of sustainable development when awarding lottery grants. The lottery distributing bodies are strongly committed to sustainable development, including the procurement of timber from legal and sustainable sources.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the use of Burmese teak in the Lottery-funded restoration of HMS Warrior; and what assessment she has made of whether importing Burmese teak for such use is in line with Government policy regarding trade with Burma. [224768]

Estelle Morris: In December 2000, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) awarded a grant of £725,000 to the Warrior Preservation Trust for the restoration of HMS Warrior, the Royal Navy's first ironclad and the most revolutionary warship of her age. The award was conditional upon the trust satisfying HLF that the teak came from a sustainable source.

The Heritage Lottery Fund agreed new guidance on timber procurement in January 2005. Under this guidance, all timber used on HLF-funded projects must be obtained from verifiable legal sources. The preference must always be for HLF grant recipients to use timber that can be shown to have been obtained from sustainably managed forests. The guidance has been developed with the assistance of the UK Government's 'Central Point of Expertise on Timber' (CPET). Although there is no ban on companies trading with Burma, the Government does not encourage trade and investment with that country; neither does it give financial support to promote trade missions there.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for her Department is for 2011–12. [223429]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Timms) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Drinks Industry

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list meetings her Department has had with representatives of the drinks, licensing and public house industries in the last 12 months, broken down by *(a)* date and *(b)* attendees; and whether civil servants were present at the meetings to record what occurred. [209544]

Mr. Caborn: I regret that it has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Droitwich Spa Lido

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on proposals to list the Droitwich Spa Lido building. [224882]

Mr. Caborn: The most recent application to list this building has been assessed by English Heritage, the Secretary of State's statutory advisors on listing matters. English Heritage's advice has now been sent to the Department and officials are considering this advice prior to advising Ministers. This building was previously assessed in 2002 and the decision taken then was that the building was not of sufficient architectural merit to warrant being listed.

Film Piracy

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to tackle film piracy. [224655]

Estelle Morris: Together with Lord Sainsbury, Minister for Science and Innovation at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), I chair the Creative Industries Forum on Intellectual Property. The forum has been exploring the issue of piracy as it affects all the creative industries. The forum's members include Government Departments and representatives from the creative industries sectors, including the UK Film Council, the Government's strategic agency for film. The threat of piracy to the film industry was outlined in the UK Film Council's report "Film Theft in the UK", published in December 2004 and these findings have been fed into the work of the forum.

We expect the forum to make final recommendations later this year. The Government will consider these and make a detailed response in due course.

Public Service Agreements

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what recent assessment she has made of whether the public service agreement target to halt the rise in obesity among children aged under 11 by 2010 will be met. [219971]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my hon. Friend the Minister for Public Health (Miss Johnson) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1101W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Antisocial Behaviour

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how long it took for a case for a breach of an antisocial behaviour order to appear before the courts in the last period for which figures are available; what the sentencing guidelines are in such cases; and what sentences have been imposed by the courts for breaches of such orders. [224898]

Mr. Lammy: Data is not collected on the time it takes for breach of an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO) to be brought before the court.

Breach of an ASBO carries a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment and/or a maximum £5,000 fine in the magistrates courts and a maximum five years imprisonment and/or a fine in the Crown court. The maximum sentence the Youth Court can impose is a 2-year detention and training order. Guidance on how to deal with a breach is set out in the "Magistrates' Courts Sentencing Guidelines" produced by the Magistrates' Association. These give a starting point guideline of custody based on a first time adult offender pleading not guilty. They also list examples of possible aggravating factors. When dealing with a child or young person, the court is required to have regard to his or her welfare.

Data on the sentences imposed by the courts for breach of ASBO is available for the period June 2000 to December 2003. It shows that 55 per cent. of defendants who breached their ASBO received a custodial sentence, 27 per cent. received a community penalty, 9 per cent. received a fine, 3 per cent. received a discharge and 6 per cent. received some other sentence.

Discipline Policy

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if the Lord Chancellor will discipline or dismiss Mr. Philip Bassett for his use of foul and abusive language to BBC employees when present with the Lord Chancellor in an official capacity in BBC studios on the morning of 21 March. [224837]

Mr. Lammy: No and No. Following the interview in the BBC studios on 21 March Mr. Bassett sent a letter of explanation to the editor of the Today programme and apologised unreservedly. No further action is contemplated.

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what his Department's policy is on the use of foul and abusive language by its employees when dealing with third parties. [224838]

Mr. Lammy: My Department conduct policy identifies offensive language as one example of inappropriate behaviour. Serious cases, or repeated incidences of minor misconduct, would result in formal action. Line managers are encouraged in the first instance to resolve issues of minor misconduct informally.

Judicial Officers

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time judicial officers were in post in each year since 1975, broken down by gender. [224775]

Mr. Lammy: Figures detailing the numbers in post across the full range of judicial offices for 1975–87 are not easily available in any complete form. It is important to note that the figures provided are not necessarily complete and reflect only those that are available or were collected.

The number of judicial officers that were in post between 1987–92 is detailed in tables A (full time) and B (part time). Gender breakdown for this period has not been given because it is not available. These figures include the Tribunal posts known about.

The numbers of judicial officers who were in post 1993–2004 are detailed in tables C (i) and (ii) for full time officers and D (i) and (ii) for part time officers) and are broken down by gender. The figures for the years 1993–98 do not include Tribunal offices as these are incomplete and unobtainable in this timescale or without disproportionate cost.

The figures for 1999–2004, include tribunal posts and come from the DCA's judicial database and reflect the information held regarding those posts, at the time of obtaining the statistics.

Between 1999–2004 there were a number of Tribunal officers in post who cannot be verified by the judicial database as full or part time. These figures are detailed in table E and are not included in tables C or D.

In post figures for the Lay Magistracy between 1988–2004 can be found at table F. Figures are not available for the years 1987 and 1989. Until 2001 the figures were compiled on a calendar year basis, after which they were compiled on a financial year basis. All figures include the Duchy of Lancaster.

Table A: Full time judicial officers in post 1987–92, including figures for the Tribunal posts known about

	Total
1987	875
1988	900.5
1989	921
1990	910
1991	975
1992	1,044

Table B: Part time judicial officers in post 1987–92, including figures for the Tribunal posts known about

	Total
1987	2,224
1988	2,206
1989	2,422
1990	2,429
1991	2,630
1992	2,621

Table C (i): Full time judicial officers in post 1993–98, excluding Tribunal posts (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1993	919	59	978
1994	962	75	1,037
1995	993	83	1,076
1996	1,042	87	1,129
1997	1,037	91	1,128
1998	1,078	109	1,187

Table C (ii): Full time judicial officers in post 1999–2004, including Tribunal posts (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1999	1,307	172	1,479
2000	1,328	205	1,533
2001	1,357	217	1,574
2002	1,392	240	1,632
2003	1,463	266	1,729
2004	1,482	287	1,769

Table D (i): Part time judicial officers in post 1993–98, excluding Tribunal posts (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1993	1,811	178	1,989
1994	1,794	186	1,980
1995	1,762	204	1,966
1996	1,734	201	1,935
1997	1,739	200	1,939
1998	1,871	250	2,121

Table D (ii): Part time judicial officers in post 1999–2004, including Tribunal posts (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1999	5,077	1,526	6,603
2000	4,693	1,307	6,000
2001	4,824	1,386	6,210
2002	5,068	1,608	6,676
2003	5,287	1,992	7,279
2004	5,437	2,068	7,505

Table E: Number of Tribunal officers in post 1999–2004, but not shown as full time or part time on the Judicial database (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1999	195	53	248
2000	597	341	938
2001	537	325	862
2002	511	317	828
2003	242	80	322
2004	284	97	381

Table F: Lay magistrates in post 1988–2004 (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1988	15,992	11,934	27,926
1989	n/a	n/a	0
1990	16,090	12,577	28,667
1991	16,098	12964	29062

Table F: Lay magistrates in post 1988–2004 (broken down by gender)

	Male	Female	Total
1992	16,105	13,336	29,441
1993	16,087	13,599	29,686
1994	16,151	13,903	30,054
1995	16,045	14,043	30,088
1996	15,951	14,375	30,326
1997	15,858	14,516	30,374
1998	15,713	14,648	30,361
1999	15,561	14,699	30,260
2000	15,544	14,764	30,308
2001	14,639	14,096	28,735
2002	14,498	13,981	28,479
2003	14,392	13,952	28,344
2004	14,555	14,150	28,705

Overseas Citizens

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will estimate the proportions of eligible UK citizens resident overseas who have not registered to vote, broken down by *(a)* service personnel and *(b)* civilians. [224953]

Mr. Lammy: The information is not collected. British citizens resident overseas are entitled to apply to be included on the overseas electors' list. This is not compulsory, however, and electoral registration officers are not required to obtain or record the proportion of eligible British citizens previously resident in the electoral area for which they are responsible who do not register as overseas voters. It is not possible to identify separately those overseas electors who may also be service personnel. According to the Office for National Statistics the number of British citizens included on the overseas electors' list in December 2004 was 9,672.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Civilian Trials (Armed Forces)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Solicitor-General if the Attorney-General will review the application of the double jeopardy rule as it relates to soldiers going to trial in the civilian courts having lost the opportunity of a court martial on the grounds that the commanding officer found there was no case to answer. [224461]

The Solicitor-General: The double jeopardy rule applies to soldiers in the same way as it does to defendants in the civilian courts. The Attorney-General will not review the application of the double jeopardy rule as it relates to soldiers going to trial in the civilian courts.

For the doctrine of autrefois convict/acquit to apply the defendant must stand for a second time "in jeopardy". "Jeopardy" means a real risk or danger of punishment following conviction. In cases transferred to the civilian system from the military the doctrine of autrefois convict/acquit will apply as in any other case.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to her oral answer of 24 March, in what circumstances it would be appropriate to bring to trial a serving soldier in the civilian courts. [224462]

The Solicitor-General: The vast majority of offences committed by Army personnel are dealt with by courts martial, following investigation by the military police. In some cases both in the UK and abroad there is concurrent jurisdiction. Often, the most appropriate jurisdiction is for the case to proceed in the military system. When considering the appropriate jurisdiction for trial the various considerations will be taken into account such as where the offence was allegedly committed in operational circumstances; whether there are other charges which can only be preferred under military law; witness availability; whether the alleged victim is military or civilian; whether the soldiers committed offences with civilians who are not subject to military law.

This is not an exhaustive nor cumulative list but an example of the type of considerations that will apply in deciding when it would be appropriate to bring to trial a serving soldier in the civilian courts.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Solicitor-General, when will she reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North of 24 January concerning a constituent, reference ULS/8/05 [224786]

The Solicitor-General: I have no record of receiving the hon. Member's letter dated 24 January. However, I will write to him to advise him of the outcome of the case about which I wrote to him on 24 January.

Crown Prosecution Service

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what the cost of staffing the Crown Prosecution Service was in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend in each year since 1997. [222488]

The Solicitor-General: The figures given in the following table include the staff in the trials unit preparing papers for prosecutions in the Crown court, as well as staff allocated to prosecutions in magistrates court, and staff engaged in administrative support and management.

Total staff payroll costs for Essex

	£
1997–98	2,680,184
1998–99	2,866,935
1999–2000	3,005,097
2000–01	3,169,339
2001–02	3,818,204
2002–03	4,392,303
2003–04	4,912,280
2004 (To date)	4,924,402

Southend Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) restructured following the implementation of the Glidewell Project in 2000. This resulted in transfer of staff from Chelmsford's main office, to the co-located Criminal Justice Units shared with Essex Police, and is reflected in a discontinuity in payroll figures for periods before and after the date of re-structuring.

Total staff payroll costs for Southend CJU

	£
1997–98	455,631
1998–99	487,379
1999–2000	482,907
2000–01	494,527
2001–02	439,249
2002–03	619,278
2003–04	656,845
2004 (To date)	524,390

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans she has to make the activities of the Crown Prosecution Service more transparent when considering a prosecution. [219434]

The Solicitor-General: The Code for Crown Prosecutors, which sets out the guidance for prosecutors, is a publicly available document issued by the Director of Public Prosecutions. Detailed legal guidance that underpins the Code is available on the Crown Prosecution Service's website.

The Crown Prosecution Service now routinely explains to victims its decisions to discontinue or down grade the charges.

The Crown Prosecution Service explains its role to communities at both local and national levels and consults on the development of its prosecution policies, in particular in the areas of domestic violence, race crime, homophobic crime and the prosecution of rape offences.

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate inspects and reports on CPS Areas and thematic issues. The Crown Prosecution Service produces an Annual Report.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General (1) how many *(a)* domestic violence, *(b)* vehicle theft, *(c)* assault, *(d)* youth crime, *(e)* violence against the person, *(f)* violent crime and *(g)* sexual offence cases the Crown Prosecution Service has brought in (i) Essex and (ii) England and Wales in each year since 1997; and how many of these resulted in (A) conviction and (B) acquittal; [210456]

(2) how many cases have been referred to the Crown Prosecution Service relating to graffiti in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* England and Wales in each year since 1997; and how many resulted in (i) conviction and (ii) acquittal; [216356]

(3) how many prosecutions there have been in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend for (i) possession of and (ii) dealing in each category of drug in each year since 1997; [219435]

(4) what criteria the Crown Prosecution Service uses in making decisions on whether or not to prosecute when a person is found dead under suspicious circumstances; [222477]

(5) how many objections have been lodged against lenient sentences in all categories of convictions in each year since 1997; and how many of those were successfully upheld in each year; [222474]

(6) pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1639W, on mobile phone offences, what the cost to public funds was of prosecutions since February 2004; and if she will make a statement; [222425]

(7) how many objections have been lodged against lenient sentences in all categories of convictions of police officers in each year since 1997; and how many of these in each year were successfully upheld. [222473]

The Solicitor-General: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Solicitor-General whether she has issued written instructions to override her Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221114]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 79W.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Solicitor-General what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for the Law Officers' Department is for 2011–12. [223436]

The Solicitor-General: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Legal Advice (Iraq)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Solicitor-General on how many occasions since 1997 law officers' advice had been presented to the Cabinet orally, prior to the Attorney-General's oral presentation to the Cabinet of his advice on the legality of the war in Iraq. [224712]

The Solicitor-General: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Lenient Sentences

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General, how many unduly lenient sentences for crimes committed by serving police officers have been referred to the Court of Appeal in *(a)* England, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* Southend in each of the last five years; and how many appeals have been upheld in each of those years. [224921]

The Solicitor-General: Records are kept by the Legal Secretariat to the Law Officers on the cases referred to Law Officers by prosecution agencies and those brought to the attention of Law Officers by direct correspondence. Records kept in the present form commenced in 2002.

Records are not organised by offenders' employment. Therefore, it is not possible to identify with certainty the number of references for the period when records commenced involving serving police officers.

Some data has been obtained by searching for references which contain the words "serving police officer". The following data was obtained:

2002—One case referred to the Court of Appeal which concerned a retired Metropolitan police officer. The sentence was unchanged.

2003—One case referred to the Court of Appeal which concerned a Kent police officer. The sentence was increased.

2004—Two cases were received by the Law Officers which involved police officers. The first concerned a retired Yorkshire constabulary officer. This was referred to the Court of Appeal which concluded the sentence was not unduly lenient. The second concerned a retired Metropolitan police officer. This was not referred to the Court of Appeal.

2005—One case has been received by the Law Officers which involved two serving police officers from the Surrey Constabulary. It was not referred to the Court of Appeal.

Ministerial Visits

Keith Vaz: To ask the Solicitor-General how many EU countries the Attorney-General has visited since his appointment. [220091]

The Solicitor-General: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

National Intelligence Database

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Solicitor-General what procedures *(a)* Government Departments and agencies and *(b)* local authorities with independent prosecuting authority for particular criminal offences use to forward details of convictions, cautions and intelligence on possible criminals to (i) the Criminal Records Bureau and (ii) the Police National Computer; what amendments to these procedures are proposed in relation to the National Intelligence Database; and if she will make a statement. [223002]

The Solicitor-General: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available for Prorogation.

Offences (Statutory Charging)

Mr. Amess: To ask the Solicitor-General pursuant to her answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1637W, on Crown Prosecution Service (Essex Pilot), how many offences have been brought to justice through statutory charging in each of the areas where statutory charging is in operation. [222418]

The Solicitor-General: Between 17 May 2004 and 9 November 2004, statutory charging became operational in 14 police/CPS Areas. The number of cases which received early advice and charging decisions, and were finalised as convictions in each area since the area's implementation of statutory charging are as follows:

	Number
Avon and Somerset	2,721
Cleveland	1,881
Greater Manchester	4,194
Humberside	2,144
Kent	3,056
Lancashire	4,844
London	4,837
Merseyside	1,829
Northumbria	3,544
Nottinghamshire	2,721
South Yorkshire	2,671
Thames Valley	1,809
West Midlands	2,460
West Yorkshire	7,952
Total (all 14 areas)	46,663

Rape/Sexual Assault

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General what research the law officers have *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the reasons for the attrition rate in rape prosecutions. [215578]

The Solicitor-General: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General what plans she has to ask the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate further to investigate the way in which rape is prosecuted in England and Wales. [215579]

The Solicitor-General: The Criminal Justice Chief Inspectors' Group intend to include a follow-up to the joint inspection of "Investigation and Prosecution of Cases Involving Allegations of Rape" (the report of which was published by HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary in April 2002) in its programme for 2005–06. Details of the programme have not been finalised, it is likely to be in the second half of the year.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Crosby in each of the last five years. [223885]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent in legal fees by the Adult Learning Inspectorate in contesting the unfair dismissal and sex discrimination cases brought by Mrs Lesley Virr; and who authorised this expenditure. [224744]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much the Adult Learning Inspectorate spent on legal fees in the 12 months to 31 March. [224747]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Child Care (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places have been created in York since 1997. [224648]

Margaret Hodge: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Child Protection

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action she is taking to address the issues raised by Operation Paladin Child. [224343]

Margaret Hodge: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the proposed replacement of child protection measures with the integrated children's system. [224344]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 5 April 2005]:* The Integrated Children's System (ICS) has been designed to enable social services and partner agencies to achieve better outcomes for children in need.

In the longer term, as the ICS becomes widely used, its supporting IT system will enable child protection and other children's services staff to identify children on the system who have been the subject of enquiries into whether they are at risk of suffering, or have suffered, significant harm; have been the subject of a child protection conference; or who are the subject of a child protection plan.

Once the system is developed and operating, there will no longer be a need for local authorities to maintain a Child Protection Register separate from or additional to the Integrated Children's System. No date has yet been identified for this change to be completed.

Children at Risk

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of procedures aimed at protecting children at risk when they move between England and Wales. [224951]

Margaret Hodge: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many civil servants in her Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223900]

Derek Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Community Family Trusts

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when she expects to make an announcement concerning community family trusts grant programmes. [224836]

Margaret Hodge: We have not completed our consideration of applications under the Strengthening Families grant programme. Applications from organisations meeting the criteria for Strategic, ongoing MARS and FSG commitments (which include Family Matters York, Poole Community Family Trust, Somerset Family Partnerships and Totnes Community Family Trust) or Infrastructure/Change Up awards have been decided.

However, other applications, including others from the Community Family Trusts will be decided later in the summer.

Deaf Students

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has commissioned on academic achievements of deaf and hard of hearing pupils in *(a)* mainstream schools and *(b)* special schools and units. [224925]

Margaret Hodge: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what research she has commissioned on the effects of matching teaching methods to the degree of deafness on the academic achievements of deaf and hard of hearing pupils. [224926]

Margaret Hodge: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for her Department is for 2011–12. [223444]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170 W.

Education Funding

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the capital funding was for *(a)* sixth form colleges and *(b)* further education colleges in (i) the London borough of Southwark, (ii) Greater London and (iii) England in each of the last five years. [224746]

Dr. Howells: The Department allocates funds for education and training in the post-16 learning and skills sector to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), including capital investment. Consequently the Department does not collect or hold the information requested.

Mark Haysom, the Learning and Skills Council's chief executive will write to the hon. Member with details of what the capital funding was for *(a)* sixth

form colleges and *(b)* further education colleges in (i) the London borough of Southwark, (ii) Greater London and (ii) England in each of the last five years. A copy of the letter will be placed in the House Library.

Energy Consumption

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will list the private finance initiative contracts which *(a)* her Department and *(b)* local education authorities advertised in 2004, indicating in each case whether the output specification included *(a)* clauses specifically relating to energy consumption and energy efficiency, *(b)* a requirement for relevant equipment being purchased to be on the Government's energy technology list, *(c)* a requirement to use whole life costing to assess energy costs for any new building or major refurbishments and *(d)* a requirement that new buildings or major refurbishments would be constructed to a specific energy standard; and what standard was specified in each case. [221884]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* The Department for Education and Skills itself is not a party to any private finance initiative (PFI) contracts and therefore does not advertise such contracts. PFI projects for the provision of schools are delivered through contracts between local authorities and private sector contractors and these contracts are advertised in the "Official Journal of the European Union".

The Department does not hold details of the exact energy requirements in the output specification linked to each contract. However, the Department's policy is to support the efficient use of energy in schools buildings and it expects schools PFI projects to follow departmental guidance on energy efficiency. Most output specifications quote the Department's own standard (Building Bulletin 87 "Guidelines for Environmental Design in Schools", 2nd Edition Version 1 (May 2003), which is downloadable from www.teach ernet.gov.uk/energy.) This standard complies with Part L2 ("Conservation of Fuel and Power") of the Building Regulations.

There are a total of 109 schools PFI projects either signed or in negotiation in 88 different local authorities. Details of these projects and the local authorities involved can be found at www.teachernet.gov.uk/pfi.

Ethnic Minority Students

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the proportion of black and ethnic minority students is in *(a)* sixth form colleges and *(b)* further education colleges in (i) the London borough of Southwark, (ii) Greater London and (iii) England. [224745]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Mike Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what powers she has to require universities to tackle discrimination against minority groups on campus. [224831]

Dr. Howells: Universities are independent bodies which have their own procedures for dealing with incidents of discrimination against minority groups. Ministers have no powers to intervene in such matters. Universities are bound by equality and diversity legislation and it is the responsibility of their governing bodies to ensure that non-discriminatory practices are followed. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act specifically requires institutions to promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations between people of different races and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.

FE Colleges

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what instructions or guidelines are issued to Ofsted inspectors regarding the assessment of learning resources services in further education colleges. [224835]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The current common inspection framework for post-16 providers, which sets out the principles applicable to the inspections of further education colleges, states that inspectors should evaluate the adequacy, suitability and use of specialist equipment, learning resources and accommodation. In making these judgements, inspectors should consider the extent to which, among other things, learners have access to learning resources that are appropriate for effective independent study, resources are used to best effect in promoting learning, and the extent to which learning resources and accommodation allow all learners to participate fully. Fuller details are set out in the "Handbook for Inspecting Colleges", which is produced and disseminated by Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what training is given to Ofsted inspectors on the operation of learning resources services in further education colleges. [224845]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Under the current inspection arrangements, Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate train all inspectors on how to cover all of the key questions in the common inspection framework for post-16 providers, which sets out the principles applicable to the inspection of further education colleges. This includes training in how to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of learning resources. Inspectors judge to what extent learning resources are fit for purpose. Under the revised common inspection framework, operating from September 2005, similar training will be provided by the two inspectorates.

Higher Education Funding (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding per *(a)* undergraduate and *(b)* postgraduate student the

Government have provided to (i) the University of York and (ii) University College of York St. John in each year since 1996–97. [224651]

Dr. Howells: The information requested can be found in the following tables, however it is not possible to provide a comparable time series as the changes in the funding models vary from year to year. Information prior to 1998–99 is not available on a similar basis to the later years and has therefore been shown in separate tables.

University of York

	Teaching funding
1996–97	
UG (including PGT)	2,561
PGR	1,507
1997–98	
UG (including PGT)	2,567
PGR	1,592

(NOT a time series)	*Rates for standard teaching funding*	*Home and EC HEFCE-funded FTEs (T model)*	*Rate for PGR supervision fund*	*Widening participation funding*	*Rewarding and developing staff funding*
1998–99					
UG	2,790	4,395	—	—	—
PGT	1,670	551	—	—	—
PGR	2,169	261	3,251	—	—
1999–2000					
UG	—	—	—	102,188	—
PGT	2,885	4,884	—	—	—
PGR	1,847	585	—	—	—
	2,397	237	3,502	—	—
2000–01					
UG	—	—	—	166,031	—
PGT	3,114	4,681	—	—	—
PGR	2,073	483	—	—	—
	2,534	250	3,542	—	—
2001–02					
UG	—	—	—	234,295	594,163
PGT	3,083	5,005	—	—	—
PGR	1,914	530	—	—	—
	2,615	255	3,525	—	—
2002–03					
UG	—	—	—	275,075	896,460
PGT	3,080	5,347	—	—	—
PGR	1,676	535	—	—	—
	2,576	228	3,393	—	—
2003–04					
UG	—	—	—	527,255	1,382,345
PGT	2,985	5,584	—	—	—
PGR	1,620	587	—	—	—
	2,531	238	3,521	—	—
2004–05					
UG	—	—	—	496,396	—
PGT	3,282	5,854	—	—	—
PGR	1,499	639	—	—	—
	3,111	225	3,830	—	—
2005–06					
UG	—	—	—	402,819	—
PGT	3,440	5,982	—	—	—
PGR	1,610	580	—	—	—
	—	—	5,981	—	—

University College of York St. John

1996–97	*Teaching funding*
UG (including PGT)	2,043
PGR	0
1997–98	
UG (including PGT)	2,099
PGR	0

(NOT a time series)	*Rates for standard teaching funding*	*Home and EC HEFCE-funded FTEs (T model)*	*Rate for PGR supervision fund*	*Widening participation funding*	*Rewarding and developing staff funding*
1998–99					
UG	2,790	4,395	—	—	—
PGT	1.670	551	—	—	—
PGR	2,169	261	3,251	—	—
1999–2000					
UG	—	—	—	102,188	—
	2,885	4,884	—	—	—

(NOT a time series)	Rates for standard teaching funding	Home and EC HEFCE-funded FTEs (T model)	Rate for PGR supervision fund	Widening participation funding	Rewarding and developing staff funding
PGT	1,847	585	—	—	—
PGR	2,397	237	3,502	—	—
2000–01	—	—	—	166,031	—
UG	3,114	4,681	—	—	—
PGT	2,073	483	—	—	—
PGR	2,534	250	3,542	—	—
2001–02	—	—	—	234,295	594,163
UG	3,083	5,005	—	—	—
PGT	1,914	530	—	—	—
PGR	2,615	255	3,525	—	—
2002–03	—	—	—	275,075	896,460
UG	3,080	5,347	—	—	—
PGT	1,676	535	—	—	—
PGR	2,576	228	3,393	—	—
2003–04	—	—	—	527,255	1,382,345
UG	2,985	5,584	—	—	—
PGT	1,620	587	—	—	—
PGR	2,531	238	3,521	—	—
2004–05	—	—	—	496,396	—
UG	3,282	5,854	—	—	—
PGT	1,499	639	—	—	—
PGR	3,111	225	3,830	—	—
2005–06	—	—	—	402,819	—
UG	3,440	5,982	—	—	—
PGT	1,610	580	—	—	—
PGR	—	—	5,981	—	—

Jewish Students

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent reports she has received of incidents of intimidation of Jewish students at the School of Oriental and African Studies; and if she will make a statement. [224839]

Dr. Howells: The Secretary of State is aware of recent press reports of tensions at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) but she has not received any reports of individual incidents of intimidation against Jewish students there.

Higher education institutions are independent bodies which have their own procedures for dealing with incidents of racial discrimination and intolerance. They are bound by equality and diversity legislation and it is the responsibility of their governing bodies to ensure that non-discriminatory practices are followed. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act specifically requires institutions to promote equality of opportunity, promote good relations between people of different races and eliminate unlawful racial discrimination.

While we deplore any incidents of racial intolerance in higher education institutions it is the responsibility of individual governing bodies to take appropriate action if such incidents occur.

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received regarding intimidation experienced by Jewish students at the School of Oriental and African Studies; and if she will make a statement. [224928]

Dr. Howells: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Litter

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action she is taking to promote anti-litter campaigns in schools. [224979]

Derek Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Migrant Intakes

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional support her Department provides to schools with a recent large migrant intake. [223880]

Margaret Hodge: Local education authorities receive funding for all pupils on the school roll in their area through the Education Formula Spending Share. The formula also takes account of the number of pupils with English as an additional language. In 2004–05 the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant, a matched funded grant which is part of the Standards Fund, has provided a total of £162 million of ring-fenced funding to schools, aimed at raising the attainment of under-achieving minority ethnic pupils and those whose first language is other than English. For 2005–06, this total will be £168.6 million.

In addition, in 2003 my Department conducted the "Aiming High: Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Pupils" consultation. This has been followed by a wide range of initiatives aimed at addressing the specific needs of certain groups of pupils, including those whose first language is other than English. Part of this initiative is the Primary National Strategy English as an Additional Language (EAL) Pilot which involves the provision of EAL consultants in 21 local education authority areas, each working with 10 schools. The role

of these consultants is to develop an intensive professional development programme for mainstream school staff. This will enable the development of improved skills and confidence among mainstream teachers and allow for the production of teaching and learning materials and the dissemination of good practice.

My Department has also worked with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and Ofsted to promote a common national approach to assessment of the acquisition of English language fluency based on the National Curriculum in English levels. This approach states that particular care needs to be taken to assess the needs of newly arrived pupils and the importance of using pupils' first languages as part of the assessment process. Finally, my Department provided funding to the QCA to develop guidance to help teachers respond to the needs of newly arrived pupils. This guidance "Pathways to Learning for New Arrivals" was launched in December 2004 and provides all school staff with access to information on all aspects of integrating newly arrived pupils, including good practice case studies, to ensure that these pupils get full access to the National Curriculum. This guidance can be found on the QCA website—www.qca.org.uk

Pre-school Education

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many free *(a)* nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Crosby in each of the last seven years. [223883]

Margaret Hodge: All four-year-olds in England have been entitled to a free part-time early education place since September 1998. All three-year-olds in England have been entitled to a free part-time early education place since April 2004.

The available information on the numbers of free part-time early education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Sefton Local Education Authority area and parliamentary constituencies within Sefton local education authority area since 1998 is shown in the tables.

The latest figures on early education places for three and four-year-olds in England were published in Statistical First Release 39/2004 "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2004 (final)", which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Number of free nursery education places[1] taken up by three and four-year-olds—Sefton Local Education Authority area: Position in January each year

	3-year-olds			4-year-olds		
	Maintained nursery and primary schools[2]	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 3-year-olds*	*Maintained nursery and primary schools[3]*	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers*	*Total 4-year-olds*
1998	2,000	n/a	2,000	n/a	n/a	[4]3,300
1999	2,100	n/a	2,100	n/a	n/a	[4]3,200
2000	2,100	[5]290	2,400	n/a	n/a	[4]3,100
2001	2,100	[5]780	2,900	n/a	n/a	[4]3,200
2002	1,800	[5]940	2,800	2,900	[6]350	3,200
2003	1,700	[5]970	2,700	2,700	[6]390	3,100
2004	1,800	[7]970	2,700	2,500	[8]400	2,900

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.
[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[3] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[4] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Nursery Education Grant data collection exercise.
[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Nursery Education Grant data collection exercise.
[6] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census supplementary data collection exercise and the Annual Schools' Census.
[7] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.
[8] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Number of free nursery education places[1] taken up by three and four-year-olds by parliamentary constituency—Sefton Local Education Authority: Position in January 2004

	3-year-olds			4-year-olds		
Parliamentary constituency	*Maintained nursery and primary schools2*	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers3*	*Total 3-year-olds*	*Maintained nursery and primary schools4*	*Other maintained and private, voluntary and independent providers5*	*Total 4-year-olds*
Crosby	250	310	560	570	150	720
Sefton LEA total	1,800	970	2,700	2,500	400	2,900

[1] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10 or 100 as appropriate.
[2] Headcount of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[3] Part-time equivalent number of children aged three at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.
[4] Headcount of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Annual Schools' Census.
[5] Part-time equivalent number of children aged four at 31 December in the previous calendar year from the Early Years Census and the Annual Schools' Census.

Changes in pupil figures may arise from changes to the underlying population in the local education authority area and other factors. However, my Department doesn't publish population figures for individual age cohorts at sub-national level because of the unreliability of the underlying population estimates. The Office for National Statistics publish sub-national population estimates in five-year age bands.

Private Children's Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many private children's homes have been registered in each of the last five years. [210207]

Margaret Hodge *[pursuant to the reply, 27 January 2005, Official Report, c. 506W]:* It has come to my attention that the information provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection for this answer was incorrect due to a clerical error. I am advised by the commission that the number of private children's homes registered in 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 (up to 19 January 2005) was 169, 276 and 187 respectively.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many private children's homes have been de-registered *(a)* due to voluntary closure and *(b)* under direction from her inspectors in each of the last five years. [210208]

Margaret Hodge *[pursuant to the reply, 27 January 2005, Official Report, c. 506W]:* It has come to my attention that some of the information provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection for this answer was incorrect due to a clerical error. I am advised by the commission that the number of private children's homes de- registered in 2002/03 was 87.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many private children's homes have been registered to operate in each of the last eight years; and how many have closed during that time. [222069]

Margaret Hodge: Information provided by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, who took over the role of the National Care Standards Commission from 1 April 2004, on the number of registered and de-registered private children's homes for the last three years is shown in the following table.

Information is not available prior to 1 April 2002, the date when the National Care Standards Commission was created.

Private children's homes	*2002/03*	*2003/04*	*2004/05*[1]
Registered	169	276	199
De-registered[2]	87	156	131

[1] As at 7 March 2005

[2] De-registrations occur for a number of reasons, including:
voluntary closure of a home
enforced closure resulting from regulatory action
change of ownership
change in the category of service provided.

School Discipline

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what advice she gives to teachers regarding the extent to which teachers can raise their voice when disciplining a pupil; and if she will make a statement. [224658]

Derek Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

School Funding

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Coventry in each year since 1997. [224793]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

School Kitchens

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school kitchens have been *(a)* closed and *(b)* converted to other uses since May 1997, and whether the new resources announced on 30 March for improving school meals includes funding available to re-open closed kitchens. [224713]

Derek Twigg: Information on the closure or conversion of school kitchens should be held locally; and we do not collect it centrally. The £280 million announced on 30 March is revenue funding to transform the quality of school meals in England and set up the new School Food Trust. We have already announced substantial capital investment most of which can be used to improve kitchen and dining facilities of English schools.

£ million

Financial year	*Schools capital investment*
2005–06	5,515
2006–07	5,770
2007–08	6,280

School Meals

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the £280 million pledged by the Government to improve school meals is new money in addition to funds already allocated to local education authorities. [224899]

Derek Twigg: The money to improve school meals has come from the Department's reserve. It is therefore new money over and above existing allocations to local education authorities.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans she has to assist schools which do not provide hot dinners to do so; and if she will make a statement. [224907]

Derek Twigg: On 30 March, the Secretary of State announced that schools would receive additional funding to help them transform the quality of school meals. Over the next three years, all maintained schools in England will receive a share of the 220m set aside to

help local education authorities and schools strengthen their support for healthy eating and to provide better quality food.

An expert panel has been convened to recommend revisions to current minimum school lunch nutritional standards. The panel has been asked to strongly consider the use of nutrient-based standards, whether any individual foodstuffs should be banned and the benefits of hot school lunches.

In addition, DfES officials are considering the work that would need to be done to reintroduce hot meals into all schools. This is a complex issue and we will need to work with schools, local education authorities and others to ensure that an appropriate
long-term strategy is developed.

School Uniforms (Vouchers)

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action the Department is proposing in connection with the use of clothing vouchers for social security recipient purchasers of school uniforms. [224901]

Derek Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Students

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures she takes to ensure that students are treated without discrimination; and if she will make a statement. [224952]

Dr. Howells: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations she has received concerning *(a)* the compliance of student unions at UK universities with Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and *(b)* direct intervention by university authorities in the affairs of student unions. [224929]

Dr. Howells: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Sure Start

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what Sure Start activities are undertaken in Crosby constituency. [218866]

Margaret Hodge: The Sure Start local programme in Seaforth and Bootle was approved in 2001 to provide services to 700 children under four and their families in the wards of Church and Linacre. The Neighbourhood Nursery attached to this local programme, is located in the Linacre ward and opened in June 2004 delivering 62 additional child care places to families living in the area.

The local programme delivers a range of services for families and parents within the area, including

Outreach and home visiting; support for families and parents;

Play, learn and child care facilities

Primary and community health care.

The combined expertise within the team members covers all aspect of health, education, parenting skills, practical and emotional support and social care from ante-natal stage to nursery education.

Seaforth and Bootle local programme has established a mobile toy library and the early years workers provide practical support around early learning and play.

The proportion of parents expressing no concerns about the extent of their children's language development increased from 77 per cent. in 2001–02 to 79 per cent. in 2003–04.

The community midwife provides breast feeding support sessions at birth, six weeks and 17 weeks. The rate of take up of these sessions has gone up from 34.4 per cent. in 2002–03 to 37.9 per cent. in 2003–04 at birth; 8 per cent. to 13.9 per cent. at six weeks and 4 per cent. to 8.6 per cent. at 17 weeks.

The number of women supported by post-natal depression group increased from 13 in 2002–03 to 30 women in 2003–04.

The programme funding for the current and future years is as follows:

	Programme name: Seaforth and Bootle (£)
Capital	
Approved	825,211
Revenue	
2004–05	770,140
2005–06	789,393
2006–07	789,393

Sefton council have been allocated capital of £1,954,031 and revenue of £250,000 for 2004–05 and £323,432 for 2005–06, and are planning to open seven Children's centre by March 2006.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many parents and children in York have been supported by the Sure Start programme in Clifton and Westfield. [224649]

Margaret Hodge: The York Sure Start local programme serves 355 families with a total of 598 children under the age of four. 679 parents are currently registered with the programme and an average of 166 children are seen every month, 16 per cent. of whom are accessing services for the first time.

To date the programme has had access to £1,075,000 in capital funding and £1,383,860 in revenue funding and can expect a further £1,171,420 in revenue funding over the next two years (2005–06 to 2006–07). Services delivered include outreach visiting, high quality play experiences for children and parents, breast feeding and smoking reduction support, family learning and employment opportunities, and access to child care and early education. The programme is also working in partnership with the local authority's early years team and The Gatsby Foundation to explore ways of ensuring that children are supported in their development of speech and language.

Two new integrated children's centres are currently being developed at Hob Moor school and Clifton Green school. These will further extend Sure Start services to

families with children under five living in the programme's catchment area. The local authority has also received £1,330,718 of revenue and £1,689,450 of capital funding to create eight further children's centres between 2006 and 2008.

Teachers (Life Expectancy)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on her Department's estimate of the life expectancy of teachers. [224851]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: An individuals total life expectancy is defined as their current age plus their life expectancy from the current age. For a group of individuals of the same age, total life expectancy increases with age attained because those dying at earlier ages are excluded from the group. Thus, an individual's life expectancy at birth is very different to their total life expectancy at later ages.

As part of the demographic assumptions associated with the periodic valuations of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, the Government Actuary takes into account the life expectancy of teachers following their retirement. In the latest valuation report at 31 March 2001 the assumed life expectancy of teachers in normal health at age 60 was 26 years for men and 29 years for women. At age 65, assumed life expectancy would be about five years less than at age 60. The Government Actuary will be taking account of any subsequent improvements in life expectancy as part of the current valuation of the scheme.

Teachers' Pensions

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if she will make a statement on the treatment of additional voluntary contributions within the proposed changes to teachers' pensions. [224852]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We are committed to the continued provision of arrangements within the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) that would enable teachers to pay additional contributions for a higher level of pension benefits. We are looking at how the TPS could provide new opportunities for paying additional contributions that are flexible, appropriate for a public service pension scheme and provide teachers with increased choice and options. We are also considering what increased flexibilities could be introduced into the existing in-house additional voluntary contribution (AVC) arrangements to take advantage of the new tax regime from April 2006.

Truancy

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils played truant in England in each year since 1997 *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by local education authority; and if she will make a statement. [220278]

Derek Twigg: It has not proved possible to respond in the time available before Prorogation.

Woodcraft Folk

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much financial assistance her Department provided to the Woodcraft Folk in each of the last 10 financial years for which figures are available; if she will make in 2005–06 a grant to the Woodcraft Folk equivalent to that made in 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [223450]

Margaret Hodge: The Woodcraft Folk have received the following funding since 1997, the earliest date for which figures are available:

	Amount (£)
1997–98	39,100
1998–99	33,000
1999–2000	38,000
2000–01	38,000
2001–02	38,000
2002–03	52,281
2003–04	52,281
2004–05	52,281
Total	342,943

Source:
NVYO Grant Scheme

The Woodcraft Folk submitted a bid for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation Grant scheme due to run from 2005 to 2008. This scheme was run as an open competition. Participation on previous schemes was not one of the criteria used to determine funding. The bid was assessed against criteria made explicit in both the application and guidance notes for the scheme.

The key reasons the Woodcraft Folk's bid was unsuccessful was that, in comparison with other bids, it did not provide the level of detail to enable the Department to determine either how the proposed activities would deliver the outcomes specified or how the outcomes specifically linked with the "Every Child Matters" agenda.

It is important to emphasise that even though the Woodcraft Folk's bid for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation grant scheme was unsuccessful, this is no reflection on the work it does to promote the well-being of children and young people and their participation in society.

The scheme was open to all national voluntary sector organisations engaged in youth work and who met specific criteria and not just those on the existing scheme. We received 160 bids from a variety of national voluntary organisations which totalled over £44 million for the length of the scheme. As the grant scheme was allocated £21 million over three years we were unable to fund everyone who applied. We assessed all of the bids and awarded grants to those organisations which clearly demonstrated the outcomes and quality the scheme required to an agreed standard.

I met the Woodcraft Folk on the 4 April to discuss their work. As a result of that meeting we agreed to second a member of DfES staff to the Woodcraft Folk

for 12 months. We hope that that member of staff will be able to support the central organisation by helping it to look for new ways of diversifying the funding streams that it receives so that it secures long-term funding.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons the Department rejected the grant application from the Woodcraft Folk. [224528]

Margaret Hodge: The criteria by which all decisions about funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation (NVYO) grant scheme were made were explicit in both the application forms and guidance notes, to assist organisations through the application process.

The guidance notes clearly stated that applications should make a strong contribution to the achievement of the outcomes for young people set out in "Every Child Matters".

Paragraph 13.2 of the application guidance states clearly that the Department would look for bids that:

were clearly focused on the outcomes identified in the guidance

were for activities in line with those identified in the grant criteria

identified clear and robust outcome indicators that were relevant to the outcomes the bid proposes to deliver

clearly explained the national significance of the activity being proposed

were realistic and deliverable

The Woodcraft Folk's bid for funding was unsuccessful because, when compared with other applications, it did not provide the level of detail to enable the Department to determine how the proposed activities would deliver the outcomes that were specified in the criteria. It was also not sufficiently clear, in comparison with other bids, how Woodcraft Folk's outcomes specifically linked with the "Every Child Matters" agenda.

It is important to emphasise that even though the Woodcraft Folk's bid for funding under the National Voluntary Youth Organisation grant scheme was unsuccessful, this is no reflection on the work it does to promote the well-being of children and young people and their participation in society.

The scheme was open to all national voluntary sector organisations engaged in youth work and who met specific criteria and not just those on the existing scheme. We received 160 bids from a variety of national voluntary organisations which totalled over £44 million for the length of the scheme. As the grant scheme had been allocated £21 million for the three years we were unable to fund everyone who applied. We assessed all of the bids and awarded grants to those organisations which clearly demonstrated the outcomes and quality the scheme required to an agreed standard.

I met the Woodcraft Folk on the 4 April to discuss their work. As a result of that meeting we agreed to second a member of DfES staff to the Woodcraft Folk for 12 months. We hope that that member of staff will be able to support the central organisation by helping it to look for new ways of diversifying the funding streams that it receives so that it secures long-term funding.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many civil servants in his Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223897]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is as follows.

(a) 103 posts have already been relocated to the areas set out as follows:

Location	*Number of posts moved*
Government Office for the north-east	4
Government Office for the north-west	18
Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside	8
Government Office for the West Midlands	5
Government Office for the East Midlands	18
Government Office for the East	18
Government Office for the south-east	4
Government Office for the south-west	7
Government Office for London	8
Hastings	2
Hemel Hempstead	4
Glossop	7
Total number of posts moved	103

(b) The Office of Deputy Prime Minister is expected to relocate 240 posts by 2010.

Communities Plan

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much of the Communities Plan budget has been allocated to *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside and *(c)* the north east. [224723]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold separate expenditure data on *(a)* the Jarrow constituency.

Expenditure and planned spending on programmes within the Communities Plan for *(b)* South Tyneside and *(c)* the north east are set out in the following table. The figures for 2006–07 and 2007–08 exclude programmes for which spending plans have still to be finalised.

£ million

	(b) South Tyneside	*(c) The North East*
2003–04	19.310	592.187
2004–05	21.254	613.844
2005–06	21.238	676.354
2006–07	[1]—	555.157
2007–08	[1]—	572.882
Total	61.802	3,010.424

[1] Not available. Budget allocations at district level are yet to be determined.

Council Tax

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax charge was in *(a)* City of York,

(b) Yorkshire and the Humber and *(c)* England in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) each year since 2002–03; and what he expects the charge to be in 2005–06. [224814]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is the following table.

Average area Band D council taxes (two adults)

£

	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06
City of York	874	988	1,078	1,127
Yorkshire and the Humber	971	1,071	1,132	1,182
England	976	1,102	1,167	1,214

Source:
Budget requirement returns to ODPM and ODPM news releases.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax bill was in *(a)* Labour, *(b)* Liberal Democrat and *(c)* Conservative-led local authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2004–05. [224815]

Mr. Raynsford: The average council tax bill by individual local authority in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2004–05 is in the following table. Definitive information on political control is not held centrally:

2004–05 average area Band D council taxes (two adults)

	£
West Yorkshire	
Bradford	1,061
Calderdale	1,181
Kirklees	1,134
Leeds	1,040
Wakefield	1,048
South Yorkshire	
Barnsley	1,104
Doncaster	1,094
Rotherham	1,143
Sheffield	1,216
North Yorkshire	
Craven	1,199
Hambleton	1,128
Harrogate	1,224
Richmondshire	1,219
Ryedale	1,215
Scarborough	1,222
Selby	1,207
Shire Unitary Authorities	
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	1,183
Kingston-upon-Hull UA	1,094
North East Lincolnshire UA	1,265
North Lincolnshire UA	1,237
York UA	1,078

Source:
Budget requirement returns to ODPM and ODPM news releases.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the likely impact of council tax revaluation on average council tax bills in real terms in *(a)* City of York, *(b)* Yorkshire and the Humber and *(c)* England; and if he will make a statement. [224816]

Mr. Raynsford: The distribution of dwellings to bands after revaluation will depend on property values as at 1 April 2005 and on decisions yet to be taken on the number and values of council tax bands. The report of the independent inquiry into local government funding by Sir Michael Lyons will inform the Government's decisions on council tax bands. This report is due to be submitted by the end of this year to my right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Government have already made clear that the revaluation should not lead to a change in the overall council tax yield and consequently most council tax payers are unlikely to face an increase (or decrease) in their council tax bill as a result of revaluation. There will be a transitional relief scheme to help taxpayers whose properties move to a higher band. Council tax benefit will continue to be available to help those on low incomes with their council tax payments.

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to exempt members of HM armed forces from council tax for periods when they are posted on duties overseas. [224910]

Mr. Raynsford: Officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are currently exploring with Officials in the Ministry of Defence whether there is a case for a council tax exemption or discount for service personnel serving abroad.

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many EU *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives covering matters within the responsibility of his Department have been repealed since 1 April 2004. [224573]

Yvette Cooper: The information requested is not held centrally in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, but by the management units responsible for the policy areas concerned. It could be assembled only at disproportionate cost.

Fire Control

Mr. Todd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish the risk assessment conducted on the proposal to regionalise emergency fire control; and what steps he is taking to ensure that those engaged in providing services *(a)* contribute to the design of new systems and *(b)* maintain services during transition. [224927]

Mr. Raynsford: The Mott MacDonald report "The Future of Fire Service Control Rooms and Communications in England and Wales" which was published in 2000 with an update in 2003, undertook a cost/benefit risk analysis of the options for the provision of fire and rescue service control rooms and communications. The original report is available at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_601055.pdf

The 2003 update is available at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_fire/documents/page/odpm_fire_026180.pdf

There are a number of control room and other fire and rescue service personnel seconded to the national project team, and a member of the Chief Fire Officers' Association is employed to work on the project full time. These have had, and will continue to have, significant input into the design of the accommodation, the specification for the control room systems and the development of processes and staffing models. We also have a wide programme of engagement with members of the service through regular national seminars, control

staff workshops and other workstream-focussed working groups, which brings significant expertise to the project and ensures that the service has a voice to influence and guide progress.

Maintenance of adequate staffing levels in control rooms during the transition period is the responsibility of individual fire and rescue authorities. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has provided guidance to authorities on methods of retention.

Gap Funding Agreements

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how much has been allocated by his Department for gap funding agreements; [224797]

(2) how his Department will evaluate the performance of registered social landlords in connection with provision of staged gap funding. [224798]

(3) how many gap funding agreements have been signed between his Department and registered social landlords. [224799]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made £182 million available over the 2004 Spending Review period for gap funding agreements. One gap funding agreement has been signed to date between Shoreline Housing Partnership and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The agreement sets out a range of conditions to which the registered social landlord must adhere and requires that specific performance milestones are met to demonstrate eligibility for gap funding payments.

Housing (South-East)

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what assessment he has made of the environmental impact of the Government's proposed new housing for the South-East; [224781]

(2) what assessment he has made of the impact on *(a)* road and *(b)* rail infrastructure of the new housing he proposes for the South-East; [224782]

(3) what proportion of the proposed new houses for the South-East he expects to be built on brownfield sites; [224783]

(4) what his estimate is of the cost of additional public facilities of all kinds to serve the people living in the additional houses he proposes for the South-East. [224784]

Keith Hill: These are all matters for the South East England Regional Assembly as part of their preparation of the draft South East Plan, upon which they are currently carrying out a public consultation.

Housing Market (Liverpool)

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of housing market renewal in Liverpool. [224840]

Keith Hill: New Heartlands, the market renewal pathfinder for Merseyside is making good progress. It is on target for full spend and achievement of target outputs in 2004–05. But the programme is still in its early stages and it is too soon to assess in detail the impact of the programme on the Merseyside housing market.

New Heartlands has an allocation of £34 million grant in 2005–06 and has been invited to update its strategy and make the case for future funding, including £65 million to £110 million for the two-year period from April 2006.

Litter

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effects of the Best Value Performance Indicator on litter and detritus on local authorities' performance in this area. [224973]

Mr. Raynsford: The Best Value Performance Indicator on litter and detritus (BV199) was introduced in April 2003. Data has been submitted by local authorities for 2003–04, and audited data for 2004–05 will not be received until at least August 2005. With only one year's performance data so far, it is too early to assess the effect on local authorities' performance.

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Amess: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many official visits *(a)* he, *(b)* the Minister of State (Local and Regional Government), *(c)* the Minister of State (Regeneration and Regional Development) and *(d)* the Minister of State (Minister for Housing and Planning) have made since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [223452]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Since then we estimate that Ministers have undertaken the following number of official visits (including speaking engagements):

Minister	*Number of official visits*
My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister	179
The Minister of State for local and regional government and fire	119
The Minister of State for regeneration and regional development	217
The Minister of State for housing and planning	[1]99

[1] Since June 2003 only. Figures for predecessor not held centrally.

National House Building Council

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will arrange for an independent inquiry to be held into the building control and inspection procedures of the National House Building Council (NHBC); and if he will invite members of the public dissatisfied with the performance of the NHBC to give evidence. [224914]

Phil Hope: There is no evidence to suggest that there is a general problem with the building control inspection regime currently employed by the National House Building Council (NHBC). Consequently the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to call an

independent inquiry. However, officials in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to work closely with NHBC to resolve the isolated cases involving claims from new home buyers.

Traveller Sites

Mr. Baron: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many decisions by him on a refusal by a local authority to give planning permission for a Traveller site were outstanding in each parliamentary constituency in the last year for which figures are available; and what percentage of decisions on Traveller sites made by the local authority this represented in each case; [223137]

(2) what percentage of planning permission applications for Traveller sites which were refused by local authorities in each of the last five years were awaiting a decision from him at each year end; [223139]

(3) how many and what percentage of Traveller sites applications which had been refused planning permission by local authorities were awaiting a decision from him in *(a)* the last year for which figures are available and *(b)* each of the preceding four years. [223140]

Yvette Cooper: There is an ongoing flow of planning appeals resulting from Local Planning Authorities' refusal of an application for planning permission involving Traveller sites. Both the Planning Inspectorate and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister seek to ensure that these are determined in a timely manner. Information on the number of planning appeals decided and the number that were in the process of being determined at the end of each of the last four financial years, broken down by local authority, has been made available in the Library of the House. This information includes planning appeals determined by Planning Inspectors on behalf of the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister and those recovered for determination by the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister. It is not possible to present the information by parliamentary constituency. We do not collect information centrally on the total number of decisions made by Local Planning Authorities.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Working Time Directive

11. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Minister for Women what assessment she has made of the impact of the Working Time Directive on women. [224758]

Jacqui Smith: All workers, including 12.2 million working women, benefit from rights under the Working Time Directive. This provides, among other things, that workers cannot be forced to work more than 48-hours a week on average; are entitled to paid annual leave; and rights to daily and weekly rest breaks.

Equal Pay

12. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Minister for Women what the Government's policy is on reducing the gap between the average income of single men and single women aged over 65. [224759]

Jacqui Smith: We have introduced a number of measures to support today's female pensioners in retirement such as pension credit and winter fuel allowances. As a result, 1.9 million pensioners have been lifted out of abject poverty since 1997, two-thirds of them women.

We will produce a report on the pension position of women later this year, which will address all the issues currently faced by women in building up their retirement income.

Equal Opportunities (Research)

13. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Minister for Women what academic research she has commissioned on barriers to equality of opportunity for women. [224795]

Ms Hewitt: I have commissioned various research projects which explore barriers of equality of opportunity for women in work and training. These examine:

young people's perceptions of jobs and training;

the ways in which women re-enter the labour market after periods of inactivity;

the skills profile of women returners, particularly whether skills are a barrier to them returning to the labour market.

Freedom of Information

John Mann: To ask the Minister for Women what categories of information are available under Freedom of Information legislation that have not been provided in written parliamentary answers by her office in the last three years. [207819]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Women's Employment

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister for Women what assessment she has made of the way in which women from *(a)* ethnic minority groups and *(b)* faith groups have been affected by Government policy aimed at increasing labour market participation of (i) women and (ii) mothers. [220853]

Ms Hewitt: The Women and Work Commission, which was launched in September 2004, to examine the pay and opportunities gap, has taken evidence from minority ethnic women as part of its information gathering exercise and will report to the Prime Minister by September 2005.

The Government are committed to supporting women who want to return to work after having children. The DTI is conducting research into the way women re-enter the labour market after taking time out to bring up their children.

We have commissioned, and published in January 2004, research which examined the child care preferences of different groups of mothers and the impact that the accessibility, affordability and quality of child care has on their employment decisions. These findings were discussed at my regular bi-annual meetings with Muslim women.

The regional development agencies in London, the East Midlands and the South East are developing pilot programmes to support women considering returning to work, through offering careers advice, access to training, confidence building, work placements and child care. The results of these pilot schemes will help us to inform the development further support for women, wanting to return to work.

All this work includes an assessment of the particular position of women from different minority and faith communities.

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister for Women what research her Department has commissioned on *(a)* entry to and *(b)* progression of black and ethnic minority women in the workplace. [220854]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Vera Baird: To ask the Minister for Women what assessment she has made of the role of Government Departments and agencies in delivering a targeted system of support to black and ethnic minority women in the workplace. [220856]

Ms Hewitt: Although no formal assessment has been made of the role of Government Departments and agencies in delivering a targeted system of support to black and ethnic minority women in the workplace, the Government are committed to developing policies and services delivery to meet the needs of all groups, including black and ethnic minority women.

Indeed, the proposal to introduce a public sector duty to promote gender equality combined with the existing public sector duty on race will enable us to improve our knowledge. This will be strengthened by the introduction of a the Commission for Equality and Human Rights which will be able to look at the impact on individuals of more than one form of discrimination.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

India

8. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on bilateral trade relations with India. [224794]

Mr. Alexander: Our bilateral trade relationship with India has never been better. In 2004, bilateral trade in goods was worth around £4.6 billion, an increase of over 3 per cent. compared to 2003. Total bilateral trade in goods and services is expected to reach over £6 billion. The UK is India's 3rd largest trade partner, while India is our second largest export market in the developing world, and our 15th largest export market worldwide.

This is good news, but there is still plenty of room for improvement. The joint Economic and Trade Committee, launched in January by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and India's Commerce Minister, will help us identify opportunities for even greater growth in our trade and investment relationship.

Manufacturing

9. **Mr. Page:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the ratio was of officials employed in her Department to people employed in manufacturing in the UK in *(a)* 1998 and *(b)* 2004. [224820]

Nigel Griffiths: The DTI headcount as a proportion of those employed in the manufacturing sector was 0.14 per cent. in 1998 and 0.2 per cent. in 2004. But the DTI's remit covers the whole economy, and as a proportion of total employment the DTI's share remains broadly unchanged at 0.02 per cent. This is despite taking on additional responsibilities and meeting increased demand for our services.

Accidents

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many accidents occurred at her departmental premises in each of the last five years involving *(a)* members of her Department's staff and *(b)* members of the public. [222573]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Airports (Car Parking)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will invite the Competition Commission to investigate the level of car parking charges in force at airports in the UK. [224152]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Alvis plc

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action is being taken to prosecute Alvis plc. for the £16.5 million payment made to Siti Hardiyanti ("Futut") Rukmana in order to secure the contract from the Indonesian Government to supply Scorpion armoured fighting vehicles; and if she will make a full statement. [220538]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Anti-bribery/Corruption

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment her Department has made of the impact on business opportunities of possible business uncertainty over Export Credits Guarantee Department anti-bribery guidelines. [223891]

Mr. Alexander: ECGD's anti-bribery and corruption procedures introduced in December 2004 remain in force while public consultation on them, which is currently under way and will run until 18 June 2005, is conducted. The December 2004 procedures were put in place having taken account of concerns about the workability of those previously introduced in May 2004 expressed by ECGD's principal customers and their banks.

Copies of the consultation document are available on ECGD's website www.ecgd.gov.uk

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list *(a)* the companies, *(b)* the projects and *(c)* the countries involved in the seven transactions supported by the Export Credits Guarantee Department under its May 2004 anti-corruption procedures. [219355]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 3 March 2004]*: The Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD) supported 10 transactions in respect of five companies under its May 2004 anti-corruption procedures. In my evidence to the Trade and Industry Committee on 23 February 2005 I referred to the seven such companies based on factually incorrect briefing. I wrote to the Committee chair to correct the evidence on 11 March 2005. Of these transactions, nine relate to insurance provided by ECGD. It is ECGD's policy not to disclose details of insurance it provides, or the fact of having provided insurance, where it considers the disclosure of such information might increase the likelihood of default by the bodies whose payment obligations ECGD is insuring. This is because, the commercial interests of ECGD and the U.K economy would be prejudiced by a default. Pursuant to that policy the nine insurance cases referred to have not been publicised.

ECGD supported one non-insurance case in the relevant period for Alderley Systems Ltd. in respect of the supply of product loading meters for ships to Iran.

Arms Sales (China)

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects of the UK position on lifting the EU embargo on arms sales to China on *(a)* the UK balance of trade with the USA and *(b)* the UK arms industry. [209743]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Bankruptcies (London)

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* personal and *(b)* company bankruptcies in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough there were in each of the last three years for which figures are available; what assessment she has made of recent trends; and if she will make a statement. [212377]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not-proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Beer

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had since 2002 with *(a)* the Campaign for Real Ale and *(b)* other stakeholders on beer drinkers receiving a full pint on licensed premises; and what steps are being taken to encourage a consensus among stakeholders. [224810]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when her Department expects to announce the outcome of its consultations on the full pint of beer. [224811]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Broadband

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the cost to public funds of extending broadband to every home in the UK. [221563]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government's approach to ensure they meet their target of having the most extensive and competitive broadband market in the G7 by 2005, has focused on stimulating competition in the marketplace, in preference to subsidising individual companies to roll out broadband services.

In November 2003 my hon. Friend the Member for East Ham, the then Minister for E-Commerce called on all stakeholders to bring broadband availability to all communities in Britain by the end of 2005. BT's 2004 announcement to upgrade their telephone exchanges means that by this summer, over 99 per cent. of all homes and businesses in the UK will be able to receive broadband on their network alone.

To ensure that as many people and businesses as possible are able to access broadband services, the Government provided £30 million through the UK Broadband Fund to stimulate supply and demand in rural areas. This funding was distributed through the Regional Development Agencies and devolved administrations and helped to develop innovative broadband related schemes to meet local requirements. In addition to this amount, RDA's and devolved administrations have contributed in excess of £200 million in promoting coverage and take-up of broadband.

Burma

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the discussions which she has had with representatives of British holiday companies regarding the promotion of tours in Burma; and if she will make a statement. [202839]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Business Prosecutions

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many prosecutions of *(a)* small and medium-sized enterprises and *(b)* large businesses were brought in 2003–04 for breaches of regulations sponsored by her Department; how much in total was imposed in fines in each case; and how many visits were made in 2003–04 by officials from her Department or agencies for which her Department is responsible to verify regulatory compliance in each case. [217178]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Businesses

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses went into receivership in each of the past 17 years, broken down by region. [219892]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses have registered for VAT in Tamworth in each year since 1997. [221926]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Carbon Monoxide

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will introduce a levy on gas supply companies to be used for publicity and research on preventing carbon monoxide poisoning. [224690]

Mr. Pond: I have been asked to reply.

We have no proposals for introducing a statutory levy. The Health and Safety Executive is working with the major gas supply companies on voluntary funding for a gas safety publicity strategy that includes the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. Agreement has been reached with the Energy Retail Association (representing the six largest suppliers) and the first campaigns commenced winter 2004–05.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will instruct gas emergency services to carry and use equipment to test for and detect carbon monoxide. [224697]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

There are legal duties under gas safety legislation that require gas emergency service providers to attend and make safe appliances that are suspected of spilling combustion products such as carbon monoxide. It is for the service providers to determine the equipment they need to carry out this duty.

Cash Machines

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what discussions her Department has had with *(a)* the LINK network, *(b)* high street banks and *(c)* cash machine operators on charges for use of cash machines; [213193]

(2) what action her Department has taken to ensure *(a)* transparency and *(b)* fairness in charges for ATM withdrawals. [213194]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Charter of Fundamental Rights

Mr. Graham Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the applicability of the Charter of Fundamental Rights to the provision of services of general interest. [203150]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 7 December 2004]*: No detailed assessment has been made of the applicability of the Charter of Fundamental Rights to the provision of services of general interest. The Charter would only be applicable to member state action if the member state were implementing union law. The proposed constitutional treaty makes plain that the Charter does not extend the field of application of union law, create new powers or tasks for the union or modify existing powers or tasks.

Chile

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list all contacts that have taken place between officials of her Department and General Augustus Pinochet concerning arms contracts since 1990. [207696]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many civil servants in her Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223909]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Coal Industry Pension Schemes

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what payments have been made to the guarantor of the Miners' Pension Scheme and the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme for each of the last 10 years, broken down by *(a)* surplus payments and *(b)* payments from the investment reserves; and how much is due to be paid to the guarantor in April in each case. [217655]

Nigel Griffiths: The figures are published in the annual report and accounts of both the Mineworkers Pension Scheme (MPS) and the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme (BCSSS), copies of which are available from the trustee company.

Since the Guaranteed funds have been in deficit recently it has been necessary to make transfers into those funds of £355 million in September 2003 in the case of the MPS and £220 million in the case of the BCSSS in March 204. This reflects the agreement of the Government to guarantee the pension payments, should the funds be in deficit.

Construction Skills

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what payments have been made by the Construction Industry Training Board on behalf of the Construction Skills Scheme to companies who participated in the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) between 2001 and 2004; how many companies participated in the scheme; how many new entrants were encouraged to join the CSCS as a result; and how many new jobs were created by the initiative. [218936]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 2 March 2005]*: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Correspondence

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Department for Trade and Industry will reply to Mr. Brian Worrall of Bestwood, Nottingham as promised by her Office in the letter dated 7 October 2004 from Mr. John Saunders. [213440]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Banff and Buchan dated 17 February regarding the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad Scheme. [224026]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North of 10 March concerning a constituent. [224787]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have made inquiries and it appears the letter for my hon. Friend has been mislaid by officials.

I am grateful to my hon. Friend for providing a copy of the letter which I will reply to within days.

Data Protection Fraud

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects the Office of Fair Trading to report on its investigation into the financial activities of bogus data protection agencies. [220597]

Mr. Sutcliffe: This is a matter for the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).

The OFT can take action under the Control of Misleading Advertisements Regulations 1988, to prevent the continued publication of misleading advertising. However, under the Regulations, the OFT is not empowered to investigate the financial activities of businesses or individuals. It can only take action to protect consumers and traders from the effects of advertisements that mislead or make unacceptable comparisons.

I understand that you are already aware that the OFT has taken enforcement action under the Regulations against several businesses and individuals concerned with the publication of misleading mailings offering data protection notification services. Due to strict disclosure restrictions under Part 9 of the Enterprise Act 2002, the OFT is unable to comment on the details of any ongoing investigations. However, the OFT does publicise on its website and in the press any undertakings that it has obtained or court action it has taken under the Regulations when such action is completed.

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether Ministers in her Department have issued written instructions to override her Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221116]

Ms Hewitt: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W, by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Burnley constituency, the effects on Burnley of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [214697]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effect of her actions and policies on Blackpool, South constituency since *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2001. [215750]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effect of her Department's actions and policies on Blackpool, South constituency since *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2001. [215751]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effect on Chorley constituency of her policies and actions since 1997. [216237]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Clwyd South constituency, the effect on the constituency of policies pursued by her Department at the Council of Ministers; and if she will make a statement. [215718]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Martyn Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Clwyd, South constituency, the effects on Clwyd, South of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [210320]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Westmorland and Lonsdale constituency, the effects on Westmorland and Lonsdale of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [215981]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my right hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Epsom and Ewell constituency, the effects on Epsom and Ewell of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216024]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Pendle constituency, the effects on Pendle of her Department's policies and activities since 2 May 1997. [214979]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Preseli, Pembrokeshire constituency, the effects on Preseli, Pembrokeshire of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [211320]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effects on Rochdale constituency of her policies and actions since 1997. [217376]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to West Dorset constituency, the effects on West Dorset of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216023]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Disability Discrimination

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact on small businesses of the uncertainties regarding the Disability Discrimination Act 2000 set out in the recent information campaign by the Department for Work and Pensions. [222212]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints relating to discrimination on the basis of *(a)* age, *(b)* gender, *(c)* race and *(d)* sexual preference were made against her Department in each year between 1997 and 2004, broken down by complaints by (i) full-time employees, (ii) part-time employees and (iii) job applicants; and what the outcome was in each case. [221138]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Electronic Devices

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many electronic devices are owned by the Department, broken down by type. [207675]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

E-mail Access

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the proportion of the adult population in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* the South West and *(c)* South Gloucestershire who had domestic access to e-mail (i) in the latest year for which estimates are available and (ii) five years earlier. [218010]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 24 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Emigration Consultants

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to license emigration consultants and companies dealing with inquiries from would-be emigrants from the UK. [217341]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Employment Appeals Tribunal

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in how many *(a)* industrial tribunal cases and *(b)* appeals to the Employment Appeals Tribunal since 1997, the band of reasonable responses test has been used as the test for deciding the fairness of a dismissal. [220479]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to review the working of the band of reasonable responses test in *(a)* industrial tribunal cases and *(b)* Employment Appeals Tribunal cases for deciding whether a dismissal was fair; and if she will make a statement. [220481]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 8 March 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Energy Policy/Research

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Government's hydrogen energy strategy will be published. [215540]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Last year the DTI commissioned a study to develop a strategic framework for hydrogen energy activities in the UK. This was undertaken by E4tech, Element Energy and Eoin Lees Energy and was completed in December. A report of their analysis has been placed on the DTIs publications website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/sepn/hydrogen_framework_full.pdf from which it can be downloaded. We will be considering the specific recommendations carefully, and will publish these, together with our response shortly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much and what percentage of public expenditure on energy research and development was spent on research and development for *(a)* nuclear fission, *(b)* nuclear fusion, *(c)* fossil fuel generation and *(d)* renewable energy sources in each year since 1997. [224020]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much and what percentage of public expenditure on energy research and development for the financial year 2004–05 is planned to be spent on research and development for *(a)* nuclear fission, *(b)* nuclear fusion, *(c)* fossil fuel generation and *(d)* renewable energy sources. [224021]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for implementation of multiannual framework programme for actions in the safety of nuclear installations in the countries participating in the Tacis programme met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [215484]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the (i) Joint Committee with the countries of the European Free Trade Association (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland), (ii) Joint Committee on the Agreement concerning products of the clock and watch industry between the EEC and Switzerland and (iii) Joint Committee on the Agreement between Switzerland and the EEC on the processing traffic in textiles met; when and where each meeting took place; what UK Government expert was present at each meeting; and if she will make a statement. [216726]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217898]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Advisory Committee on Restrictive Practices and Dominant Positions is the body through which the European Commission carries out its duty to consult member states on decisions under, and amendments to, EC competition law which it proposes to adopt.

Between 1 July 2003 and 31 December 2004, the Advisory Committee met 32 times in Brussels to discuss proposed Commission antitrust decisions: in all, 29 draft decisions were discussed. The Office of Fair Trading represented the UK at all meetings, usually accompanied by a representative of a UK sectoral regulator if there was a sectoral interest. The decisions discussed included one against Microsoft for abuse of its dominant position and 12 cartel cases, including those involving copper plumbing tubes, sorbate food preservatives and carbon and graphite products.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee on Concentrations between Undertakings met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [217902]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Advisory Committee on Protection Against Dumped Imports met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [217912]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee (i) on Fees, Implementation Rules and the Procedure of the Boards of Appeal of the Office of Harmonisation in the Internal Market (Trademarks and Designs), (ii) for the Implementation of the Multiannual Community Programme to Stimulate the Establishment of the Information Society in Europe and (iii) on Electronic Signatures met; when and where these meetings took place; which UK Government expert was present; and if she will make a statement. [218432]

Mr. Alexander: The Committee on Fees, Implementation Rules and the Procedure of the Boards of Appeal Council Working Group on Intellectual Property met eight times during the period of Irish and Dutch presidency only. The dates of the meetings were: 2 February, 19 February, 18 March, 27 May, 25 June, 10 September, 13 October and 11 November 2004. All the meetings took place in Brussels and were attended by officials from the Patent Office. Details of the regulations discussed at these meetings can be viewed on the Patent Office website at www.patent.gov.uk.

The Committee for the Implementation of the Multiannual Community Programme to Stimulate the Establishment of the Information Society in Europe met three times during the period of Irish and Dutch presidency only. The dates of the meetings were: 27 February, 26 March and 5 July 2004. All the meetings took place in Brussels and an Official from the UK's permanent representation attended the meetings on 26 March and 5 July, but there was no representation at 27 February 2004 meeting.

The Committee on Electronic Signatures did not meet during the course of the three presidencies.

EU Constitution

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of whether the EU constitution will increase the powers of the EU over trade policy. [203149]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 7 December 2004]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

EU Legislation

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support her Department will give to the development of a working partnership between developers, investors and the commercial sector to encourage their compliance with EU legislation. [217206]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 23 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

European Data Regulation

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the nature of information *(a)* exchanged, *(b)* stored and *(c)* passed on to non-EU countries in connection with Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 as identified in OJ L364 volume 47 of 9 December 2004; what right of access individuals will have to data on themselves; which agencies are expected to seek access to such data; and what the purpose is of this legislation. [215244]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

European Development Money

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if he will place in the Library a list of UK recipients of European Development Money funds since 1997, indicating in each case what *(a)* sums were received and *(b)* projects were supported. [207152]

Mr. Alexander: European money in respect of economic development is provided to UK recipients under European Structural Fund programmes which are supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and two smaller funds for agriculture (EAGGF) and fisheries (FIFG).

The programmes are all multi-annual and some are multi-fund, and individual programmes are identified by objective. The table sets out allocations by region and objective for the last three years of the 1994–99 programming period and the first five years of the 2000–06 period.

There are many thousands of individual projects supported by the funds, and details of expenditure on individual schemes could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

£ million

		Allocation							
Region	*Objective*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
North West	1	87	108	117	113	116	118	120	126
	2	88	100	103	83	80	77	73	76
South West	1	—	—	—	42	43	44	45	48
	2	8	9	18	23	17	17	—	—
	5b*	36	28	29	—	—	—	—	—
Yorkshire and the Humber	1	—	—	—	100	102	104	106	111
	2	73	85	87	49	48	48	47	50
East Midlands	2	23	23	24	36	35	35	34	33
	5b*	9	9	9	—	—	—	—	—
West Midlands	2	15	102	106	84	82	80	77	82
	5b*	6	5	5	—	—	—	—	—
East of England	2	—	—	—	15	15	15	14	16
	5b*	7	8	8	—	—	—	—	—
North East	2	81	82	85	64	65	65	65	71
London	2	21	23	24	23	23	23	23	27
South East	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
Northern Uplands	5b*	16	14	14	—	—	—	—	—
Highlands and Islands	1	34	41	44	—	—	—	—	—
	1 Transitional	—	—	—	54	46	38	29	32
Eastern Scotland	2	27	31	32	29	27	25	23	20
Western Scotland	2	61	71	73	52	49	47	44	40
South of Scotland	2	—	—	—	6	7	7	7	7
Borders	5b*	4	4	4	—	—	—	—	—

£ million

Region	Objective	1997	1998	1999	Allocation 2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Dumfries and Galloway	5b*	5	6	6	—	—	—	—	—
Stirling and Upper Tayside	5b*	3	3	3	—	—	—	—	—
Grampian	5b*	4	5	5	—	—	—	—	—
Northern Ireland	1	171	163	176	—	—	—	—	—
	1 Transitional	—	—	—	156	132	108	100	94
West Wales and the Valleys	1	—	—	—	157	161	164	167	182
East Wales	2	—	—	—	14	13	12	12	11
Industrial South Wales	2	54	49	51	—	—	—	—	—
Rural Wales	5b*	20	24	24	—	—	—	—	—
Gibraltar	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Great Britain	3	311	315	517	—	—	—	—	—
	4	—	28	137	—	—	—	—	—
England and Gibraltar	3	—	—	—	349	357	364	388	391
Scotland	3	—	—	—	42	43	44	45	47
Wales	3	—	—	—	10	11	11	11	12

Ex-directory Numbers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is planning to take to stop companies publishing ex-directory telephone numbers on the internet. [224900]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Ex-directory customers' numbers are not given out to third parties by BT, nor are they printed in phone books. However, being ex-directory does not mean a customer will never see their telephone number on a website. For example, telemarketing companies use databases to contact people. These are generally compiled by customers unwittingly completing coupons for special offers, magazine and catalogue tear off slips and other promotional questionnaires and flyers but forgetting to fill in the non-disclosure box (if available).

If it was proved that a telecoms company made public an ex-directory telephone number, the telecoms company would be in breach of the Data Protection Act and the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) would take appropriate action.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps her Department took to consult business organisations regarding the introduction of new Export Credits Guarantee Department forms. [224340]

Mr. Alexander: ECGD held discussions with trade associations representing the views of exporters who use ECGD's services, led by the CBI, regarding the most recent changes to Export Credits Guarantee Department forms, implemented on 1 December 2004.

Exporters

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects on exporters of the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad Scheme; and if she will make a statement. [217958]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many companies based in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* the rest of the UK have received assistance under the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad Scheme in each year since 1997; and what the average payment was. [217960]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

External Suppliers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many tenders were let by her Department to external suppliers in the financial year 2003–04; and what the value was. [209093]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Fast Patrol Vessel Defender

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 13 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 628–29W, on the Fast Patrol Vessel Defender, to whom the vessel was sold; when the vessel was sold; for what amount the vessel was sold; and if she will place a copy of the marine surveyor's assessment in the Library. [211098]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Fireworks

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has held with the RSPCA on ways of restricting the *(a)* sale and *(b)* use of noisy fireworks; and if she will make a statement. [223025]

Mr. Sutcliffe: In developing the Fireworks Regulations 2004, which, among other things, places restrictions on the sale and use of noisy fireworks, officials met with animal welfare representatives, including the RSPCA. All animal welfare organisations were also consulted formally on the proposed measures during the summer of 2004.

More recently, officials have met with the RSPCA to discuss the current noise levels of fireworks (as set out in the 2004 Regulations) and possible ways to achieve further reductions in sound levels.

Freedom of Information

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many inquiries have been made by members of the general public to her Department for information under Freedom of Information legislation since 1 January; and how many of these inquiries were responded to within 20 days. [213773]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what categories of information are available under Freedom of Information legislation that have not been provided in written parliamentary answers by her Department in the last three years. [207779]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what applications were made to her Department during January under the Freedom of Information Act 2000; what the cost was of discovery and distribution of the information requested; how many requests were answered within the statutory 20 days; and what reasons were given to those whose requests were rejected. [214236]

Ms Hewitt: My Department received 147 applications under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in January. No information is held centrally on the cost of dealing with these applications. 91 or 62 per cent. of the applications were answered within the statutory 20 days. 45 or 30 per cent. of the applications were refused in full or in part on the grounds of relevant exemptions provided for by the Act.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is in respect of the publication *(a)* on the departmental website and *(b)* by placing copies in the Library of (i) all or (ii) a selection of the information disclosed in response to Freedom of Information requests since January. [215219]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Future for Nuclear Group

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she established the Future for Nuclear group in her Department; what resources have been allocated to the group; which *(a)* officials and *(b)* contributors from outside her Department have participated in the group; in what format she expects the group to report; and when. [224714]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: No such group has been formed.

Growth Areas (Funding)

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funding her Department has earmarked for growth areas to ensure that they have the resources required to meet the demands of a growing population. [218331]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Handling Fees

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid to the Union of Democratic Miners in handling fees for coal health claims. [224774]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the results of the consultation on draft regulations to allow the NHS to re-coup costs under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003; and what recent discussions she has had with the Department of Health about the effect that these proposals will have on *(a)* small businesses and *(b)* the cost of employers' liability insurance. [210305]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Higher Education (York)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much was allocated to higher education institutions in the City of York by research councils in 2003–04; and how much she estimates will be allocated in 2004–05. [222290]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Inspection and Enforcement Costs

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the annual cost of inspection and enforcement activities carried out by *(a)* her

Department and *(b)* regulatory bodies and agencies sponsored by her Department was in (i) 1996–97 and (ii) 2003–04. [217779]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Maternity Leave/Pay

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 20 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1380W, on maternity leave, if she will estimate the average length of time taken in paid maternity leave by those receiving *(a)* statutory maternity pay and *(b)* maternity allowance in (i) the latest year for which figures are available and (ii) each of the previous five years. [207786]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the change in average length of time taken in paid maternity leave by those receiving *(a)* statutory maternity pay and *(b)* maternity allowance since the changes implemented in April 2003; and if she will make a statement. [207787]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the annual *(a)* administrative and *(b)* policy cost of extending maternity pay to (i) nine and (ii) 12 months for (A) small and medium-sized enterprises and (B) large businesses. [217780]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Medical Instruments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list companies in the UK making medical instruments, broken down by percentage of market share. [209505]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Migrant Workers

Dr. Pugh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the percentage of the migrant worker force who are employed by *(a)* employment agencies and *(b)* gangmasters. [219952]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Military Exports

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what end-use monitoring agreements relating to the export of military products have been signed since December 2002 with *(a)* Angola, *(b)* Cameroon, *(c)* Eritrea, *(d)* Ethiopia, *(e)* Ghana; *(f)* Kenya, *(g)* Mozambique, *(h)* Sierra Leone, *(i)* Sudan, *(j)* Tanzania, *(k)* Uganda, *(l)* Zambia, *(m)* Bolivia *(n)* Guyana and *(o)* Republic of Yemen; and what end-use monitoring mechanisms are in place in each case. [218894]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 10 March 2004]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Ministerial Engagements

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the ministerial engagements *(a)* out of London and *(b)* in London that she has cancelled since 1 January 2004. [209213]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

National Minimum Wage

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what penalties have been imposed on companies found paying their employees below the minimum wage. [215882]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Lorna Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have benefited from the minimum wage in Rochdale. [217375]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Edinburgh, North and Leith have benefited from the national minimum wage. [222907]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

New Businesses

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have been established in Coventry since 1997. [223386]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have been created in the Huddersfield constituency since 1997; and how much support in *(a)* loans and *(b)* grants the Government have given to such businesses during that time. [216920]

Jacqui Smith: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Newcastle-under-Lyme

Paul Farrelly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much Newcastle-under-Lyme has received in European Objective 2 funding since 1997; and which projects have benefited from such funding. [223258]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The total amount of grants offered to projects in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997 is £5,790,229.

26 objective 2 projects have been funded in Newcastle-under-Lyme since 1997, including Crackley Community and Training Centre and High Carr Business Park;

Newspaper Registration Scheme

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions took place with the devolved Administrations prior to the ending of the newspaper registration scheme. [222845]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I am not aware of any discussions that took place between the Department and the devolved Administrations about the withdrawal of the newspaper registration service. The decision was an operational and commercial matter for Royal Mail.

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost of the newspaper registration scheme was to the Royal Mail in each year since 2000; and what percentage of Royal Mail turnover in each year those figures represented. [222846]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The cost of the newspaper registration service and its cost as a percentage of turnover are commercial matters for Royal Mail. My officials have asked Royal Mail to issue a direct reply to the hon. Member.

Mr. Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultations took place between the Royal Mail and her Department on the abolition of the newspaper registration scheme; and what representations she made as a result. [222847]

Mr. Sutcliffe: No consultations took place between Royal Mail and the Department about the withdrawal of the newspaper registration service. This was an operational and commercial matter for Royal Mail.

NIREX

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, if she will make a statement on the future structure of Nirex. [224847]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Government have honoured their commitment, given in a statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 21 July 2004, to establish a new Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) to hold the shares of Nirex and oversee its business operations. These new arrangements took effect on 1 April 2005 with the CLG being jointly owned by DTI and Defra.

This CLG will, effectively, provide a means of placing Nirex assets and intellectual property into trust, whilst enabling it to continue with its important work that includes setting standards for the conditioning and packaging of radioactive waste, until the Government can take their decision on policy for the long-term management of the UK's higher activity radioactive waste, and the means of its delivery, in light of recommendations from the independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM).

These new arrangements achieve both of the Government's previously stated objectives, to make Nirex independent of industry and bring the company under greater Government control.

Nuclear Power/Security

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are being taken in her Department to prepare for the construction of additional nuclear power generating capacity; and what discussions she has had with *(a)* Sir David King and *(b)* Mr. Geoffrey Norris on the subject. [224741]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* The Department's policy on nuclear power remains as set out in the 2003 Energy White Paper, Cm 5761.

I have had discussions with both Sir David King and Geoffrey Norris on many aspects of energy policy in the last year.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the future costs of ensuring the secure status of *(a)* nuclear installations to the end of their decommissioning and *(b)* nuclear materials until they are no longer useable in a malevolent fashion; and what measures have been put in place to ensure such future security. [217486]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many potential threats as defined by the Nuclear Industries Security Regulations 2003 have occurred at each licensed nuclear installation since 1 January 2004. [217495]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Nuclear Waste

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her policy is on the import of spent nuclear fuel into the UK for disposal. [224023]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is not Government policy to import spent nuclear fuel into the UK for disposal.

Since 1976, all new contracts entered into by BNFL for reprocessing spent nuclear fuel from overseas have contained options for BNFL to return the waste, along with the uranium and plutonium for recycling.

Any new proposals will be subject to public consultation and will require the approval of the Secretary of State. In the event that such a proposal was received, the Government would assess that case on its merits, including under the terms of the Bergen declaration, considering the implications of increasing the current volume of fuel to be reprocessed through BNFL's Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP).

Decisions would be taken in the best interests of the UK as a whole, in light of advice from the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Office of Civil Nuclear Security

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry who is responsible for the work of the Office of Civil Nuclear Security in Wales; and whether the Office has field inspectors based solely in Wales. [223104]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry is responsible for nuclear security in the UK, and this is carried out on her behalf by the Director of Civil Nuclear Security. Office for Civil Nuclear Security inspectors are allocated responsibility for sites according to the security need: there are none dedicated solely to Wales.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the projects being undertaken by her Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216638]

Ms Hewitt: A decision not to release information relating to any project as a result of commercial confidentiality is made on the basis of the specific request made in each parliamentary question.

An assessment of commercial confidentiality may apply to a specific element within a project as well as to an entire project. It is, therefore, not possible to provide the information requested.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will answer the question, reference 202791, tabled for answer on 6 December 2004. [219729]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she will reply to question reference 210278, tabled for answer on 20 January. [221162]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Patent Office

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Patent Office is undertaking a consultation with business about the new intellectual property system she proposes that Office develops; and whether the resulting system development will be put out to tender. [224119]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The Government have stressed the importance of an intellectual property system which continues to promote innovation. We remain committed to consulting fully with all interested parties, including business, on all developments to that system.

Photovoltaic Cells/Energy

Mr. McWalter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the case for continuing funding to companies who are developing photovoltaic cells; and if she will make a statement on the contribution which the photovoltaic industry can make to reduction in carbon emissions. [221637]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* DTI provides research funding to companies developing photovoltaic (PV) cells through the DTI Technology Programme. The overall research budget for emerging energy technologies is £20 million per annum.

Funding for installation of the technology is through the PV Major Demonstration Programme and grants go to householders and public organisations, not direct to the companies installing the technology.

The Renewables Innovation Review, published by DTI and The Carbon Trust in February 2004, recommended continued support for research and development into next generation PV technologies. The report stated that PV was not expected to be fully economic compared to retail price until post 2020; however next generation solutions could bring this forward.

The Renewables Innovation Review estimated that the potential contribution of PV towards reducing carbon emissions was 3 Mt by 2050 (total contribution from renewable energy aspiration of 20 Mt).

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reasons the Government plans to phase out grant support for photovoltaic energy systems; and what further plans the Government have to *(a)* promote and *(b)* support PV development. [220937]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Government have no plans to phase out support for photovoltaics. The current capital grant programme, the major PV demonstration programme, is due to end in March 2006 and the Department will continue its support for PV through a "low carbon buildings" programme.

The Renewable Innovation Review February 2004, recommended this more holistic approach to energy use in buildings incorporating both energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The low carbon buildings programme is currently under development and there will be formal consultation on this later this year. The programme is expected to begin operating in 2006–07.

Post Office Closures

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations were received by *(a)* her Department, *(b)* Postwatch and *(c)* the Royal Mail from the hon. Member for South Dorset in (i) 2003 and (ii) 2004 regarding the proposed closure of seven sub-post offices in Weymouth. [222598]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Under the public consultation arrangements for sub-post office closure proposals as part of the urban reinvention programme, Members of Parliament and other interested parties were invited to make any representations concerning such proposals to Post Office Ltd. and Postwatch. The Department does

not have details of representations about proposed urban reinvention programme proposals for South Dorset made to Post Office Ltd. or Postwatch, but I understand that, in the light of representations received, the proposed closure of Southhill sub-post office was permanently withdrawn from the programme.

Post Offices

Mr. Watts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on future ownership of the Post Office. [224755]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Jenkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on provision of post office services in Amington ward in Tamworth. [220790]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Provision of post office services is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). My officials have asked POL to issue a direct reply to the hon. Member.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [223151]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government do not hold this information. This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. (POL). My officials have asked POL to issue a direct reply to the hon. Member.

Professional Fees

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much had been paid for professional fees in respect of coal health claims to the top 20 highest paid solicitor practices at the latest date for which figures are available. [224772]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid for solicitors to date for professional fees in respect of coal health claims. [224773]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Project Costs

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the 10 largest *(a)* research and development and *(b)* construction projects sponsored by her Department since 1997 that are yet to recoup outlay are; what the total cost to date is of each project; what the annual maintenance cost is of each; and what the estimated time is before outlay will be recovered. [211383]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Regional Bodies

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of her Department. [220431]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Regional Development Agencies

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much in EU grants was distributed through regional development agencies in each of the last three years; and what the total amount distributed to *(a)* North Yorkshire and *(b)* South Yorkshire was in each year. [224557]

Mr. Alexander: According to the published accounts of the regional development agencies (RDAs), EU grants or funding received by the RDAs amounted to £25.9 million in 2002–3 and £112.5 million in 2003–04. Figures are not yet available for 2004–05.

The amount distributed by Yorkshire Forward to North Yorkshire was £1.3 million in 2002–03 and £0.8 million 2003–04. As an objective one region with a large urban demographic eligible for regeneration funding, South Yorkshire received £3.5 million in 2002–03 and £17.3 million in 2003–04.

Renewables

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 18 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 482W, on renewables, what the reasons are for the difference between the figure given in the answer and the target figure quoted on the departmental website. [224118]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The two figures differ in respect of coverage. The figure quoted on the Department's website relates to generation from all types of renewable plant and includes renewable sources that are not eligible for the Renewables Obligation (i.e. large hydroelectric plant and incineration of mixed wastes). The figure given in answer to the hon. Member's previous question on this subject, on 18 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 482W, concerns electricity supplied to final consumers (which is inevitably less than that generated) and was confined to sources eligible for the Renewables Obligation.

All estimates are regularly revised in the light of updated energy projections and the latest information on progress of major renewable projects.

Research and Development

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* resource allocation and *(b)* competition deadlines for the Grants for Research and Development are for each region in 2005–06. [217806]

Ms Hewitt: It has not-proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the occasions on which sections of uranium nuclear reactor fuel rods have been discovered outside the area where special nuclear materials are required to be held, with particular reference to Pelham House, Calderbridge. [221679]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: On 24 March 2000 the Environment Agency were notified of the discovery of a radioactive rod at Mormet Alloys in Tamworth. The Environment Agency reported that there was no indication of any hazard to members of the public and that no radioactive contamination had been found at the site. This rod would appear to have been one of two produced in the early 1960s by UKAEA Springfields (now BNFL) for engineering testing purposes. The rod was provided on loan to CA Parsons Ltd in Newcastle. This company was involved with construction consortia involved in the building of nuclear power stations. Because of the destruction of advice and delivery notes under the 30 year rule and the loss of the Parsons files it is impossible to establish if the rod was ever returned to Springfields by Parsons. The rod had been extensively damaged including the removal of both ends which would have had stamped identification numbers.

The rod was taken to Winfrith (and subsequently NNC at Risley) for analysis and then to Springfields for storage.

I understand from BNFL, British Energy and UKAEA that their current records show no other occasions on which sections of uranium nuclear reactor fuels rods have been discovered outside the areas where special nuclear materials are required to be held.

Skills Training Agency

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will assess progress made since 13 March 1989 in safeguarding pension arrangements for Skills Training Agency staff who transferred into the private sector. [217131]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 21 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Small Businesses

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry from which regulations the Small Business Service has pressed for an exemption for small businesses since 2000; and on which occasions an exemption was awarded. [217782]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses in York have been helped by the Small Business Service since 1997. [224646]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what representations she has received from *(a)* industry and *(b)* trade associations in the past three months on her proposal to reduce support for small firms attending trade fairs and missions abroad. [224778]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received from small and medium-sized enterprises following changes to the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad scheme; and what response her Department will make to those representations. [223332]

Mr. Alexander: About 150 companies, mainly small and medium-sized enterprises, have made representations about the impact of proposed changes to the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad scheme (SESA). These proposals seek to integrate SESA assistance more fully with other support services from UK Trade and Investment and focus more resources on new-to-export companies in line with the SR 2004 settlement. UK Trade and Investment has carried out extensive consultations with accredited trade organisations, many of whom represent SMEs, and the issues raised will be taken into account in the re-design of support.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what guidance has been issued by her Department to advise small and medium-sized businesses on *(a)* protecting the security of staff and property and *(b)* contingency plans in the event of a terrorist attack. [217804]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Solar Heating

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will continue the funding of grants for the installation of domestic solar water heating systems. [224827]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Solar Photovoltaics

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of her Department's Solar Photovoltaics Major Demonstration Programme on private sector investment in the UK solar photovoltaic industry. [220502]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 14 March 2005]*: The Major PV Demonstration Programme is due to be assessed in 2005. This assessment will consider how well the programme has addressed its objectives to:

raise awareness of PV in the U.K;

generate investment in the PV industry;

assure quality installations of PV;
generate growth and competition;
reduce product/install costs over time;
establish a sustainable PV market in U.K.

In this context, the assessment will consider the impact of the programme on the number of jobs created.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1713W, on solar photovoltaics, how many projects were included in the 2004 Photovoltaic Demonstration Programme; and what plans she has *(a)* to promote and *(b)* to extend the programme. [221738]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Unfortunately due to a double counting error the figure given in reply to PQ No 220204 was incorrect.

The number of installations in calendar year 2004 is as follows:

	Projects	*kWp installed*
For Stream 1	236	513.936
For Stream 2	39	883.877
Total installed		1,397

The current capital grants programme is due to end in March 2006 and the Department will continue its support for PV through a "low carbon buildings" programme. The renewable innovation review, February 2004, recommended this more holistic approach to energy use in buildings incorporating both energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. The low carbon buildings programme is currently under development and there will be formal consultation shortly. The programme is expected to begin operating in 2006–07.

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her Department's estimate of the number of full-time equivalent jobs in the UK solar PV sector is in the last year for which information is available; and if she will make a statement. [220904]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It is estimated that the number of full-time equivalent jobs in the UK solar PV sector in 2003 was 337. This is based on data collected by the International Agency—Photovoltaics Power Systems Programme and reported in the 2003 National Survey Report. In addition the Survey records 66 jobs in solar PV research and development (non industry based).

Special Representative for International Trade and Investment

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the appointment process was for the Special Representative for International Trade and Investment; and what the *(a)* role and *(b)* responsibilities of the Special Representative were. [224566]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The Duke of York was appointed to the role in support of British Trade International (BTI) (which in 2003 became UK Trade and Investment), by Her Majesty The Queen, after consultation with The Cabinet Office, BTI and The Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He was given the title "UK Special Representative for International Trade and Investment". His Royal Highness formally assumed this voluntary and unpaid position on 1 October 2001.

The roles and responsibilities of the UK's Special Representative for Trade and Investment are set out in the 2004 UK Trade and Investment Departmental Report available in the Libraries of the House.

Statutory Audit Requirements (Yorkshire)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many businesses in *(a)* York and *(b)* Yorkshire were exempt from the statutory audit requirement in 1997; and how many are exempt from that requirement. [224645]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Stem Cell Research

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what financial commitment her Department plans to make to stem cell research in *(a)* 2005, *(b)* 2006, *(c)* 2007 and *(d)* 2008. [220508]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Support and Exhibitions

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what *(a)* criteria she has used and *(b)* research she has commissioned in order to assess the effects on the economy of reforms made by her Department to the Support for Exhibitions and Seminars Abroad scheme. [220559]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the value of sales of surplus assets from her Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220974]

Ms Hewitt: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Telecom Billing Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations she has received about Telecom Billing Services Ltd. and their premium rate service. [224871]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department received four letters from MPs in the course of 2004 about Telecoms Billing Services Ltd. (TBS). The constituents had been billed by TBS for a service they had not used.

Television Sets (Recycling)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the cost to local authorities of recycling television sets. [223827]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Town Centres (Businesses)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what financial incentives the Government *(a)* have in place and *(b)* are planning to support (i) small and (ii) specialised businesses to remain open in town centres. [205288]

Nigel Griffiths: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Trade Agreements

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the US Administration about its policy on countries entering into international environmental agreements as a condition of bilateral trade agreements. [213226]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Trade Balance

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment she has made of trends in the UK's balance of trade figures. [217364]

Mr. Alexander: The latest official figures from the 2005 Budget report for the UK's total balance of trade in goods and services for 2004 show a deficit representing 3.3 per cent. of GDP. The Treasury forecasts this to fall to between 3 per cent. to 3.1 per cent. of GDP by 2007.

Trade Development Schemes

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has undertaken into the impact of reducing the role of trade associations and chambers of commerce in delivering UK Trade and Investment's trade development schemes. [224790]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Gentleman in the time available before Prorogation.

Trading Relationships (Food)

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many representations her Department has received in each of the last three years for which figures are available in respect of the nature of trading relationships from primary producers to supermarkets through the food supply chain. [208807]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 17 January 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Trading Standards

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many successful prosecutions there have been by trading standards officers in each of the last five years under the Property Misdescriptions Act 1991; and if she will make a statement. [220545]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Trident

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what calculation his Department has made of the *(a)* physical, *(b)* environmental and *(c)* health impacts of the detonation of a single trident nuclear warhead on an urban area. [224987]

Mr. Hoon: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

UK Gas Market

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will urge the European Commission to undertake an investigation into the operation of the UK wholesale gas market; and if she will make a statement. [202791]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when UK Trade and Investment will begin to limit its support to new exporters. [224789]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

UK-Israel Trade Relations

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of bilateral trade relations between the UK and Israel *(a)* between 1997 and 2001 and *(b)* since 2001. [223868]

Mr. Alexander: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Finchley and Golders Green (Dr. Vis) on 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 674–75W.

Under-age Drinking

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what statistics trading standards officers are required to compile on the sale of alcohol to under-age individuals; [209243]

(2) what guidance the Government have issued to local authority trading standards officers on measures they should take towards reducing under-age drinking. [209244]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Underprivileged People Overseas

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government takes to ensure that overseas operations by companies registered in the UK do not harm underprivileged people overseas; and what form of redress such people may seek if they believe that they have been harmed by such activities. [223709]

Mr. Alexander: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Union of Democratic Mineworkers

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will suspend her Department's handling agreement with the Union of Democratic Mineworkers subsidiary company Vendside while concerns raised about financial irregularities are investigated. [223380]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* No. Suspending the agreement with Vendside who have handled 59,000 claims would freeze payments to all the sick miners and their widows currently using Vendside. To date I am not aware that the hon. Member has been able to substantiate his claims of financial irregularity.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive on the disposal of waste goods. [223828]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Wind Power

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many megawatts of installed capacity of wind power have been *(a)* applied for and *(b)* approved in each of the last five years in (i) England, (ii) Scotland and (iii) Wales. [221696]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The DTI is responsible for considering applications for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act for wind farm projects of more than 50MW onshore and more than 1MW offshore in England and Wales. The DTI is also responsible for applications under the Transport and Work Act (TWA) for offshore wind farm projects in England only: the NAW has responsibility for TWA projects in Welsh waters.

Smaller wind farm projects, less than 50MW, are dealt with by the relevant local planning authority, which should hold the details of these.

For Scotland, the Scottish Executive is responsible for the consenting function for wind farm projects over 50MW.

The figures within the table are based on the information obtained by the DTI for all wind farm projects both large (under section 36) and smaller (outside section 36).

MW

	England applied	*England approved*	*Wales applied*	*Wales approved*	*Scotland applied*	*Scotland approved*
2000	17.086	8.89	99.623	30.203	110.01	19.62
2001	33.51	33.51	13.542	4.675	621.12	154.96
2002	971.992	28.827	175.3	229.03	1099.9405	187.5325
2003	376.024	795.2075	24.9125	0	1018.1746	543.0946
2004	550.552	5.61	31.26	0	4804.345	366.5

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Beef Exports

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what steps she is taking to *(a)* promote British beef to countries which refuse to permit its importation and *(b)* secure the lifting of the ban on the import of British beef; and if she will raise the matter at the World Trade Organisation; [224962]

(2) what her policy is on the export of British beef to countries which have not stated whether they will allow British beef to be imported; [224963]

(3) what action she has taken to secure a change of policy in countries which refuse to permit the importation of British beef. [224964]

Mr. Bradshaw: Where countries ban British beef or have not stated whether they allow imports, we make use of bilateral contacts at all levels as they arise to press the case for our exports. The European Commission has also played an active role in tackling bans on EU beef in general. However, while the over-30 months (OTM) rule remains in place and while we can export only beef produced under the date based export scheme, the UK will remain a major importer of beef. When the OTM rule is replaced by BSE testing and EU export restrictions are lifted, we will agree a targeted lobbying strategy with industry focussed on countries that provide significant export opportunities. This will include working with the European Commission on third country issues. The Commission would pursue with WTO as appropriate.

Abandoned Vehicles

Mike Gapes: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many abandoned vehicles were recovered in *(a)* 2000–01, *(b)* 2001–02, *(c)* 2002–03 and *(d)* 2003–04, broken down by region. [225030]

Alun Michael: Revised estimates for the numbers of abandoned vehicles removed and destroyed between 2000–01 and 2003–04 are listed in the table.

Thousands

Region	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
North east	3.1	3.2	6.7	7.3
North west	10.1	10.6	13.8	13.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	7.9	12.7	15.4	14.0
East Midlands	12.3	16.9	19.3	15.9
West Midlands	13.9	13.1	16.1	13.7
East	30.6	42.2	44.9	35.5
London	83.9	104.5	94.5	59.7
South east	43.9	57.5	53.4	40.8
South west	17.9	23.7	27.7	21.4
England totals	223.5	284.4	291.7	221.6

Burnley

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Burnley constituency, the effects on Burnley of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [214693]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Burnley constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Burnley.

Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04 and 25 per cent. by 2005–06. Since 2001, Defra has established a number of funding mechanisms to help local authorities achieve their targets. As a result of allocations from these funds the residents of Burnley should reap the benefits over the next few years. Since 2001 a total of £1,131,245 has been awarded to the borough to expand kerbside recycling schemes.

In March 2005 I announced that Lancashire has been selected as the rural pathfinder in the North West—one of eight rural pathfinders in different regions of England. The pathfinder initiative is a key part of Rural Strategy and reflects the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making and resources to the local level. The Lancashire rural pathfinder will ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the common agricultural policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm-based schemes in the Burnley constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £780,824.36.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

CAP Payments

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the

Government will press for the introduction of a ceiling on Common Agricultural Policy payments to individuals. [224710]

Alun Michael: The Government are committed to further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy but does not intend to press for a ceiling on individual payments since this could actually slow the process of reform. Only cutting CAP payments to the EU's largest farms would penalise those which would tend to be better able to compete in a less subsidy dependent market. The measure could, therefore, have the counter-intuitive effect of disproportionately supporting those EU farm businesses most likely to resist further reform. A ceiling on CAP payments would also penalise the UK in relation to most other EU member states, as UK farms tend to be larger than the EU average.

Cattle Birth Notifications

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress officials in her Department have made since 11 December 2004 on reviewing arrangements for enforcing the deadline for birth notifications of cattle. [224959]

Mr. Bradshaw: Discussions between Defra, Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly officials are continuing. Unfortunately legal issues have proved more difficult to resolve than was initially hoped. Officials are currently considering whether an administrative solution can be found. If this is not possible legislative changes will be necessary. Industry representatives continue to be involved in informal discussions.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many civil servants in her Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223899]

Alun Michael: The information is as follows.

(a) In financial year 2004–05, Defra relocated 124 members of staff from London and the south east. This figure can be broken down as follows:

50 to Workington,

31 to York

20 to Worcester,

13 to Carlisle and

10 to a variety of sites in the Rural Development Service.

(b) Defra's overall target is to relocate at least 390 members of staff from the south east by the end of financial year 2007–08. This will be achieved through a number of major change programmes. Most of these relocations are expected to be to York and Worcester.

Common Agricultural Policy

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the EU Agriculture Commissioner on the degree of control over agricultural policy available to the Governments of member states. [224662]

Alun Michael: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, has had discussions with the EU Agriculture Commissioner formally and informally on a number of occasions since the Commissioner took office in November. In particular, they have discussed the proposal for a new Rural Development Regulation, and the possibilities within it for greater simplification and flexibility for member states.

Contaminated Land

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much funding her Department has allocated to the Environment Agency for the development and delivery of training to local authority staff working on land affected by contamination in each year since Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 was brought into effect; how much has been allocated to the Environment Agency for this purpose in 2005–06; what output her Department agreed with the Agency; and what has been delivered to date. [224097]

Mr. Morley: From the grant-in-aid from my Department for its activities the Environment Agency spent £150,000 and £108,000 in 2003–04 and 2004–05 respectively to develop and deliver training events with places for local authority staff, with supporting materials, in connection with Part IIA (contaminated land). Specific costs for earlier years are not readily available but are of similar order of magnitude to 2003–04. The Agency has not currently allocated any sums for such training in 2005–06.

Training events in 2004–05 covered "Model Procedures" (Contaminated Land Report 11, published in October 2004), "Site investigation for the regulation of contaminated land" (nine events), "Part IIA Documentation" (four events), and "Evaluating Human Health Risk Assessments" (one event).

Correspondence

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will provide a response to the hon. Member for Bassetlaw regarding odour emissions from Mission mushroom farm. [224902]

Alun Michael: My noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, replied to my hon. Friend on 31 January 2005 and wrote again with an update on the 10 March 2005. Officials are now re-drafting the relevant statutory guidance for mushroom substrate manufacturing prior to a wider consultation.

Countryside Stewardship

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many Countryside Stewardship payments for 2004–05 have been paid. [224331]

Alun Michael: The scheme year for Countryside Stewardship runs from 1 October to 30 September. Annual management payments are made in arrears for the previous scheme year. Therefore claims for the 2004–05 year are not due for payment until October 2005.

Claims for Capital Items under CSS (one-off items of work such as hedge and wall restoration) may be submitted at any time during the scheme year in which they are scheduled. In the 2004–05 scheme year, 1,187 claims have been received for Capital Items of which 947 have been paid.

Dairy Farming

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what mechanism is used for the distribution of dairy premium and additional dairy payment to dairy farmers in England. [225028]

Alun Michael: Dairy premium and the additional payment were introduced by the EU as direct payments to dairy farmers. In 2004 milk producers qualified for the dairy premium based upon the quota available on their holdings as at 31 March 2004. The UK was granted the sum of 53.4 million Euros to be distributed to producers on the basis of objective criteria and in such a way as to ensure equal treatment between producers. The UK decided to pay the additional payment as a top up to the dairy premium.

In 2004 producers were required to apply for dairy premium and additional payment by completing an integrated administration and control system application form. Claims for England, Northern Ireland and Wales were processed by the Rural Payments Agency.

For 2005, producers will claim dairy premium and additional payment through their single payment scheme claim form. Eligibility will be similar to 2004. Producers will not be receiving separate payments this year as both elements will be included in the single payment.

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of dairy premium and additional dairy payment will be distributed to non-dairy farmers in England. [225029]

Alun Michael: No payment will be distributed to non-dairy farmers in England as dairy premium and the additional payment are only paid to milk producers who held quota that was available on the holding at the end of the quota year. A producer is defined in the EU regulations as a farmer with a holding located within the geographic territory of a member state, who produces and markets milk or who is preparing to do so in the very near future

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many dairy farmers there were in *(a)* Lancashire and *(b)* Chorley in the last year for which figures are available. [223793]

Alun Michael: The following figures show the number of holdings in Lancashire and Chorley where dairy is the predominant activity and the total number of farmers, partners, directors and spouses on these holdings. All figures are for 2003.

	Dairy holdings	*Farmers, partners, directors and spouses working on dairy holdings*
(a) Lancashire		
Lancashire county	875	1,970
Blackpool unitary	0	0
Blackburn and Darwen unitary	28	54
(b) Chorley	58	124

Source:
June Agricultural Census

Departmental Land Purchases

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what acreage of land formerly owned by Solway Light Aviation at Great Orton Airfield has been acquired by her Department; and what acreage of arable and other land at Kirkbride has been conveyed to Solway Light Aviation by her Department. [224629]

Alun Michael: The Department conveyed Kirkbride Airfield to Solway Light Aviation in exchange for their interest in the airfield at Great Orton which was acquired by the Department in 2001. The total site area at Great Orton is 83 hectares (approximately 205 acres). We do not hold details of the site area for Kirkbride Airfield.

Departmental Policies

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical evidence relating as closely as possible to the Coventry, South constituency, the effects in Coventry South of changes to her Department's policies since 1997. [219691]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition, the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Coventry South constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Coventry South.

Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04 and 25 per cent. by

2005–06. Since 2001, Defra has established a number of funding mechanisms to help local authorities achieve their targets. As a result of allocations from these funds the residents of Coventry South should reap the benefits over the next few years. The main source of funding for Coventry city council's waste management services, as for all local authorities, is through the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (EPCS) block of annual Government grant. It is for the local authority to decide what proportion of the block is invested in waste management, including recycling, services. Coventry city council has also been allocated the following additional funding and support:

£1,450,000 through the National Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund over the period 2002–03 to 2003–04 for kerbside collection of green waste and paper;

£84,026 from Defra to relieve spending pressures on waste in 2004–05; and

£240,478 through the Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant in 2005–06.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the common agricultural policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm-based schemes in the Coventry South constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £23,147.13.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to the constituency, the effect of her Department's actions and policies on Blackpool, South constituency since *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2001. [215748]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take my hon. Friend directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office for National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk.

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Blackpool, South constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office for National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Blackpool, South.

Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to deliver a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04 and 25 per cent. by 2005–06. Defra has, since its establishment in 2001, set up a number of funding mechanisms to help local authorities achieve their targets.

It is not possible to be specific as to how successful the Blackpool, South constituency has been in obtaining some of the available funding. However, as a result of allocations from these funds, the residents of the borough of Blackpool should, over the next few years, reap the benefits. Since 2001 a total of £1,106,836 has been awarded to the borough to expand kerbside recycling schemes.

Defra has overall policy responsibility for flood and coastal erosion risk in England and funds most of the activities of the Environment Agency (EA) in this area. Defra also provides grant aid on a project-by-project basis to the other flood and coastal defence operating authorities (local authorities and internal drainage boards) to support their investment in improvement works.

Improvement projects funded by Defra, including those of the EA, must meet specified economic, technical and environmental criteria and achieve an appropriate "priority score" to be eligible for funding. Defra does not build defences, nor direct the authorities on what specific projects to carry out. The works programme to manage risk is driven by the operating authorities.

Details of Defra grant aid paid to Blackpool borough council for coast protection works carried out under the Coast Protection Act from 1997 to date are:

	£
1997	3,246,295
1998	5,333,593
1999	2,693,727
2000	6,320,596
2001	1,295,302
2002	1,850,269
2003	1,128,269
2004	400,873
2005	670,003

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the Common Agricultural Policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Knowsley, North

and Sefton, East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm based schemes in the Blackpool, South constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £4,426.59

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Exfensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs 0if she will set out, with statistical information relating as closely as possible to Chorley constituency, the effect of her Department's policies and actions on Chorley constituency since 1997. [216194]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Chorley constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Chorley.

Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to deliver a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04 and 25 per cent. by 2005–06.

Defra has, since its establishment in 2001, set up a number of funding mechanisms to help local authorities achieve their targets. As a result of allocations from these funds the residents of Chorley should, over the next few years, reap the benefits. Since 2001 a total of £1,016,646 has been awarded to the borough to expand kerbside recycling schemes.

In March 2005 we announced Lancashire as one of eight rural pathfinders in England. The pathfinder initiative is a key part of the Government's Rural Strategy and reflects the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making and resources to the local level. The Lancashire rural pathfinder will ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the Common Agricultural Policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East, (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm based schemes in the Chorley constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £1,207,777.07.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to West Dorset constituency, the effects on West Dorset of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [215978]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the West Dorset constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits West Dorset.

The Environment Agency has been active on the ground in West Dorset dealing with water quality problems. This work has been part of the "Cycleau Project", a European Interreg IIIB funded project that aims to:

Find innovative ways of managing and improving the water environment.

Share knowledge and experience of water management.

Involve local communities in the management of local rivers.

More details are on the website. www.cycleau.com

In West Dorset most of the activity has been in the River Char catchment area (upstream of Charmouth). The Environment Agency is the lead partner with FWAG delivering advice and grant aid. The main concern has been to ensure that the beach at Charmouth meets its Bathing Water standards with failures in the past resulting from diffuse farm pollution. There are about 35 farms in the Char catchment and so far about 20 farmers have been involved in the project. Funding is £70,000 over three years, up to 2006

West Dorset forms part of the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and as such is supported by Defra (through the Countryside Agency) for core funding. Core funding since 2002 has been £574,200 that is further enhanced by contributions from all the district authorities and the county council.

Defra has supported Leader+ through the Dorset Chalk and Cheese programme, and awarded £1,217,456 EU and £591,558 Defra funding, to run a six year community based programme (2000–06), in parts of rural West Dorset.

The Voluntary and Community Sector in Dorset has benefited from joint funding with the Home Office through the Capacity Building and Infrastructure Strategy Programme. The rural preparatory programme to June 2004 awarded £20,000 to Churches Together in Dorset (CTD), Dorset Community Action (DCA) and Dorset Race Equality Council and sought primarily to:

Build a broader consortium of rural partners, and develop Vision" for closer collaboration in the longer term.

Develop a "Countywide Investment Plan" for Voluntary Sector Infrastructure

The Change Up programme that follows on from this will see Defra and the Home Office supporting a Dorset Consortia to continue with this work and West Dorset is sure to benefit.

The England Rural Development Programme has supported a number of grants in West Dorset for Vocational Training Schemes, for example training farm staff and on organic skills. Processing and Marketing grants of £105,577 were given to support farms and food processing plants. The Rural Enterprise Scheme gave grants of £466,671 to support rural businesses including a livery stable, equatic centre and food processing plant.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the Common Agricultural Policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East, (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–1150W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity:

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm based schemes in the West Dorset constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £9,929,067.25

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Preseli, Pembrokeshire constituency, the effects on Preseli, Pembrokeshire of her Department's policies and actions since it was established. [211322]

Alun Michael: Most policy areas for which Defra has responsibility are devolved and fall to the National Assembly for Wales in respect of Welsh constituencies. Statistics for Welsh constituencies are also generally a matter for the Assembly.

Mr. Sedgemore: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to South-East Cambridgeshire constituency, the effects on South-East Cambridgeshire of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216020]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the South East Cambridgeshire constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits South East Cambridgeshire. Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04, and 25 per cent. by

2005–06. The county of Cambridgeshire continues to make a substantial contribution to achieving national recycling targets. The county's recycling performance in 2003–04, the most recent year for which data are available, was 29 per cent., against the national average for that year of 16.9 per cent.

The Government are committed to increasing the amount of electricity supplied by renewable sources in the UK to 10 per cent. by 2010. Between 1990 and 1998, the percentage of electricity generated from renewable sources in Cambridgeshire increased from zero, or very little, to around 0.9 per cent. In the last four years, this figure has increased to around 6 per cent. This dramatic increase is mainly attributable to the opening of a straw burning power station in Sutton near Ely in late 2001.

An area of the East of England, which covers a large part of the South East Cambridgeshire constituency, is one of the eight rural delivery pathfinders announced by the Minister of State, Alun Michael, at Ely on 14 March. The pathfinder initiative is a key part of the Government's Rural Strategy and reflects the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making and resources to the local level. The Fens rural pathfinder will ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes by testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses. Partners in pathfinder areas are currently worked on their detailed proposals of actions they will undertake, but a summary can be obtained via the following web address: www. idea-knowledge, gov.uk/idk/core/page. do?pageId =335795

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the Common Agricultural Policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East, (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm based schemes in the South East Cambridgeshire constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £12, 865, 707.74.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Mr. Chris Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to Witney constituency, the effects on Witney of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [215977]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take my right hon. Friend directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition the Office for National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk.

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Witney constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office for National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the Common Agricultural Policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Knowsley, North and Sefton, East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm based schemes in the Witney constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £13,661,576.34.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Other benefits

The following information may also help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Witney through a selection of activities which have taken place in Oxfordshire.

Applications for the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) have been received from within the County of Oxfordshire. As at 2004 Oxfordshire had 594 agri-environment schemes which is the highest number of any other county in the region. Grant paid under the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme and Farm Woodland Scheme since 2000 is £1.2 million and £112,000 has been under the Habitat Scheme since 2001. £565,000 has been paid under the Project Based Schemes since 2001.

Clinics for the promotion of good quality applications under the ERDP are held regularly by the Defra Rural Development Service in Reading and Guildford.

West Oxfordshire is one of five areas in the South East region that has funding under the LEADER + programme, with European Union support, for experimental development of rural projects and community initiatives. Over 20 projects have, or are being funded, through the programme in Oxfordshire with further projects due to start this year. Projects aim to improve quality of life and particularly target younger and older people, women, rural business and workers affected by rural restructuring.

The Countryside Agency is supporting a number of projects in the area. The Vital Villages Programme began in 2001 and provides financial support for rural transport projects, projects to enhance and establish key rural services and to assist parishes with producing a parish plan. Funding for this programme in West Oxfordshire exceeds £1 million.

Defra has worked to implement the vision of the Rural White Paper to support vibrant rural communities through the proactive work of Oxfordshire rural community council which delivers support and services on the ground to rural communities. In the three years from 2001–04 over £800,000 has been invested in supporting rural transport, rural retail services, the provision of affordable homes in rural communities, community development work and work with socially excluded groups in rural areas across Oxfordshire. The money channelled by Defra through the RCC for this work, has also been instrumental at a local level, in levering other sources of finance to support rural communities.

Defra is funding a pilot study which aims to increase the local food content (fresh, seasonal ingredients) of school meals. Several schools are involved across the pilot area covering Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The findings are due this April.

The South East Rural Affairs Forum was set up following recommendations in the Rural White Paper. The forum held a conference involving stakeholders across the region on 7 September 2004 and was attended by several stakeholders from Oxfordshire.

Deregulation

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many EU *(a)* regulations and *(b)* directives covering matters within the responsibility of her Department have been repealed since 1 April 2004. [224572]

Alun Michael: The European Commission publishes information on the repeal of EU regulations and directives in its simplification progress reports. Its last report was published in June 2004 and is available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/governance/docs/comm_doc_trav_en.pdf. The next report will cover the period since 1 April 2004.

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many regulations have been repealed by her Department since 1 October 2004. [224618]

Alun Michael: We have the information from 1 April 2004 and the Department has repealed the following 42 pieces of domestic legislation:

The Diseases of Animals (Fees for the Testing of Disinfectants) Order 1991 (SI 1991/1168)

Integrated Administration and Control System Regulations 1993 (SI 1993/1317)

Integrated Administration and Control System (Amendment) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994/1134)

Integrated Administration and Control System (Amendment) Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/1148)

Potatoes Originating in the Netherlands Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/2441)

Potatoes Originating in the Netherlands (Amendment) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/3168)

The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (Amendment) Order 1999 (SI 1999/919)

The Dairy Produce Quotas Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/457)

Plant Health (Phytophthora ramorum) (England) (No. 2) Order 2002 (SI 2002/2573)

Integrated Administration and Control System (Amendment) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/2573)

The Common Agricultural Policy Support Schemes (Modulation) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/3127)

The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (Amendment) (England) Order 2000 (SI 2000/3195)

Regulation 7(16) of the Intervention Board for Agricultural Produce (Abolition) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/3686)

The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (Amendment) (England) Order 2001 (SI 2001/608)

The Dairy Produce Quotas Regulations 2002 (SI 2002/457)

Plant Health (Forestry) (Phytophthora ramorum) (Great Britain) (No. 2) Order 2002 (SI 2002/2589)

Organic Farming (England Rural Development Programme) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1235)

The Animal Gatherings (England) Order 2003 (SI 2003/1723)

The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) (Amendment) (England) Order 2003 (SI 2003/1428)

Integrated Administration and Control System (Amendment) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/189)

The Dairy Produce Quotas (Amendment) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/312)

The Sea Fishing (Restriction on Days at Sea) Order 2004 (SI 2004/398)

The Animals and Animal Products (Import and Export) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/853)

The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (No. 2) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1740)

The Common Agricultural Policy Support Schemes (Modulation) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/2330)

The Products of Animal Origin (Third Country Imports) (No. 3) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/2640)

In so far as they apply to England

The Arable Area Payments Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/3142)

The Arable Area Payments (Amendment) Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/2969)

The Arable Area Payments (Amendment) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/3169)

The Arable Area Payments (Amendment) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/8)

The Sheep Annual Premium and Suckler Cow Quotas Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2261)

In so far as the Secretary of State is the relevant competent authority in relation to the holding for the purposes of the IACS regulations:

The Sheep Annual Premium Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/2677)

The Sheep Annual Premium (Amendment) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994/2741)

The Sheep Annual Premium (Amendment) Regulations 1995 (SI 1995/2779)

The Sheep Annual Premium (Amendment) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/49)

The Sheep Annual Premium (Amendment) Regulations 1997 (SI 1997/2500)

The Slaughter Premium Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/3126)

The Sheep Annual Premium (Amendment) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/281)

Extensification Payment Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/864)

Suckler Cow Premium Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/1370)

Beef Special Premium Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/2503)

The Slaughter Premium (Amendment) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/3906)

Farm Plastic Collections

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what farm plastic collections are made in *(a)* Stroud and *(b)* Gloucestershire; and if she will make a statement. [224805]

Mr. Morley: We understand that there are currently no farm plastic collections being made in either Stroud or Gloucestershire.

There was at one time a scheme operating in Gloucestershire, connected to the Somerset Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, but I understand that this has now closed down.

Farmers (Bureaucracy)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to merge agencies and non-departmental public bodies for which her Department is responsible in order to reduce the administrative burden for farmers who have to supply the same information to different bodies. [224958]

Alun Michael: Action that is being taken to reduce the administrative burden on farmers includes the following:

1. We are already implementing the commitments in the Rural Strategy 2004 to modernise the delivery of rural services. Subject to parliamentary approval, we will bring together three existing bodies, English Nature, parts of the Countryside Agency and Defra's Rural Development Service, into a single body, Natural England, to be responsible for conserving, managing and enhancing the natural environment.

2. Our IT Strategy, and its constituent customer information programme, is developing a single data repository for farmers, in partnership with the Rural Payments Agency. Phase One of this work is currently underway, and will be completed in July 2005, when we will have a better idea of the costs and timescales for full delivery.

3. We are developing the Defra Whole Farm Approach programme. This will:

Save time on form filling and stop repeated requests for the same information.

Cut down bureaucracy and provide a mechanism for registering for exemptions and licenses.

Enable farmers to provide us with the evidence of good practice that will reduce their risk of being selected for inspection.

Provide instant access to up to date help and guidance.

The programme is being developed with a range of partners including the Environment Agency, Food Standards Agency, Health and Safety Executive and National Farmers Union. They are all playing a vital role in the development of the Approach, and together we aim to create a single set of essential core data on farms and farming activity, and by sharing that data significantly reduce the burdens of regulation and enforcement activities.

Farms

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to reduce the burden of administration on farm assured farms. [224698]

Alun Michael: Assurance schemes are private initiatives and membership is voluntary. Decisions on assurance standards and inspection regimes are a matter for scheme owners. However, the Department has facilitated discussions between key stakeholders with a view to the rationalisation of assurance schemes in line with the recommendations of the Policy Commission on the future of farming and food. As a result of those discussions the six main sectoral assurance schemes in England have either merged or entered into binding agreements with Assured Food Standards, the private organisation that was set up to administer the Red Tractor logo. This has provided scope for further rationalisation of assurance standards and inspections.

The Department is also committed to further improving farm regulation and in November 2005 we will publish a Strategy for the Regulation of Agriculture. In order to develop this Strategy, we are gathering evidence directly from farmers and their regulators on the impact and performance of farm regulation. This evidence will inform us about how to improve the performance of existing and planned regulation and achieve more effective controls that are delivered more efficiently and with less bureaucracy.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many visits on average she expects officials will make to farms in relation to the single farm payment. [224699]

Alun Michael: The average number of visits to farms in relation to the single payment scheme will depend on the total number of applications made. Visits will be undertaken to at least 5 per cent. of the applicants each year. If there are for example 125,000 applicants in 2005, this would produce 6,250 visits.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what arrangements will be put in place for interim payments to be made where there is a delay in the payment of the single farm payment. [224700]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency has announced that it expects to begin payments under the single payment scheme in February 2006, well before the deadline of 30 June 2006 set in EU legislation. The Government are considering what action can be taken to improve on this position or to help in other ways.

Fisheries

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cetaceans have been reported stranded during the 2004–05 season of the pair trawl sea bass fishery. [219865]

Mr. Bradshaw: The pair trawling sea bass fishery season usually starts in November and continues until April and fishing for sea bass takes place in the south-west Approaches. From 1 November 2004 to 4 March 2005, a total of 90 cetaceans have been reported as stranded on the south coast (Cornwall, Devon and Dorset,). These comprised 47 common dolphins, 31 harbour porpoises, one bottlenose dolphin, two long-finned pilot whales and nine unidentified cetaceans.

All strandings found in the south-west cannot be solely attributed to the pair trawling sea bass fishery. These figures include stranded dead cetaceans, live strandings and carcasses seen floating at sea. Only 12 of the 90 cetaceans that were stranded were definitely confirmed as bycatch. The data were obtained under the Defra-funded Cetacean and Turtle Strandings Scheme, carried out by the Natural History Museum in partnership with the Institute of Zoology and Scottish Agricultural College.

Fly-tipping

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps her Department is taking to combat fly-tipping. [224977]

Alun Michael: The Department is taking forward a wide ranging strategy for combating fly-tipping, in close liaison with the Environment Agency and local authorities. Some new powers for these enforcement agencies were included in the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Many more provisions have been included in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill which has now completed its passage through Parliament. These include raising the penalties for the main offence of illegal waste disposal; new powers to stop, search and instantly seize vehicles that are being used for fly-tipping; additional sentencing powers for the courts including a power to award forfeiture of vehicles used to commit an offence; and powers for the enforcing authorities to issue fixed penalty notices for some offences. We will work closely with the enforcement authorities on implementation of all the measures in the Bill.

100 per cent. of local authorities are now registered on the Flycapture database, which for the first time is producing national data on the nature and scale of fly-tipping across the country. We are funding the Environment Agency through the Flycapture Enforcement project to provide training for local authority enforcement officers and lawyers on how to enhance their skills. Through the BREW programme, we are providing additional funding for the agency to assist businesses in complying with the legal requirements on the disposal of waste. The Department has also just let a research project that will look in depth at the reasons why people fly-tip and will develop good practice guidance for local authorities on further measures they can take to help reduce the problem.

Food Imports (African Products)

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the impact of imports of African food products into western markets on farmers in the UK. [224680]

Alun Michael: In 2003, 4.9 per cent. of the total value of food, feed and drink imports into the European Union were from Africa. For the same year, 6.3 per cent. of the total value of food, feed and drink imports into the United Kingdom were from Africa. Of all of the imported food, feed and drink indigenous to the UK, 3.8 per cent. were from Africa, the corresponding figure for imported non- indigenous food, feed and drink from Africa was 10.3 per cent.

Gangmaster Licensing

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what guidance her Department has issued to assist legitimate labour providers in complying with gangmasters licensing regulations. [224490]

Alun Michael: The Government are working to ensure that labour provider businesses have robust business systems in place in advance of the introduction of licensing later this year. Regulation of the industry is intended to end exploitation and drive out illegal activity. In parallel to developing the licensing system, we are working to help legitimate labour providers to be successful and robust businesses. To facilitate this process we are working closely with the Ethical Trading Initiative Temporary Labour Working Group to promote the Code of Practice which the group launched in November 2004. Labour providers are being invited to arrange for their businesses to be audited against the code. Those that do will be offered a pre audit business consultancy session to assess their business and offer advice on problem areas. This process has the full backing of the supermarkets, the Association of Labour Providers, the Transport and General Workers Union and the National Farmers Union. To help reduce the cost to labour providers, the Government will be meeting a proportion of the cost of the consultancy advice and audit activities on a first come first served basis. The Chairman of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority has also indicated, that the cost of a licence audit will be reduced where a labour provider has previously been audited against the Temporary Labour Working Group Code by an auditor meeting the competencies set by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority.

In the longer term the Gangmasters Licensing Authority will be responsible for developing regulations setting out the conditions labour providers will be required to comply with under the new gangmaster licensing arrangements. Regulations establishing the Gangmasters Licensing Authority are in place and the authority started work on 1 April. The authority will be consulting on licence conditions over the next few weeks and hopes to have regulations in place establishing the detailed licensing arrangements by the autumn. It is anticipated that the authority will develop best practice guidance for labour providers alongside the regulations.

GM Crops

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking in connection with the failure of the US Administration to notify the UK before March of the import into the UK since 2001 of GM maize containing an antibiotic resistant marker of a type that the EU had been advised to phase out; and what steps her Department is taking to prevent a recurrence of such an event with reference to *(a)* regulatory controls in the US and *(b)* the implementation of controls in the EU. [224888]

Mr. Morley: This relates to the incident in the USA where some batches of Syngenta's GM maize seed intended to be Bt11 actually contained an unapproved GM maize event known as Bt10. We were informed of this incident on 22 March and issued a press release on 23 March. Our understanding is that between 2001–04 approximately 15,000 hectares of Bt10 was grown in the USA and most of the resulting grain was used in the USA. Only 18 per cent. of US corn is exported and the levels of maize exported from the US to the EU are very small indeed. The European Commission has been informed that an estimated 1,000 tonnes of Bt10 food and feed products may have entered the European Union (as distinct from the UK) since 2001. We have no evidence at this stage of any import of Bt10 into the UK.

We are unaware of the original source of the figure of 170,000 tonnes which you quote. There is no evidence that 170,000 tonnes of Bt10 maize has been imported into the UK; and indeed this figure is an order of magnitude higher than the total annual maize imports into the UK from the US, which are in a range of 4,000 to 14,000 tonnes annually.

Following Syngenta's disclosure on 22 March, Defra and the Food Standards Agency have been working with the European Commission and the US authorities to gain information on whether or not any contaminated maize has been imported into the UK. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

We have written to maize importers to remind them of the need to check imports of maize and other crops for the presence of GMOs which have not been authorised in the European Union. It is for EU and UK importers to satisfy themselves that imported maize grain and derived products are approved for use and if material is GM that it is appropriately labelled. Our GM Inspectorate and local authority inspectors oversee this process.

We understand that the US authorities consider that Bt10 does not present any concerns for human or animal health. Bt10 maize does contain an antibiotic resistance marker gene (which is not present in Bt11). Although the antibiotic resistance marker is in the process of being phased out, the European Food Safety Authority has concluded that this antibiotic resistance marker gene would have minimal, if any, impact on human health if present in GM plants.

I should stress that we take incidents of this kind seriously. We do monitor the supply chain records of GM imports and take immediate action if evidence or information indicates the presence of any unauthorized GM product. Our priority is to protect the consumer and environment and ensure there is informed consumer choice.

Green Lanes

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will ensure that the new Government policy and guidance on the vehicular use of green lanes outlined in "Making the Best Byways' is open to public consultation for a 12-week period. [224876]

Alun Michael: Formal public consultation is more commonly carried out on policy or legislative proposals. "Making the Best of Byways" is intended as practical guidance. The draft revision was put together with the help of an advisory group including representatives from the Ramblers Association, Sustrans, the British Horse Society, English Nature, the Countryside Agency and the Countryside Council for Wales. The draft revision was also circulated for comment to a range of interest groups.

Hazardous Waste

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK hazardous waste landfills are licensed to receive contaminated soils. [224569]

Mr. Morley: There are nine authorised commercial hazardous landfill sites in England and Wales. Eight of these are authorised under Pollution Prevention and Control permits and the ninth is authorised under a Waste Management Licence.

All of these landfill sites are currently operational and able to receive hazardous contaminated soils.

Huddersfield

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Huddersfield constituency, the effects on Huddersfield of her Department's policies and actions since 2 May 1997. [216869]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition, the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk.

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and .energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the Huddersfield constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits Huddersfield.

Waste: Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04, and 25 per cent. by 2005–06. To help local authorities achieve their own targets Defra's Waste Minimisation Fund was set up in 2002. As a result of successful bids for money from this fund by Kirklees metropolitan council a total of almost £1.2 million was used for projects which have seen extra green wheeled bins being provided to 140,000 households across Kirklees, including Huddersfield itself. This, together with a waste reduction and reuse awareness raising campaign, also funded by Defra, has enabled Kirklees to double its recycling and composting rate from 7 per cent. in 1998–99 to reach its statutory target of 14 per cent. in 2003–04.

River Water Quality has improved along the Kirklees rivers, including the Rivers Colne and Holme in Huddersfield over recent years. While 75 per cent. of the rivers' lengths within the Kirklees area were already considered to be of fair or better chemical quality in 1997, by 2003 this had risen to 95 per cent. The improvements in the biological quality of the rivers has been even more rapid with the percentage of river length of fair quality or better rising from 4.0 per cent. in 1995 to 75 per cent. in 2003. These improvements reflect Defra's policy to improve river water quality, which is one of the headline indicators of sustainable development and to raise compliance with the EC water framework directive.

Flood Defences: With grant support from Defra the Environment Agency has undertaken maintenance and improvement of flood defences around the Huddersfield area and has invested £30 million in new defences in the past 10–15 years across Kirklees as a whole. The Environment Agency also now offers a flood warning service for residents and businesses at high and medium risk of flooding through Huddersfield.

Rural Environment: The most important environment scheme delivered by Defra's Rural Development Service in the Huddersfield area constituency is the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS). It aims are to help to conserve and improve the rural environment. There are three CSS agreements in the constituency; the total area of land on these three holdings is 123.42ha, of which 22.12ha is under agreement. In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the common agricultural policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm-based schemes in the Huddersfield constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £146,410.85.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Litter

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many litter abatement orders have been served. [224975]

Alun Michael: We cannot provide comprehensive figures since there is no requirement for the service of litter abatement orders to be reported to Defra, but we are aware that at least one abatement order has been served.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps an individual can take to encourage local authorities to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to litter and detritus. [224976]

Alun Michael: Under section 91 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, an individual can complain to a magistrates court if aggrieved by the defacement, by litter or refuse, of land that a local authority has a duty to keep clear under section 89 of that Act. If the magistrates are satisfied that the land in question is defaced, they can issue a litter abatement order requiring the local authority to clear the land of litter and refuse within a time specified in the order. It is an offence to fail to comply with a litter abatement order.

An individual can also complain to a local authority using its standard complaint procedures. Many local authorities have set up call centres or hotlines to which their residents can report local environmental quality issues. If the local authority does not have a complaints procedure, or the individual is not satisfied with the action the council takes, he or she can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman who investigates maladministration by local authorities.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with her Department's agencies on measures to tackle litter in the countryside. [224978]

Alun Michael: The appropriate agencies were consulted about the measures in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill, but there have

been no discussions with them specifically on litter, which is primarily the responsibility of local authorities. The Department sponsors ENCAMS to promote campaigning on environmental issues, including campaigns to combat litter and ENCAMS works closely with local government on such issues. The Department has increased support for ENCAMS in parallel to providing additional tools to local authorities to enable them to increase their effectiveness in tackling local environmental issues including litter.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with companies that use large quantities of food wrapping paper on *(a)* mechanisms to persuade customers not to cause litter and *(b)* using biodegradable materials to reduce litter. [224980]

Mr. Morley: On 22 November 2004 the Government launched its Voluntary Code of Practice for "Food on the Go'—the aim of which is to reduce the amount of food related waste that becomes litter in the local environment. This followed over two years of extensive research into the problem and detailed consultation with both businesses that sell food for immediate consumption, and the industry bodies that represent them.

The voluntary code sets out a series of recommendations for joint action between businesses and local authorities. These include measures to minimise packaging by using biodegradable materials in its production, asking customers if they require a bag, and displaying anti littering messaging on packaging. This is complemented by recommendations on the implementation of education and community engagement initiatives, and the local authority's enforcement regime.

Livestock Burial

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she is taking against those farmers who continue to engage in on-farm burial of livestock. [224808]

Mr. Bradshaw: The scheme is voluntary and farmers may dispose of their fallen stock outside of the scheme providing the method used meets with the requirements of the "Animal By-Products Regulation" (Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002).

Where on-farm burial continues we would expect local enforcement agencies to investigate and, where necessary, take appropriate action against the person or persons responsible.

Lobsters

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Department's proposed prohibition on the landing of berried hen lobsters is planned to come into force; whether she is still considering representations on this issue; and what assessment she has made of whether the scheme is needed in areas where the landing of v-notched or multilateral lobsters is prohibited. [223977]

Mr. Bradshaw: I announced my intention to ban the landing, carriage and storage of berried lobsters last year. A technical consultation will take place shortly with interested parties.

I know that there is support for the continuation of local v-notch schemes (where mature female lobsters are given protection through a notch being cut in the shell, and it being illegal to land such a lobster), either in conjunction with, or instead of this ban. We are currently preparing draft legislation for consultation with a view to ensuring that this ban will not preclude the continuation of local v-notch schemes.

Milk Quota

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she expects that the UK will be able to fulfil its milk quota for the last financial year; and if she will make a statement. [224804]

Alun Michael: Although the quota year ended on 31 March, the Rural Payments Agency will not know the final position on milk supply against quota until July. This is because there has been the usual end-of-year quota transfer activity and all of these transfers have to be processed. Once this has been done, milk purchasers and direct sellers have to provide details of production. Temporary conversions of quota (from wholesale to direct sale and vice versa) have to be processed, and finally any spare quota will be reallocated to producers who have been affected by herd restrictions (such as those producers who have herds affected by TB).

Once all of these processes have been completed the Rural Payments Agency will issue a statement on whether production has met quota and whether a levy is due.

Ministerial Engagements

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Minister for Nature Conservation and Fisheries will list his official engagements up to the Easter recess. [215858]

Margaret Beckett *[holding answer 10 February 2005]:* The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is to place on its website at regular intervals lists of the official public engagements undertaken by all Defra Ministers. Details of future engagements are not normally released for security reasons.

NIREX

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the operations of Nirex will be *(a)* overseen and *(b)* funded under the new management arrangements. [224848]

Mr. Morley: Since 1 April 2005, the shares of United Kingdom Nirex Limited (Nirex) have been held by a new company limited by guarantee (CLG), jointly owned by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department of Trade and Industry. The CLG board will oversee the operations of Nirex in accordance with a business plan agreed with the company each year. Day-to-day management of Nirex,

in accordance with the business plan, will be the responsibility of the Nirex board. Under the new arrangements over 90 per cent. of the funding for Nirex work will be provided under a contract with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA), with the remainder coming from the continuing memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Defence, and individual contracts with waste producers for advice on its conditioning and packaging.

North Durham

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out, including statistical information relating as directly as possible to the constituency, the effect on North Durham constituency of her Department's policies since June 2001. [214470]

Alun Michael: Defra publishes a wide range of statistical information relating to its policies and actions and the following web address will take you directly to the service: http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/default.asp. In addition, the Office of National Statistics also publishes further information that you can access from its website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk

Since its establishment in 2001 Defra has put in place a comprehensive programme of action on issues including sustainable development, climate change and energy, sustainable consumption and production, natural resource protection, sustainable rural communities, and a sustainable farming and food sector. I am confident that the North Durham constituency will have benefited from these but it is not possible to systematically quantify those benefits to a constituency level. The difficulties of such geographical analyses are set out by the Office of National Statistics at the following address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp.

The following information may help provide a "word picture" of the way Defra's work benefits North Durham.

Through our national strategy for waste we are committed to delivering a step change to more sustainable waste management, including tough national targets to recycle or compost 17 per cent. of household waste by 2003–04, and 25 per cent. by 2005–06. The districts of Chester le Street and Derwentside continue to make a contribution to achieving these national recycling targets and have exceeded regional targets set at 10 per cent. for 2003–04. The districts' recycling performance in 2003–04, the most recent year for which data is available, were 12 per cent. and 14 per cent. respectively, an improvement for each council of 5 per cent.

The policy initiatives flowing from the Rural White Paper had a major impact on people in rural and urban fringe locations. North Durham constituents will have benefited from a living, working and vibrant countryside surrounding the towns of Stanley and Chester le Street. The Rural Strategy published in July 2004, builds on the success of the White Paper and aims to give the people of North Durham a greater say in the delivery of services.

The Modernising Rural Delivery pathfinder initiative is a key part of the Government's Rural Strategy and is designed to test and share, at a local authority level, good practice on the Government's commitment to devolve decision-making and resources to the local level. In October, I announced seven rural pathfinders in England, and I announced the final pathfinder in the West Durham area more recently. The North East pathfinder will ensure greater co-ordination of rural delivery programmes testing new and innovative methods to bring about improvements in the delivery of services to rural communities and businesses. Whilst not directly located in the pathfinder area, I expect that the lessons learned will be shared across the constituency, the North East Region and nationally.

West County Durham is an area steeped in a rich social, industrial and natural heritage. I am pleased that the Department is involved in the "Mineral Valleys Project", which covers an area of 89,000 hectares, aims to use environment-led regeneration to help local communities celebrate their heritage whilst enhancing the environment around them. The Mineral Valleys Partnership that includes 50 businesses, statutory, community and voluntary organisations, led by English Nature and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, has been successful in putting a £5.2 million programme together to make this vision a reality. This exciting project has resulted in a number of positive environmental outcomes for the constituency including the Saving Stanley Burn and Woods Project, an Otter Holt at Chester le Street and the creation of wetland at Chester Moor.

In terms of specific payments we have been able to isolate expenditure under the common agricultural policy and a list of payments by constituency is available in the Library of the House following the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Knowsley North and Sefton East (Mr. Howarth) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1149–50W. It is noted in these figures that payments to customers are reported on the basis of requested business address which may differ from the location of farming activity.

Common Agricultural Policy

Payments to farm-based schemes in the North Durham constituency for the 2004 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) accounting year which ran from 16 October 2003 to 15 October 2004 amount to £1,031,592.59.

The schemes included are the Arable Area Payment, Beef Special Premium, Suckler Cow Premium, Extensification Premium, Slaughter Premium, Sheep Annual Premium, Over Thirty Months Slaughter, England Rural Development Programme and Structural Funds (which are monies made available by EAGGF to contribute to the economic development of disadvantaged regions within Europe).

Pet Markets

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the scientific basis is of her decision to permit within the terms of the

proposed Animal Welfare Bill the reintroduction of the pet markets prohibited under the 1983 amendments to the Pet Animals Act 1951. [224832]

Mr. Bradshaw: The scope of the prohibition on pet markets and similar events in public places under the Pet Animals Act 1951 (as amended 1983) is in our view in need of clarification. That is one of the aims of the proposed secondary regulation under the Animal Welfare Bill. We will be conducting a public consultation on the proposed regulation in due course.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to make a decision on whether to make available the relevant background information derived from consultations relating to her decision to legalise the selling of pet animals, birds and reptiles in markets and other public places in response to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. [224833]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have received a number of requests on the issue of pet fairs under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs). Defra endeavours to answer all these enquiries within the statutory 20 working day time limit. Where cases are more complex the enquirer is informed that the time limit is being extended for an additional 20 working days. In rare circumstances raising particularly complex issues, some responses may be delayed beyond this, although Defra will respond as quickly as possible. A response to one particularly complex case under the Freedom of Information Act has just been released. We regret that the complexity of this case led to a delay in responding.

Sewers and Drains

Andy King: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will require that all sewers and drains are laid by suitably qualified persons. [224849]

Mr. Morley: A protocol for the construction of new sewers was established in 2002. Its aim is to put into practice a common approach for the design and construction for new development, to enable wider adoption of sewers in England and Wales.

A review of the effectiveness of the protocol was recently undertaken on the Department's behalf. Its findings indicate that developers are not always adhering to the protocol. The Government are now considering the results of this review and its possible implications for the current arrangements for the construction of sewers.

I understand that Energy and Utility Skills Ltd., the Sector Skills Council whose purpose is to identify the skill needs of employers and provide effective training solutions in the electricity, gas, waste management and water industries, offers a 13 week ambition energy programme. This has been designed for operators who are involved in the maintenance of the sewerage infrastructure.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Government's proposals to transfer ownership of private sewers and lateral drains from property owners to local water companies. [224858]

Mr. Morley: The Government published a response to their consultation—Review of Existing Private Sewers and Drains in England and Wales—in October 2004. 81 per cent. of respondents favoured a change of ownership, and of these, 90 per cent. held the view that sewerage undertakers should take over responsibility. The Government acknowledged the strength of support for this solution and undertook to look into it in more depth.

My Department also recently held a seminar with stakeholders to look at sustainable options for a potential transfer. Further information on the seminar is available on the Department's website at:

http://defraweb/environment/water/industry/sewers/existing/index.htm

The Government intend to publish a decision paper this summer, but do not rule out the need to consult further on the scope and form of a potential transfer.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has conducted into the state of the sewers that it will be transferring to water companies; and what representations from water companies have been received on the proposed changes. [224860]

Mr. Morley: Defra's consultants, WS Atkins, conducted an extensive research project looking at the extent and condition of private sewers in England and Wales prior to the publication of the consultation paper in 2003. UKWIR, the water industry research body, also undertook their own research. I must emphasise that a final decision on whether private sewers should be transferred to water companies has not yet been made. A number of issues and practicalities need to be resolved including the scope of any transfer and the form it might take.

The Department chairs a Steering Group, of which Water UK are members, which is currently considering sustainable options for the way forward on private sewers.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment her Department has made of whether average household water bills will increase to take account of the costs to water companies consequent on obtaining ownership of sewers and lateral drains. [224861]

Mr. Morley: The Department acknowledges the importance of cost implications for customers. Defra is working with Ofwat in order to further examine the potential impacts on customers bills, and some modelling work is currently under way.

Funding of any possible transfer is an important issue that needs to be considered very carefully. Phasing or a gradual approach is among the approaches to implementation of options that might be considered in order to mitigate the impact of any increases.

Single Farm Payment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many cases of incorrect maps being used for the purposes of the single farm payment have occurred; and if she will make a statement. [224803]

Alun Michael: There have been no cases of the wrong maps being used for the purposes of the single payment scheme (SPS). Where the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has sent maps to potential claimants or they have advised RPA of changes and problems have arisen, RPA is resolving them with the farmers before any processing is done for SPS.

SSSIs

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for how many sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) in England conservation objectives have been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in guidance issued by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in 2003 on Common Standards Monitoring for SSSIs; and when she expects conservation objectives to be completed for all SSSIs in England. [224076]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are a total of 4,117 sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) in England and conservation objectives have been completed by English Nature for 1,436 of these sites. English Nature's corporate target is for conservation objectives to be in place on all remaining SSSIs by March 2009 and a structured programme is in place to achieve this.

Supermarkets

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Department for Trade and Industry on the recent Office of Fair Trading findings on supermarkets. [224807]

Alun Michael: Officials from the Department discussed the Office of Fair Trading's paper on the audit of the supermarket Code of Practice and related competition issues with colleagues in the Department of Trade and Industry at the time of its publication.

The paper gives the Office of Fair Trading's preliminary views on the audit and on wider concerns that have been raised about competition in the grocery market and invites comments and evidence on both. We encourage all those who have views on these issues to respond to this invitation.

The paper also welcomes the National Farmers Union's proposal for a voluntary Buyer's Charter that would cover all key aspects of trading relationships between suppliers and their customers throughout the food chain. We support this initiative and have encouraged all sections of the food chain, whether they be retailers, processors or manufacturers, to work positively with the National Farmers Union to develop the proposal.

Traffic Regulation Orders

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the expected issue date for advice on the pre-emptive use of traffic regulation orders, as set out in paragraph 12 of the document "Use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way: The Government's framework for action". [224763]

Alun Michael: Advice and practical examples on the use of pre-emptive traffic regulation orders for local authorities will be included in both the revision to the departmental publication "Making the Best of Byways" and new enforcement guidance. These publications will be available shortly and copies will be placed in the Library of the House.

Travel Costs

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total travel costs to her Department have been for *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* special advisers and *(c)* officials for each year since 1997. [203774]

Margaret Beckett: In respect of overseas travel by Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The Government have also published on an annual basis the cost of all Ministers' visits overseas. Copies of the lists are available in the Libraries of the House.

The Department has published rules for official travel in its staff handbook and ministerial travel is governed by the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

It is not possible to break-down travel costs further in the way requested without incurring disproportionate cost.

Waste

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with local authorities concerning Schedule 2 of the Statutory Controlled Waste Regulations 1992; and what guidance she has issued to local authorities on that schedule. [224897]

Mr. Morley: Guidance was issued (Circular 14/92)[1] at the time of the publication of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992. Defra has more recently (October 2004)[2] issued further guidance to local authorities on the management of asbestos waste from domestic property, a waste type specified within Schedule 2 of the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992.

I am not aware that my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has held any discussions with local authorities concerning Schedule 2.

[1] Circular 14/92 (Department of the Environment) The Environmental Protection Act 1990—Parts II and IV The Controlled Waste Regulations 1992.

[2] Correspondence to the chief executive of all waste collection authorities, waste disposal authorities and joint waste disposal authorities in England on the management of asbestos waste from domestic property also available on the Defra website at http://defraweb/environment/waste/localauth/pdf/asbestos-domestic.pdf

Waste Management Licensing Regulations

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the timetable for alteration of paragraph 7 of Schedule 3 to the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994. [224854]

Mr. Morley: The Waste Management Licensing (England & Wales) (Amendment and Related Provisions) Regulations 2005 (SI number 883) were laid before Parliament on the 23 March 2005. These regulations will come into force on 1 July 2005. Amendments to paragraph 7 of Schedule 3 to the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994 are included in these regulations.

Waste Recycling

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of waste collected in City of York has been recycled in each year since 1996–97; what financial assistance has been provided by the Government to York for recycling in that period; and what policies the Government has adopted to encourage local authorities to increase recycling rates. [224641]

Mr. Morley: The proportion[1] of household waste sent for recycling or composting for City of York in each year since 1996–67 is presented in the following table:

	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling or composting for City of York
1996–97	4
1998–99	6
1999–2000	10
2000–01	9
2001–02	10
2002–03	12
2003–04	[1]15

[1] MWMS Data for 2003–04 are not yet available. Best Value Performance Indicator data (for the percentage of household waste sent for recycling or composting) are usually a good indicator for Defra's MWMS and are included here.

Source:
Defra's Municipal Waste Management Survey (MWMS)

The City of York was allocated £350,000 in 2004–05 from Defra's Waste Minimisation and Recycling Fund for the relocation and upgrading of a Recycling and Reuse Centre and £145,789.54 in 2005–06 from Defra's Waste Performance and Efficiency Grant. This supplements Revenue Support Grants through the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services block.

To increase recycling, the Government has set each local authority in England Statutory Performance Standards for recycling and composting of household waste for 2003–04 and 2005–06 and requires waste collection authorities, subject to certain exemptions, to provide a kerbside collection service of at least two recyclable materials by 2010.

The new Landfill Tax escalator and the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme, both introduced on 1 April 2005 will also encourage local authorities to divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill.

The UK Packaging Regulations requiring producers to recover and recycle rising target levels of packaging waste each year will also increasingly encourage recycling of household packaging waste.

Government is currently reviewing the existing local authority recycling and composting targets including consideration of the potential for further targets to be set in future.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Diabetes (Public Service Recruits)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures have been put in place by the Police Service of Northern Ireland to medically assess people with diabetes who apply to join the service. [220532]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I regret that it has not been possible to answer this question before Prorogation. However, I will respond to the hon. Gentleman in writing. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Births (Londonderry)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many children living in East Londonderry constituency have been born since 1 September 2002. [215786]

Mr. Pearson: The numbers of births registered between 1 September 2002 and 31 December 2004 to mothers resident in East Londonderry parliamentary constituency are given in the table.

Number of births registered for East Londonderry parliamentary constituency by registration period, September 2002-December 2004

Registration period	*Births*
1 September to 31 December 2002	345
1 January to 31 December 2003	1,089
1 January to 31 December 2004 (Provisional)	1,095
Total	2,529

These figures do not take into account population migration or deaths of young children. Detailed 2004 population estimates for the East Londonderry parliamentary constituency will be published later in the year.

Business Support

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent in each of the last four years in Government grants to support business in Northern Ireland. [217672]

Mr. Gardiner: The hon. Gentleman will receive a response to this question as soon as possible. However, I apologise that it has not been possible to provide this information before Prorogation. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

CAP Payments

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the 100 largest payments made through the common agricultural policy to farms or enterprises in Northern Ireland for 2003–04, broken down by *(a)* recipients and *(b)* amounts received. [224668]

Mr. Pearson: It has not been possible to provide the information requested by the hon. Gentleman before Prorogation.

Child Care

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funds have been added to the Northern Ireland budget as a result of the Chancellor's commitments to early years and child care funding. [224656]

Mr. Pearson: In accordance with the Treasury's Statement of Funding Policy, additional allocations to Northern Ireland are determined via the application of the Barnett formula to overall changes in planned total spending by UK departments.

Civil Servants

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants from his Department have *(a)* faced disciplinary proceedings as a result of allegations of theft, *(b)* been charged with theft and *(c)* been dismissed following theft allegations in each year since 1997. [206395]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested is set out in the following table.

	Number of staff faced disciplinary proceedings following allegation of theft	*Number of staff charged with theft*	*Number of staff dismissed following theft allegations*
1997	0	—	—
1998	0	—	—
1999	0	—	—
2000	1	—	1
2001	0	—	—
2002	0	—	—
2003	0	—	—
2004	0	—	—

The information in the table relates only to the Northern Ireland Office and not the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland Administration.

Construction Industry

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effect on the number of apprentices entering the construction industry of the costs to businesses of premiums for insuring trainees. [224960]

Mr. Gardiner: It has not been possible to provide the information requested by the hon. Gentleman before Prorogation.

Decommissioning Commission

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the annual *(a)* salaries paid to and *(b)* allowances claimed by members of the Decommissioning Commission in each year since its formation. [219078]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I apologise for not being in a position to answer this question before Prorogation. However, I will respond to the hon. Lady in writing. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Cross-Border Implementation Bodies

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget was for the Cross-Border Implementation Bodies for each of the last 10 years; what percentage change has taken place in these budgets in each year; and what proportion of the budget of each was contributed by the Government in each year. [224601]

Mr. Pearson: The North/South Implementation Bodies were established on 2 December 1999 and details of the relevant budgets, annual percentage changes and the Northern Ireland share of the budgets for each year since then are provided in the following table.

North/south implementation bodies budgets[1]

Year ended 31 December

Body		*2000*[2]	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*	*2005*
Foyle Carlingford and Irish Lights Commission							
	Budget £ million	2.9	3.85	4.18	3.20	3.20	3.67
	Percentage change	—	33	9	-23	0	15
	Percentage NI share	17	20	34	50	50	50
Waterways Ireland							
	Budget £ million	11.3	18.82	21.99	22.61	31.70	34.16
	Percentage change	—	67	17	3	40	8
	Percentage NI share	12	12	17	35	32	35
The Trade and Business Development Body							
	Budget £ million	7.7	8.63	9.52	9.00	9.00	9.27
	Percentage change	—	12	10	-5	0	3
	Percentage NI share	40	33	33	33	33	33
Special EU Programmes Body							
	Budget £ million	2.0	1.2	1.75	2.02	2.02	2.195
	Percentage change	—	-40	46	15	0	9
	Percentage NI share	20	50	50	56	56	56
The North/South Language Body							
	Budget £ million	7.1	11.42	11.97	11.33	14.6	14.7
	Percentage change	—	61	5	-5	29	1
	Percentage NI share	32	31	31	31	31	31

North/south implementation bodies budgets[1]

Body		Year ended 31 December 2000[2]	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
The Food Safety Promotion Board							
	Budget £ million	3.0	4.87	4.96	5.42	6.08	6.16
	Percentage change	—	62	2	9	12	1
	Percentage NI share	26	30	30	30	30	30

[1] The budget figures quoted are the initial approved annual budgets and do not include any additional non-recurrent allocations that may have been agreed through the in-year monitoring process.
[2] Figures cover the period 2 December 1999 to 31 December 2000.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the equipment leasing arrangements entered into by his Department in each of the last two years; and what the cost is to public funds in each case. [202512]

Mr. Paul Murphy: This information is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of travel within the UK for the Department was in each year since 1997; and how much of this was spent on *(a)* hire cars, *(b)* helicopter hire, *(c)* hotel accommodation and *(d)* subsistence. [206472]

Mr. Spellar: Information is only available from 2001–02. Costs of *(a)* , *(b)* , *(c)* and *(d)* cannot be disaggregated from the overall totals.

Overall costs of travel to the Northern Ireland Office (excluding it's Agencies and NDPBs) are as follows.

	£
2003–04	3,264,162.87
2002–03	3,335,550.55
2001–02	2,465,438.08

Overall costs of overnight subsistence, which includes hotel accommodation are as follows.

	£
2003–04	456,727.54
2002–03	441,383.02
2001–02	330,087.03

This information relates to the Northern Ireland Office and does not include the 11 departments of the Northern Ireland administration.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many overseas trips, and at what total cost, have been made by his Department in each year since 1997; and what the costs of *(a)* flights, *(b)* internal travel, *(c)* hotel accommodation and *(d)* subsistence were of each trip. [206658]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Information is not held in the format requested.

Information relating to overseas travel by Ministers is published on an annual basis. Information for the period 2 May 1997 to 31 March 2004 is available in the Library of the House. Information for the financial year 2004–05 will be published as soon as possible at the end of the current financial year.

All official travel complied with the requirements of the Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers and the Civil Service Management Code, copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

Fixed Penalty Fines

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many fixed penalty fines for driving offences have been issued in the last three years in the Province; and what revenue was raised from such fines in each year. [225017]

Mr. Paul Murphy: It has not been possible to answer the hon. Gentleman's question before Prorogation.

Human Rights Commission

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans there are to increase funding for the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. [220356]

Mr. Spellar: The baseline funding for the Commission is currently £1.3 million and will rise to £1.35 in the next financial year.

Jordanstown Swimming Pool

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the closure of the University of Ulster's Jordanstown swimming pool. [224961]

Mr. Gardiner: The University of Ulster is an independent, autonomous institution responsible for its own policies, practices and estates management. The decision to close the pool was taken for operational reasons, based on considerations of health and safety and economic viability.

The University of Ulster is currently conducting a consultation process, in line with the recommendation of the University's Visitor, Sir Ronald Weatherup, with

the representatives of the former users of the pools, those affected by the closure decision such as Newtownabbey borough council and North Eastern Education and Library Board and other interested parties.

Long-term Care (Benefits)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the entitlement to full state pension and other relevant benefits of patients receiving long-term care in hospitals announced in the Budget extends to patients in Northern Ireland. [224970]

Mr. Spellar: I can confirm that the reduction in pensions and certain other benefits, which applies where a person has been in hospital for more than 52 weeks, will also be abolished in Northern Ireland.

Ministerial Duties

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many full days each Northern Ireland Minister was on duty in the Province during each of the last 12 months. [220440]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The number of days that each Northern Ireland Minister was on duty in Northern Ireland in each of the last 12 months was as follows:

	Paul Murphy	*John Spellar*	*Ian Pearson*	*Angela Smith*	*Barry Gardiner*
March	10	13	15	16	—
April	16	8	9	11	9
May	13	12	13	12	7
June	13	11	16	5	11
July	10	8	15	11	6
August	8	6	10	11	6
September	15	14	13	5	7
October	8	9	11	10	12
November	15	12	14	16	10
December	14	7	4	8	6
January	14	7	12	4	10
February	13	9	9	10	13

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many days each Minister in his Department has spent on duty in the Province in the last 12 months. [224819]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The number of days that each Northern Ireland Minister was on duty in Northern Ireland in each of the last 12 months was as follows:

	Paul Murphy	*John Spellar*	*Ian Pearson*	*Angela Smith*	*Barry Gardiner*
March	10	13	15	16	—
April	16	8	9	11	9
May	13	12	13	12	7
June	13	11	16	5	11
July	10	8	15	11	6
August	8	6	10	11	6
September	15	14	13	5	7
October	8	9	11	10	12
November	15	12	14	16	10
December	14	7	4	8	6
January	14	7	12	4	10
February	13	9	9	10	13

Newry and Mourne (Regeneration)

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was spent by each Government Department in the Newry and Mourne district council area on *(a)* urban regeneration and *(b)* economic development in each of the last five years. [224065]

Mr. Gardiner: The right hon. Gentleman will receive a response to this question as soon as possible. However, I apologise that it has not been possible to collate this information before Prorogation. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Nutts Corner

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has for the improvement of the racing and customer facilities at Nutts Corner racing circuit. [224093]

Angela Smith: Plans for improving the racing and customer facilities at Nutts Corner racing circuit is a matter for the owners of the facility, Antrim borough council. However, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board can provide advice and assistance to Antrim borough council in planning for the improvement of racing and customer facilities at Nutts Corner racing circuit should it be required.

Pensioner Households (Additional Payments)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 22 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 706W, on Northern Ireland, whether persons in Northern Ireland whose 65th birthday falls on 6 October will qualify for the additional £200 payment to over 65 pensioner ratepayer households equivalent to that in Great Britain. [224176]

Mr. Spellar: As the qualifying week for the £200 payment is 19 to 25 September 2005, a person whose 65th birthday falls on 6 October will not qualify for the payment.

Pensions

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Irish Government and *(b)* ICI on pension arrangements for former employees of Richardson's Fertilisers Belfast (Irish Fertiliser Industries); and if he will make a statement. [224500]

Mr. Gardiner: The hon. Gentleman will receive a response to this question as soon as possible. However, I apologise that it has not been possible to collate this information before Prorogation. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Police Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Police Service of Northern Ireland has adopted the colour vision requirements arising from his Department's review of the medical assessment process for police recruits. [216839]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I apologise for not being in a position to answer this question before Prorogation. However, I will respond to the hon. Lady in writing. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average Police Service of Northern Ireland response time to emergency calls was in *(a)* North Down District Command Unit (DCU) area and *(b)* each other DCU in Northern Ireland in each of the past 12 months. [212325]

Mr. Pearson: The Police Service of Northern Ireland does not currently record the response times to emergency calls, however these form part of the forthcoming policing plan for 2005–06.

Polling Stations (Disabled Access)

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many designated polling stations in each constituency in the Province have purpose-built wheelchair access; and if he will make a statement. [216342]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I apologise for not being in a position to answer this question before prorogation. However I will write to the hon. Lady. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Postage

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much has been spent on postage by the Department in each year since 1997. [215015]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Northern Ireland Office (excluding its Agencies and NDPBs) has spent the following on postage since 1997:

	£
1997–98	99,438
1998–99	88,299
1999–2000	118,961
2000–01	84,132
2001–02	144,506
2002–03	260,606
2003–04	265,356

Roads

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether improvements to *(a)* the A24 road between Belfast and Carryduff and *(b)* the A7 road between Carryduff and Saintfield are planned over the next two years. [222122]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. David Trimble, dated 6 April 2005:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question, whether improvements to *(a)* the A24 road between Belfast and Carryduff and *(b)* the A7 road between Carryduff and Saintfield are planned over the next two years (222122). I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Our Eastern Division is undertaking a programme of assessment of strategic routes to identify what improvements may be needed in the context of each overall route. The A24 and A7 will form part of this assessment programme however, apart from ongoing routine and structural maintenance, currently Roads Service has no specific planned improvements to these roads over the next two years.

A potential scheme to provide an overtaking lane on the A7 between Carryduff and Saintfield at Glassdrumman, has been identified and will be progressed subject to the availability of funds.

You may be aware that Roads Service has already completed a number of schemes on the Carryduff to Downpatrick route, which have provided increased carriageway and verge width, improved forward sight distances and designated overtaking opportunities.

In conclusion, I can assure you that we remain committed to the further improvement and upgrading of the roads infrastructure in this are and along this route in particular.

I hope this information is helpful.

RUC Reserve

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many members of the Part-Time RUC Reserve resigned as a result of intimidation or other terrorist activity during the Troubles. [216842]

Mr. Pearson: Information held on the PSNI Human Resources system indicates that nine members of the Part-Time Reserve left the service giving the reason as "Threatened". However, this figure cannot be regarded as definitive as specific reasons for leaving are not always provided.

Sinn Fein/IRA

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much of the fine imposed by the

Government on Sinn Fein/IRA in April 2004 has been paid since the first report of the Independent Monitoring Commission. [208991]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Following the first report by the Independent Monitoring Commission, I directed that Sinn Fein should not receive the financial assistance payable to Northern Ireland political parties for 12 months from 29 April. No such payments have been made to Sinn Fein, In the light of the IMC's report on the Northern bank robbery, I have directed that Sinn Fein will not receive financial assistance for a further 12 months, from 29 April 2005.

Source of Leak

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what progress has been made in identifying the source of the leak within the Police Service Northern Ireland or the Police Ombudsman's office to the Press Association in December 2004 in relation to the case communicated to him on 31 January. 225041

Mr. Paul Murphy: It has not been possible to answer the hon. Lady's question before Prorogation.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many complaints were made by departmental civil servants regarding the conduct of special advisers between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004. [203473]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the former Minister for the Cabinet Office on 8 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 578W.

Teachers

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of teachers progressing to point 2 of the Upper Pay Spine has been over the past three years. [223751]

Mr. Gardiner: Eligible teachers have been able to progress to UPS 2 with effect from 1 September 2003 following agreement between the teacher unions and employers to a Performance Review and Staff Development Scheme (PRSD) and implementation plan in November 2004. All applications received for UPS 2 progression have now been paid but there remains a possibility that a relatively small number of teachers have still to make an application. It is therefore not possible to provide a final total cost of teachers progressing to point 2 of the Upper Pay Scale but it is expected to be in the region of £21 million to £22 million.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many students graduated in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years with teaching qualifications. [224156]

Mr. Gardiner: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1307W.

Textile Industry

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what support the Government is making available to assist the *(a)* Saville Row textile company and *(b)* Northern Ireland textile industry; and what discussions have taken place regarding these matters. [210921]

Mr. Gardiner: The right hon. Gentleman will receive a response to this question as soon as possible. However, I apologise that it has not been possible to provide this information before Prorogation. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library.

Unallocated Spending

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his latest estimate is of unallocated departmental spending in *(a)* 2005–06, *(b)* 2006–07, and *(c)* 2007–08; and if he will make a statement. [213254]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Northern Ireland Office's estimate of unallocated departmental spending (Departmental Unallocated Provision [DUP]) in each of the years 2005–06 to 2007–08 is as follows:

	Unallocated departmental spending (£000)
2005–06	41,502
2006–07	0
2007–08	0

As a result of the outcome of the Spending Review 2004, the Department has decided, in agreement with HM Treasury, to hold no unallocated provision in the years 2006–07 and 2007–08 in order to maximise funding available to its directorates, agencies and NDPBs.

Waste Disposal

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what alternatives to landfill for waste disposal are available in Northern Ireland. [224869]

Angela Smith: In the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy, the waste management hierarchy gives top priority to prevention and second priority to recovery—with a preference for re-use and material recovery insofar as they are the best environmental options. Disposal of waste is very much a last option.

Landfill is the only disposal option currently available in Northern Ireland. However, the recent "Best Practicable Environmental Option" exercise to identify waste management solutions for Northern Ireland highlighted the need for thermal treatment by 2013. In addition, a range of other physical treatment options to recover and reuse material have been identified as an alternative to disposal.

District councils continue to work towards increased recycling, and the Department of the Environment supports them in their roll-out of separate kerbside collections of recyclable and compostable material, thereby reducing the quantity of waste going for disposal.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much waste was disposed of to landfill in Northern Ireland in the latest period for which figures are available. [224873]

Angela Smith: In 2002, 251,600 tonnes (40 per cent. of the total) of commercial and industrial waste were sent to landfill. A survey of commercial and industrial waste arisings in 2004 is planned for this year.

In 2004, 871,000 tonnes (83 per cent. of the total) of municipal waste were sent to landfill. The total amount of municipal waste sent to landfill in 2004 has decreased by 3.4 per cent. from 2003.

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of whether Northern Ireland will reach its recycling targets under the Landfill Directive. [224880]

Angela Smith: The Landfill Directive sets targets for the reduction in the landfilling of Biodegradable Municipal Waste and performance against these targets is assessed through an annual performance report submitted to the Department of the Environment by each of the three regional Waste Management Groups.

Good progress is being made and this has been reinforced by the Landfill Allowance Scheme (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004 which will set yearly landfill limits for each district council to ensure that Northern Ireland meets these targets.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Attendance Allowance

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether people resident in residential care homes are eligible to claim attendance allowance. [224813]

Maria Eagle: Local authorities are responsible for providing financial help with the costs of staying in a care home, including the cost of personal care. Attendance allowance is not payable to residents who receive any local authority help with their care home costs, but it can be paid to those who meet all their care home costs themselves, or receive only free nursing care.

Benefit Payment Methods

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on payment mechanisms for state benefits. [224354]

Mr. Pond: Direct payment into an account is now the normal way that we pay benefits and pensions, over 96 per cent. of customer accounts are now paid this way.

Direct payment increases choice, reduces fraud and assures a safe, convenient, more modern and efficient way of paying benefits. It increases financial inclusion, and allows people to make savings on many of their bills by paying by direct debit. It also reduces waste in social security administrative costs and protects vulnerable customers.

The small number of customers that cannot be paid this way will be paid by cheque, which can be cashed at the post office or paid into an account.

Benefits

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what action he proposes to take regarding benefits and direct payments being claimed by carers on behalf of claimants with particular reference to issues raised with the hon. Member for Gravesham (Mr. Pond) on BBC Radio 4 on 12 March; [222466]

(2) what representations he has received concerning difficulties faced by authorised third parties in cashing giro cheques at post offices on behalf of claimants; what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Post Office and *(b)* Alliance and Leicester on the issues; and if he will make a statement. [222465]

Mr. Pond: Cheque payments are designed for the small number of people who we cannot pay directly into an account. We settled on this solution following extensive consultation with customer representative groups. The cheque provides the facility for a third party (including a carer) to cash cheques under £450 on the customer's behalf at a Post Office and this facility has worked successfully for many years.

We need to strike a balance between a customer's right to access their benefit or pension and the need to prevent the cheque being cashed by an unauthorised person without the customer's knowledge. For this reason the Post Office requires the third party presenting the cheque for encashment to produce evidence of both their own and the customer's identity.

There is currently a wide range of forms of identification, which are acceptable to the Post Office to enable a carer or other person to cash a cheque on a customer's behalf. These are listed on the reverse of the cheque. In addition other forms of identification may be accepted at the discretion of the postmaster.

Officials have obtained a report from Post Office Ltd. about the circumstances of the case raised with me on BBC Radio 4 on 12 March 2004. Neither the Department nor Post Office Ltd. have seen any evidence to suggest that there are widespread difficulties being faced by authorised third parties cashing cheques on behalf of customers. However, we will continue to monitor the situation closely and make improvements to the process if necessary.

Bereavement Benefits

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claims for bereavement benefits there were in each of the last five years; how many were submitted by individuals in receipt of incapacity benefit; and how many were successful in each case. [221456]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* Bereavement Benefit was introduced in April 2001. Information on the number of claims is not available. The available information on the number of recipients is in the table.

Bereavement Benefit recipients in Great Britain

Number

	2002	*2003*	*2004*
All bereavement benefit recipients in Great Britain	36,300	43,600	45,300
Widowed parents allowance recipients in Great Britain	13,400	20,100	25,300
Bereavement allowance recipients in Great Britain	22,900	23,500	20,000
Bereavement Benefit recipients also receiving IB/SDA	2,000	1,800	1,200

Notes:

1. Bereavement benefit data is taken as at March each year. Incapacity benefits data is taken as at February each year.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest hundred. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
3. Incapacity benefit (IB) and severe disability allowance (SDA) figures include all IB, SDA and credits-only cases. The figures include those cases where IB/SDA entitlement is extinguished by the overlapping benefit rules.

Source:

Information Directorate, 5 per cent. sample

Child-related Benefits (Separated Parents)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what assessment he has made of the implications for the Department for Work and Pensions of the ruling by the Court of Appeal that a separated father on jobseeker's allowance with a shared residence order for his children is entitled to claim child-related benefits, even though the mother is also in receipt of those benefits; [224666]

(2) if he will place in the Library a copy of the advice that he has received on the Court of Appeal's ruling in the case of Hockenjos v. Secretary of State for Social Security. [224667]

Mr. Pond: The Department has lodged a petition of appeal with the House of Lords in this case. We are therefore unable to comment further at this time.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many civil servants in his Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223902]

Maria Eagle: As announced in Spending Review 2004 as part of the Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation, the Department put forward proposals to relocate some 4,000 posts from London and the South East.

By March 2005 the Department had relocated 2,344 posts from London and the South East. Posts have relocated to East Midlands, North East, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber regions, and to Scotland and Wales. Plans are in place to relocate the remaining posts by 2008.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply to his letter of 9 March concerning a constituent. [224788]

Maria Eagle: A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 5 April.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223443]

Maria Eagle: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Timms) on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Disabled People

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department is taking to help disabled people find employment. [224541]

Maria Eagle: There are a number of programmes, such as Access to Work, Work Preparation and Workstep designed to help disabled people return to work. Jobcentre Plus also offers interviews with a personal adviser to all disabled people making new or repeat claims to qualifying benefits to ensure they are aware of the help and opportunities available to them.

Access to Work is a specialist disability programme, which provides practical advice and support to help disabled people enter or stay in paid employment.

Work Preparation is an individually tailored, work-focused programme that enables disabled people to address barriers associated with their disability and prepare for working with the confidence necessary to achieve and sustain their job goal.

Workstep provides support in jobs for disabled people who have more complex barriers to finding and keeping work but who, with the right support, can work effectively and develop in their job. Longer-term support continues to be available for those who need it and is a major element of the programme.

Disabled people may also receive help through the new deal programme. New deal for disabled people is a voluntary programme which gives customers on qualifying disability or health-related benefits in England, Scotland and Wales access to a network of job brokers. Job brokers work with customers to help them compete in the labour market and support them in finding and keeping a job.

Disabled people may also receive help through other new deal programmes such as the new deal for young people, new deal 25-plus, new deal 50-plus, and new deal for lone parents.

Invalidity Benefits

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assumptions have been made in the Government's medium-term forecasts in his Department's benefit expenditure tables with regard to the number of invalidity benefit claimants returning to work through the *(a)* the new deal for disabled people and *(b)* pathways to work in relation to (i) the number of recipients of invalidity benefit, severe disablement allowance and income support and (ii) expenditure from

2003–04 to 2007–08 on invalidity benefit, severe disablement allowance and income support for sick and disabled people. [223381]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* Future impacts of the new deal for disabled people and the pathways to work pilots are implicitly included in the forecasts of incapacity benefit (which replaced invalidity benefit in 1995), severe disablement allowance and income support recipients and expenditure included in the Department's benefit expenditure tables, which were published at the pre-Budget report.

It is assumed that the impact of these policies, as far as they have affected the past flows on and off of benefit, will continue largely as observed in the past. As it is difficult to isolate the past impact of these policies separately from other factors which might have affected flows on and off of benefit, it is not possible to make explicit assumptions about their specific impact on the forecasts.

The further roll-out of pathways to work in the future is not factored into the forecasts as it will not have affected recent trends.

Revised expenditure forecasts, underpinning the Budget report, will be published during April.

Jobcentre Plus

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what minimum notice period Jobcentre Plus gives when cancelling contracts with employment and training providers; [223863]

(2) when the decision to review the timetable for letting Jobcentre Plus contracts for employment and training programmes in 2005 was taken; and what the reasons are for reviewing the timetable; [223867]

(3) what criteria Jobcentre Plus will use in making decisions on whether to extend contracts for employment and training, following the decision to review the 2005 timetable; [223869]

(4) what assessment has been made of the *(a)* time and *(b)* cost implications for (i) Jobcentre Plus officials and (ii) providers of the decision to review the timetable for letting Jobcentre Plus contracts for employment and training programmes in 2005; [223870]

(5) how many Jobcentre Plus contracts for 2005 *(a)* have been extended to October 2005 and *(b)* have been cancelled since the decision to review the timetable for letting was made, broken down by value. [223871]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Paul Holmes, dated 7 April 2005:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions concerning Jobcentre Plus contracts with employment and training providers and the decision to review the 2005 timetable. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

Our normal practice, wherever possible, is to commence discussions with providers three months before a contract is due to end. We do not cancel contracts during their lifespan except in extreme circumstances, such as a provider becoming insolvent or committing a serious breach of its contractual obligations.

The need to review the timetable for letting new Jobcentre Plus Contracts was identified in December 2004. That review was prompted by the Department's recently published 5 year strategy which places an increased priority on helping those who are out of work because of sickness or disability and lone parents. With fewer people unemployed and a greater emphasis on providing support to disabled people through the New Deal for Disabled People and the Pathways to Work pilots, we needed to review our contracting strategy to ensure the provision we procure focuses support on those who need the most help.

In the light of that review, the decision was taken to cease current procurement competitions. However, we were not in a position to finalise our strategy for letting new contracts until shortly before 25 February 2005, when Jobcentre Plus Field Directors and others had been informed of the changes to our timetable and the criteria for extending current contracts i.e. satisfactory performance, a clear business need or a mandatory requirement for the provision had been established.

To deliver the DWP and Jobcentre Plus efficiency challenges and modernisation agendas it is vital that we obtain best value for money. We have now identified what provision needs to be in place to support our business objectives, and are now in the process of developing a timetable for the implementation of an overall contracting strategy designed to achieve better value for money in terms of process and required outcomes.

With regard to the time and cost implications for those involved with Jobcentre Plus contracts for employment and training programmes, this information is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

We are currently informing providers whether their current contracts are being extended or not. When this process has been completed I will write to you again with the answer to your question about this.

I hope this is helpful.

Jobseekers Allowance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the main reasons for claimants leaving jobseeker's allowance; and how many people there were in each category of departure in the last period for which figures are available. [224974]

Malcolm Wicks: The available information is in the table.

Destinations of leavers from the jobseekers allowance claimant count: between 9 December 2004 and 12 January 2005

	Number of people
Found work	57,400
Works on average 16+ hours per week	2,100
Gone abroad	5,300
Claimed income support	3,800
Claimed incapacity benefit	6,200
Claimed another benefit	2,300
Full-time education	600
Approved training	200
Government-supported training	10,600
Retirement age reached	400
Automatic credits	100
Gone to prison	1,300
Attending court	0
Defective claim	1,300
Ceased claiming	2,400
Deceased	100
Not known	12,200
Failed to sign	58,800
New claim review	1,000
Total	166,300

Source:
Labour Market Trends, March 2005 (Table F.24)

National Insurance

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 604W, on contracting out rebate rates, if he will publish the advice received from actuaries consulted during the consultation process. [224277]

Malcolm Wicks: A number of actuaries provided advice on the Government Actuary's reports as part of the consultation processes. We cannot publish copies of this advice until we obtain their consent.

Pension Credit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the effect on the number of pensioners who will be in receipt of pension credit in 2009–10 of *(a)* a continuation of current uprating policy, *(b)* linking the basic state pension and the savings credit threshold to earnings and *(c)* linking the basic state pension to earnings and the savings credit threshold to prices from 2006–07 onwards. [223979]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The number of pensioner benefit units estimated to be in receipt of pension credit if the current uprating rules are continued until the financial year 2009–10 is 3,350,000. Under option *(b)* where the basic state pension is uprated in line with earnings from 2006–07 onwards and the savings credit threshold is increased in line with prices as now, 150,000 fewer benefit units would be in receipt of pension credit by 2009–10. Under option *(c)* where the savings credit threshold is increased in line with the increase in the basic state pension from 2006–07 about 250,000 fewer benefit units would be in receipt by 2009–10.

Notes:

1. The figures are rounded to the nearest 50,000 to account for the large potential margin for error in the estimate.

2. Overall pensioner incomes are assumed to rise in line with average earnings.

3. The projection of the recipient population under continuation of current policy is derived from the Public Service Agreement target for recipients at the end of 2007–08, and the change in eligibility implied purely by assumed changes in incomes, entitlements and population between then and 2009–10.

4. The projections do not prejudge future operational and policy decisions.

Source:

Figures are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model and the family resources survey 2002–03 projected forward to 2009–10

Pension Expenditure

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much his Department spent on *(a)* male and *(b)* female recipients of (i) the basic state pension, (ii) additional pension, (iii) guarantee credit and (iv) savings credit in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by constituency. [223486]

Malcolm Wicks: The information has been placed in the Library.

Pensioners

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what representations he has received about the exempting of equity release capital in calculating pensioner entitlements. [224874]

Malcolm Wicks: There have been no formal representations regarding the exempting of equity release capital in calculating pensioner entitlements.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will extend the £200 refund to council tax paying pensioner households to include households comprising a single female pensioner under the age of 65 years. [224777]

Malcolm Wicks: We have no plans to extend the £200 refund to council tax paying pensioner households to include households comprising of a single female pensioner under the age of 65 years.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in receipt of *(a)* housing benefit, *(b)* council tax benefit, *(c)* pension credit and *(d)* other means-tested benefits incur a marginal deduction rate of (i) 85 to 89 per cent., (ii) 90 to 94 per cent., (iii) 95 to 99 per cent. and (iv) 100 per cent. and over. [218693]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. There were 760,000 pensioner households (939,000 individuals) receiving the guarantee element of pension credit only at August 2004. Private pension income is brought fully into account in these cases, although they are not subject to separate benefit withdrawal of CTB/HB. There were an estimated additional 390,000 pensioner households (510,000 individuals) with incomes above guarantee element levels, but receiving both tapered housing benefit (HB) and tapered council tax benefit CTB). These households would be subject to marginal deduction rates (MDRs) of less than 100 per cent., though they would often exceed 85 pence in the pound.

All recipients of the minimum income guarantee (MIG) were subject to MDRs of 100 per cent. These people are now entitled to pension credit and most of them—of the order of 61 per cent. of those in private households—are also benefiting from the savings element of pension credit. This majority no longer face MDRs of 100 percent.

Notes:

1. The figures are subject to a degree of sampling variation.

2. Pension credit and HB/CTB are awarded to benefit units, which may be a single person or a couple.

3. Pension credit figures are rounded to the nearest thousand. Due to the estimation procedure to produce the figures for HB/CTB and the collection procedures in Scotland, HB/CTB figures are rounded to the nearest ten thousand.

4. CTB cases exclude any second adult rebate cases.

5. HB cases exclude extended payment cases.

The figures refer to cases where the claimant and/or partner is aged 60 or over.

Sources:

Pension credit data from 5 per cent. extract of income support computer system at August 2004. HB/CTB data from housing benefit and council tax benefit management information system, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2003.

Post Office Ltd. Computer System

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many times the Post Office Ltd. computer system for administering pension payments has failed; how many pensioners were affected; and what emergency measures were implemented to pay their pensions. [214158]

Malcolm Wicks: The Information is not available in the form requested.

Since April 2003, when the Post Office card account system was introduced, there have been a small number of incidents that have briefly affected payments to the Department's customers. These incidents have caused some inconvenience to customers and delay in withdrawing benefit from accounts. It is not possible to say how many customers were temporarily unable to collect their pensions at the Post Office as a result. Those customers who were still unable to manage until the systems were restored, later in the day, could contact the appropriate DWP office to arrange an emergency payment.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219882]

Maria Eagle: The Department and its constituent businesses operate on a national rather than a regional basis, although some of them have a regional aspect to their administrative operations.

In April 2002, Jobcentre Plus, an executive agency of the Department, set up nine regional offices in England to align with the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure.

None of the non-departmental public bodies that the Department is responsible for have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [219907]

Maria Eagle: The Department and its constituent businesses operate on a national rather than a regional basis, although some of them have a regional aspect to their administrative operations.

In April 2002, Jobcentre Plus, an executive agency of the Department, set up nine regional offices in England to align with the Government offices for the regions' regional structure.

The Appeals Service, an executive agency launched on 3 April 2000 to succeed the Independent Tribunal Service, has a regional structure for the administration of appeals, in line with the judicial regional structure.

When the Pension Service, also an executive agency of the Department, was established in April 2002, the operational organisation was based around Government office regions. However, during early 2004 the regional management tier was removed and support services repositioned at national and local levels.

The other executive agencies and other bodies established since May 1997 for which the Department is responsible have a number of offices based in regions but are not regional organisations.

Sickness Absence

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what initiatives his Department is taking to reduce the numbers of sick days taken by staff in the Department. [216635]

Maria Eagle: The DWP is committed to reducing its sickness absence levels. To help achieve this, a Managing Attendance policy was introduced in February 2003. This sets out the roles and responsibilities of managers and staff for achieving good attendance.

The Department's approach to managing attendance was reviewed by the National Audit Office in 2004. The recommendations made have contributed to a departmental action plan.

The Department has also produced a delivery plan in response to the recommendations of a Ministerial Task Force looking into sickness absence in the civil service and wider public sector. The task force was formed to ensure that the public sector contributes to the target of an overall reduction of 30 per cent. in the number of days lost to sickness absence by 2010.

A Well-being at Work policy was launched on 6 September 2004 on a DWP-wide basis. The aim of the policy is to tackle workplace stress in order to help reduce absence levels caused by stress.

The Department has also introduced pilots involving the early use of occupational health nurses to help managers and staff manage sickness absence.

Training Courses

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what financial penalties were paid in each financial year since 1997–98 to training providers by the Department for training courses prepared for its staff which were subsequently cancelled at the Department's request. [200406]

Maria Eagle: DWP was formed in June 2001 from the former Department of Social Security and parts of the former Department for Education and Employment, including the Employment Service.

The information requested is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Vaccine Damage

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 24 March 2005,

Official Report, column 1042W, on vaccine damage, how much each of the payments to victims of vaccine damage was; and if he will make a statement. [224696]

Maria Eagle: £10,000 was originally paid to each of the 75 victims of vaccine damage under the extra statutory scheme that preceded the 1979 Vaccine Damage Payment Act. In June 2000 it was decided that top-up payments would be made to past recipients of vaccine damage payments to bring the value of their payment up to the equivalent of what it would have been if they had originally received £100,000 ie £78,000 in real terms. Subsequently a payment of £68,000 was made to all the 75 claimants, bringing the total amount of each payment to £78,000.

Workforce (50 Years Plus)

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in, and what percentage of, the workforce were aged 50 years or above in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; what the percentage change was between those years; what his Department's policy is on numbers of workers aged 50 years or above; whether he plans changes to this policy; and if he will make a statement. [222921]

Malcolm Wicks: The information on the number and percentage of the workforce aged 50 and over is in the table.

Number of people aged 50 and over in employment and change on previous year

	Year to November 2003	*Year to November 2004*	*Percentage change*[1]
Population aged 50 and over	18,969,000	19,127,000	+0.8
Population aged 50 and over as a percentage of population aged 16 and over	41.8	41.9	+0.1
People aged 50 and over in employment	6,977,000	7,120,000	+2.0
People aged 50 and over in employment as a percentage of people aged 16 and over in employment	25.7	26.0	+0.3

[1] Figures are percentage changes in the numbers, and percentage point changes in the percentages.

Source:

Labour Force Survey, average of four quarters to end November.

In announcing the Department's five year strategy in February this year, we signalled our long term aspiration to move towards an 80 per cent. overall employment rate, and envisage 1 million more older workers in the labour force, including many who will choose to work beyond state pension age.

We have set targets to increase the employment rate of people aged 50 to state pension age, and reduce the gap between their employment rate and the overall employment rate. From April 2005 there will be an additional target to increase the employment rate of people aged 50 to 69 by 2008.

We want to increase the choices available for older workers to remain in, or rejoin, the labour market to allow them to continue contributing their skills and experience in the workplace and save towards retirement income. To support this we are changing tax and pension rules, increasing state pension deferral rates and options and introducing age discrimination legislation covering employment that will introduce a default retirement age of 65.

In May we will be launching a national guidance campaign to raise employers awareness of, and ability to adopt, flexible employment and retirement opportunities in order to increase the recruitment, retention and training of older workers.

HEALTH

"Choosing Health"

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the timetable is for the National Institute for Clinical Excellence's work programme to support the aims of the public health White Paper, "Choosing Health", as described in paragraph 28, page 41, of the Choosing Activity physical activity action plan published on 9 March. [222824]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A number of guidance topics were referred to the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) on 5 April 2005, including topics in support of public health interventions and programmes pursuant to the aims of "Choosing health—Making healthier choices easier". This referral included six public health guidance topics:

An assessment of four commonly used methods to increase physical activity: brief interventions in primary care, pedometers, exercise referral schemes and community based exercise programmes for walking and cycling.

An assessment of interventions (including screening) to reduce the transmission of Chlamydia and other sexually transmitted infections and to reduce the rate of under 18 conceptions, especially among vulnerable and at risk groups.

An assessment of brief interventions and referral for smoking cessation in primary care (including pharmacy and dental services as well as general practitioner's surgeries) and other settings with particular reference to pregnant smokers and disadvantaged groups and the tailoring and targeting of interventions.

Guidance on the optimal provision of smoking cessation services including the provision of nicotine replacement therapy, for primary care, pharmacies, local authorities and workplaces with particular reference to manual groups, pregnant smokers and hard to reach communities.

Guidance for midwives, health visitors, pharmacists and other primary care services to improve the nutrition of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children in low income households.

The most appropriate means of generic and specific interventions to support attitude and behaviour change at population and community levels.

NICE has already been commissioned to produce guidelines on the management and prevention of obesity.

Abortion (Essex)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many abortions have been performed in the Romford and Havering constituencies in each year since 1997. [219371]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data is not available in the format requested.

The National Statistician has been asked to provide the Department and the new health and social care information centre with guidelines for interpreting the national statistics code of practice and associated protocols in the handling of health statistics across the health community which balance data confidentiality risks with the public interest in the use of the figures.

Alliance Medical

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what indicators are being used to determine whether the scanning services provided by Alliance Medical are good value for money; [224215]

(2) what policies for reducing waiting times for scans were considered other than entering into a contract with a private sector provider; and what assessment was made of the relative costs of the alternatives. [224510]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The additional capacity provided by the independent sector is complementary to our policy of expanding capacity within the national health service itself. By 2008, there will be an increase of 2.75 million extra scans and diagnostic procedures, of which one million scans per year will be purchased from the independent sector, all delivered free at the point of need. The remaining 1.75 million will be delivered by the NHS.

The contract was negotiated at a rate estimated against equivalent NHS cost. The estimate found it to be less than half of the NHS cost, which demonstrates the value for money achieved.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list the individuals who were involved in the negotiation of the contract for Alliance Medical to provide scanning services to the NHS; [224216]

(2) how many meetings have taken place between his Department's officials and Alliance Medical personnel to discuss the provision of scanning services to the NHS by Alliance Medical; [224508]

(3) if he will list the individuals who were present at the meeting which took place between his Department and Alliance Medical to discuss the provision of scanning services; and on what dates the meetings were held. [224513]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The national implementation team of the Department's commercial directorate carried out the tendering process and contract negotiations.

Departmental officials and representatives had a number of talks with Alliance Medical as part of the procurement process. The Department continues to have regular contact with the company. However, given the number and variety of these contacts, it is not possible to provide a total number of meetings, nor would it be appropriate to name individual officials.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what factors were taken into consideration when determining whether Alliance Medical should provide scanning services in the NHS; [224219]

(2) if he will list contracts that have been awarded to Alliance Medical to provide services for the NHS. [224221]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answers 4 April 2005]:* The contract was negotiated based on clinical capacity, ability to deliver service, and value for money.

This is the only contract of its kind which procured by the Department from Alliance Medical. Information on contracts with individual trusts, which are not negotiated centrally, is not available.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the technical specifications are of the scanning equipment used by Alliance Medical in the mobile scanner unit under the contract held with the NHS; [224338]

(2) what the technical specifications are of the scanning equipment used at University Hospital North Durham. [224339]

Mr. Hutton: All 12 of Alliance Medical's mobile units use the latest 1.5T Siemens scanners, capable of all standard scanning sequences (including single shot fast spin echo 2D/3D fast/turbo spin echo). The Department does not hold technical specifications for equipment being used by the University Hospital North Durham.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the complaints procedure is for patients dissatisfied with services provided by Alliance Medical; [224507]

(2) what his policy is on where legal liability lies in the event of a medical negligence case arising from a procedure undertaken by Alliance Medical. [224509]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Patients who receive scans through this contract remain national health service patients throughout. All patients are therefore covered by the central negligence scheme for trusts and, in the event of any negligence claim, have the same rights as if the event occurred within the NHS.

The responsibility for handling complaints rests with the appropriate NHS primary care trust or acute trust that referred the patient. Such complaints are handled through the NHS complaints process.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procurement process was undertaken by his Department before entering into the contract with Alliance Medical for the provision of CT and MRI scans. [224511]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Standard Government procurement processes were followed in which advertisements were placed and companies were invited to send in expressions of interest. Following a robust negotiation process, Alliance Medical was selected as the company that offered value for money and capacity to deliver services.

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment was made by his Department of Alliance Medical's employment policy, with particular reference to the recognition of trade unions, prior to entering into a contract to provide CT and MRI scans for the NHS. [224512]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Alliance Medical are required to comply with all employment laws governing their staff and to ensure that all radiologists are registered with the General Medical

Council and are on the appropriate specialist register to ensure that they are of the same standard as radiologists working within the national health service.

Care Home Staff

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many care homes have complied to date with the Government's requirement for 50 per cent. of support staff to have obtained NVQ Level 2 by the end of April; what mechanisms are in place to monitor compliance; and what the sanctions for non-compliance will be. [224733]

Dr. Ladyman: Standard 28.1 of the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People and standard 32.6 for Care Homes for Adults 18 to 65 sets the expectation that by 2005 a minimum of 50 per cent. of care staff in care homes should be trained to National Vocational Qualification Level 2. It is for the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), in regulating care homes, to monitor care homes performance against the standards. The CSCI must take the standards into account when assessing a care homes compliance with the Care Homes Regulations 2001.

Chronic Disease Management

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to develop a co-ordinated approach to chronic disease management in patients with *(a)* diabetes, *(b)* heart disease and *(c)* kidney disease. [224719]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The NHS Improvement Plan set out the Government's priority to improve care for people with long-term conditions by moving from reactive care towards a systematic, patient centred approach. The national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions was launched on 10 March 2005 and aims to support people with long-term conditions to live as full and independent a life as possible.

The Department has set up a vascular programmes board that will oversee delivery of the targets for cardiovascular disease (coronary heart disease, stroke and other circulatory diseases), diabetes, chronic kidney disease, health improvement and prevention, and hypertension. The work of the board will assist in the process of taking a more co-ordinated approach to chronic disease management in patients with diabetes, heart disease and kidney disease.

The diabetes NSF was published in December 2001. The NSF sets out a 10-year programme of change where all people with diabetes requiring multi-agency support will receive integrated health and social care. The recently published report, "Improving Diabetes Services—the NSF Two Years On", provides information about how services are changing to provide an integrated approach for people with diabetes.

The coronary heart disease (CHD) NSF, published in March 2000, set out a strategy to modernise CHD services over 10 years. Heart failure was identified as an area where there was significant scope to help people with heart failure live longer and achieve a better quality of life.

Part two of the NSF for renal services was published in February 2005. It sets out new quality requirements for the identification and early management of people with, or at risk of, chronic kidney disease. It also identifies considerable scope for integrating care pathways for people with chronic kidney disease, coronary heart disease and/or diabetes, to reduce the impact of these interacting long-term conditions.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many civil servants in his Department have *(a)* been relocated and *(b)* been agreed for relocation in the last 12 months; and to which areas of the United Kingdom. [223917]

Ms Rosie Winterton: 12 civil servants from the Department have been relocated in the last 12 months:

	Number
Leeds	2
London	7
Cambridge	1
Southampton	1
Durham	1

In response to the Lyons Review, the Department has committed to relocating 1,110 posts, mainly from its arm's length bodies, by 2010. So far, around 500 posts have been confirmed for relocation. At least 300 of these posts are likely to relocate to Leeds.

CMP Practitioners Conference

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on the CMP Practitioners Conference at Turnberry on 10 and 11 March. [224735]

Mr. Hutton: The National health service did not incur any of the costs for the pathways condition management programme conference at Turnberry on 10 and 11 March 2005. The cost of this important development event for the incapacity benefit reform programme was wholly borne by the Department.

Counter-Fraud and Security Management Service

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 123W, on counter-fraud and security management service, how many cases investigated by the national health service counter fraud and management service since September 1998 resulted in *(a)* not guilty verdicts, *(b)* successful criminal prosecutions, *(c)* disciplinary sanctions and *(d)* a civil recovery. [224320]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The breakdown of outcomes in cases investigated by the national health service counter fraud and security management service (CFSMS) between September 1998 and February 2005 is as follows:

11 cases were found not guilty (unsuccessful criminal prosecutions).

297 cases resulted in successful criminal prosecutions.

329 cases resulted in disciplinary sanctions or civil recoveries.

The total received in recoveries for England and Wales is £18.4 million but overall, the CFSMS has saved £670 million between 1999 and 2005 by counter fraud work in the NHS.

Dentistry

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, columns 680–81W, on dentistry, how many dental practices were on the nhs.uk.database on the latest date for which figures are available, including those not registering new patients; how many were registering new patients; how many were not registering new patients but providing occasional NHS treatment to non-registered patients; and how many were not registering new patients or providing occasional NHS treatment to non-registered patients. [221758]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 15 March 2005]:* This information is available on the following website: www.nhs.uk/webservices/pages/webservices/dentalreport.asp.

Digital Hearing Aids

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1051W, on digital hearing aids, what mechanisms are in place to monitor the 18-week target from referral to patients receiving their digital hearing aids. [224738]

Mr. Hutton: We are expecting activity and waiting times information for pure tone audiometry to be collected for the first time as part of local delivery plans. Strategic health authorities and primary care trusts are currently developing their plans and these will be agreed with the Department shortly.

Disability Buggies

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discretion general practitioners have to charge patients for issuing forms for use of a disability buggy; and if he will make a statement. [224776]

Mr. Hutton: General practitioners (GPs) are required to issue specified medical certificates free of charge, for example, to support claims for social security benefits. However, GPs also provide a variety of other services which successive governments have regarded as private matters between the patient and the doctor providing the service. In these cases, the doctor has discretion to charge for these non-national health service services if he or she wishes.

Food Standards Directive

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Food Standards Agency will accept the derogation granted by the Italian Government to 121 nutrient sources under the provisions of the Food Standards Directive as valid in the United Kingdom; and whether it will permit the continued use of the nutrient sources after 1 August on the basis of the derogations granted in Italy. [222940]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* The United Kingdom will grant a derogation in accordance with the food supplements directive 2002/46/EC for the continued use of sources of the vitamins and minerals listed in the Directive, where dossiers have been either been submitted to the UK or to another member state, pending a positive opinion from the European Food Safety Authority. The Food Standards Agency is pressing the European Commission for a view on the Italian derogations.

Food Supplements Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will table amendments to the Food Supplements Directive in the Council of Ministers to allow the sale on domestic national markets of products which lie outside the technical restrictions on sale. [223822]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Food Supplements Directive was agreed in 2002. The European Commission would need to bring forward new proposals in order for amendments to be made to the Directive.

Health Care Worker Screening

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recommendations on healthcare worker screening were made by the ad hoc risk assessment group commissioned by his Department in December 2002; and which of these recommendations have been implemented. [223755]

Mr. Hutton: The recommendations of the ad hoc risk assessment group commissioned in December 2002 will be placed in the Library shortly.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish his Department's consultation on screening healthcare workers. [223756]

Mr. Hutton: Consultation on screening healthcare workers was published in 2002.

Health Direct

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 503W, on Health Direct, when he expects to announce the *(a)* set-up and *(b)* running costs of Health Direct; and if he will make a statement. [224324]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Health Direct will be set up starting from 2007. A scoping study will be undertaken during 2005 to establish the customer requirements and service definition for the Health Direct service. Set up and running costs for the service will be established during the subsequent procurement phase, which we expect to complete by the end of 2006.

Health Expenditure

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of health expenditure relating to *(a)* nicotine, *(b)* alcohol and *(c)* illegal drug use in each of the last five years. [223705]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Smoking costs the national health service between £1.4 billion and £1.7 billion a year in England, as set out in the White Paper, Choosing Health[1].

[1] Buck D et al—University of York Centre for Health Economics. Cost effectiveness of smoking cessation interventions: Health Education Authority 1997.

The interim analytical report prepared by the strategy unit to support the production of the alcohol harm reduction strategy for England estimated the cost annually to the health service due to alcohol related harm as between £1.4 and £1.7 billion.

The Home Office research study 249, "The economic and social costs of class A drug misuse in England and Wales, 2000", estimated that:

Young recreational users cost the NHS about £2 million.

The total healthcare costs for older regular users were also about £2 million.

Problem drug users are estimated to cost the NHS between £283 million and £509 million per year, in addition to the specific addiction treatment they are receiving.

Health White Paper

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 7 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 504W, on Health White Paper, what estimate he has made of the cost of implementing the Healthy Start programme *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by (i) costs of the campaign aimed at families, (ii) costs of the communications and training programme for health professionals and (iii) other costs. [224322]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Healthy Start will replace the existing welfare food scheme and will be phased in from summer 2005. We expect that Healthy Start expenditure should continue at a similar level to the welfare food scheme. The budget is demand-led and current expenditure is approximately £140 million per annum.

A draft regulatory impact assessment (RIA), which includes breakdowns of the expected costs of Healthy Start, was published in the Healthy Start consultation on draft regulations that was launched on 1 February 2005. This RIA will be revised in light of the responses to the consultation and before Parliament is invited to approve the regulations. The consultation ends on 26 April.

A communications strategy and health professional training activities for Healthy Start are currently in development and will link in with communications and training to be provided as part of the actions set out in the "Choosing a Better Diet: a food and health action plan".

Hospital Acquired Infections

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the national audit of deaths caused by hospital acquired infections announced by the Chief Medical Officer in December 2003 is operational; and if he will make a statement. [218119]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department of Health asked the Office for National Statistics and the Health Protection Agency (HPA) to undertake jointly a confidential, qualitative study on a proportion of deaths which may be associated with healthcare associated infection.

This study requires the collection and analysis of detailed information that is not collected routinely. This study will develop new methodologies enabling detailed analyses of case reports.

Preliminary work has been carried out and it is for the HPA and Office for National Statistics to take matters forward.

Hospital-Acquired Infections

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rate of surgical site infection was in each quarter since October 1997, broken down by category of surgical procedure. [222810]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Cumulative data from the Health Protection Agency's (HPA) voluntary reporting scheme for surgical site infection are published annually. The following table covers the period October 1997 to December 2003.

Rate of surgical site infection (SSI) by category of surgical procedure: October 1997 to December 2003

Surgical procedure	*Rate of SSI*	*95 per cent. confidence limit lower–upper*
Abdominal hysterectomy	2.0	1.8–2.3
Bile duct, liver, or pancreatic surgery	11.3	7.1–17.1
Cholecystectomy	4.1	1.3–9.5
Coronary artery bypass graft	4.3	4.0–4.6
Gastric surgery	9.9	7.0–13.7
Total hip replacement	2.2	2.1–2.4
Hip hemiarthroplasty	4.9	4.6–5.3
Knee prosthesis	1.4	1.3–1.5
Large bowel surgery	9.3	8.8–9.9
Limb amputation	14.9	13.3–16.8
Open reduction of fracture	3.8	3.3–4.3
Small bowel surgery	10.1	8.5–11.9
Vascular surgery	6.7	6.1–7.4

Source:
HPA Communicable Disease Report (CDR) Weekly 2004, volume 14, 21, 20 May

The mandatory reporting scheme for orthopaedic surgical site infections was introduced in April 2004 and the first year's data will be published later this year.

Influenza Pandemic Plan

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target rate for the update of immunisation against infection in the event of an influenza pandemic will be, assuming that an effective vaccine has been obtained. [220983]

Miss Melanie Johnson: If supplies of pandemic influenza vaccine are limited, its use would be prioritised as outlined in the pandemic influenza contingency plan. However, if sufficient supplies were available, it would be offered to all eligible individuals.

Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether guidance issued by the Joint Committee on vaccinations and immunisations is mandatory for *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* hospital trusts. [224661]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is a matter for clinical governance on how Joint Committee on vaccinations and immunisations recommendations are implemented.

Klinefelter Syndrome

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on treatment for those who have Klinefelter syndrome; and if he will make a statement. [224912]

Dr. Ladyman: Sufferers from Klinefelter's syndrome can have diverse and variable health and social care needs. These needs are best addressed on an individual basis by local health and social care bodies.

Meat Hygiene Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his plans for the Meat Hygiene Service. [222970]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) carries out important and valuable work in licensed meat establishments to protect public health, animal health and animal welfare. I have been advised by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that the MHS is facing a number of significant changes. These include enforcement arrangements for new European Union food hygiene regulations, which come into force in January 2006; plans to allow beef from cattle over 30 months old back on to the market once robust arrangements for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) testing are in place; and addressing recommendations made in the report of the independent inquiry into BSE testing failures. The MHS is working closely with the Food Standards Agency and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs towards the effective implementation of these changes.

Mental Health

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department has allocated to telephone support lines for people with mental illness in each of the last five years. [224657]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Over the last five years, the Department has allocated a total of £6,837,986 to telephone support lines for people with mental health problems. Details of which are broken down by year in the following table.

	Allocation (£)
2000–01	889,980
2001–02	894,000
2002–03	1,092,006
2003–04	2,051,000
2004–05	1,911,000

Mobile Scanner

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment was made of the North Durham area in order to find sites suitable for a mobile scanner. [224220]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave him on 18 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 523W.

MRI Scans

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1910W, on MRI scans, if he will set out for each month for which he has records the information on *(a)* number of scans, *(b)* number of rejections, *(c)* timeliness, *(d)* quality and *(e)* customer satisfaction. [222373]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The number of scans performed by Alliance Medical Limited (AML) and customer satisfaction rates for each month is shown in the table.

In relation to information concerning rejections, timeliness and quality, I refer the hon. Member to my reply of 9 March.

Month	*Number of patients scanned*	*Patient satisfaction (good or excellent) (percentage)*
August	2,097	n/a
September	2,884	90
October	4,201	91
November	5,999	96
December	4,564	96
January	5,252	93
February	4,456	n/a

Notes:
1. Data provided by Alliance Medical, but not validated by the Department.
2. The contract began roll-out in August 2004 and has been fully operational since December 2004.
3. AML first surveyed patients in September 2005. Data for February 2005 is not yet available.

NHS Absences

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many working days have been lost due to *(a)* sickness and *(b)* absenteeism in the NHS in each of the past 10 years. [224742]

Mr. Hutton: National data on sickness absence levels in the national health service has only been collected since 1999 and is collected as a percentage rate, rather than the number of working days lost. Data for the period 1999–2003 is shown in the table. National data on other types of absence in the NHS is not collected centrally, but may be available from individual NHS employing organisations.

	Percentage
1999	4.9
2000	4.7
2001	4.8
2002	4.6
2003	4.7

NHS Beds

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS beds there were in each year since 1997. [223482]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* The information requested is available in the Library.

NHS Charges

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what charges have been introduced for NHS services since 1975. [223739]

Mr. Hutton: Regulations governing charging of overseas visitors for national health service hospital treatment were first introduced in 1982. These were subsequently replaced by the NHS (Charges to Overseas Visitors) Regulations 1989, which remain the basis of the charging arrangements today, although they have been amended from time to time, most recently in April 2004.

Charging for dental examinations was introduced on 1 April 1989.

NHS Contracts

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when his Department adopted the policy of not disclosing the total value of contracts held between the NHS and providers; [224217]

(2) if he will list the companies which tendered for the contract won by Alliance Medical to provide scanning services to the NHS. [224218]

Mr. Hutton: It has always been the Department's policy to decide whether to disclose the value of contracts on a case by case basis.

Information on specific companies that tendered for the contract is commercially sensitive. Releasing the names of companies which were not successful could be considered commercially damaging to the interests of the firms concerned. For this reason, 27 expressions of interest were received and six bidders were invited to negotiate for the contract.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency's operating costs are funded. [224720]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency is an executive agency of the Department and receives its funding from the Department.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether hospital trusts are required to use the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency to source any of their supplies. [224721]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency assists around 400 national health service trusts and health bodies with their purchasing and manages some 3000 national purchasing contracts, which are available to NHS bodies. Use of these contracts by local bodies is voluntary but extensive because of the savings they provide.

NHS Staff

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many qualified *(a)* nurses, *(b)* midwives and *(c)* health visitors have (i) entered and (ii) completed return to practice schemes in the NHS in England since March 2004. [224842]

Mr. Hutton: The Department no longer collects this information.

NHS Telephone Services

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will ban premium rate charges for *(a)* incoming calls made to and *(b)* outgoing calls made from bedside phones in NHS hospitals; and if he will make a statement. [223778]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Bedside television (TV) and telephone services are now available in most major acute hospitals and provide an additional service to patients, relatives and friends to enable them to remain in direct contact when people are in hospital. It is still possible for friends and relatives to contact a hospital through its main switchboard and then be transferred to a nurse station to enquire about their relatives' health.

Charges for the use of services through bedside telephones are agreed between the national health service trust and the company supplying the service. The trust does not make any profit from these services.

Contracts are entered into by individual trusts who will set out an agreed schedule of charges, including the cost of incoming charges to patients.

Three suppliers, covering 69,000 beds, include a message notifying callers at the outset of the call what the charge will be. The fourth, which provides a service to the remaining 6,000 beds, will shortly be including a similar message at all their sites. In addition, the Patient Power suppliers set out the charges for all their services in leaflets, which are made widely available. A higher incoming call rate helps subsidise concessionary rates provided by the suppliers, which include free TV for children and discounted rates for long stay patients.

NHS Estates commissioned British Market Research Bureau to carry out a survey to conduct research into patient and staff satisfaction with the bedside communication and entertainment systems where 88 per cent. of patients said that they were satisfied with the services, 95 per cent. of patients chose to pay for services offered and patients said the most important reason for using the system was to make phone calls without having to ask a member of staff for help or go to a public pay phone.

The patient bedside entertainment system provides a vital direct link with family and friends for NHS patients. The results of the recent survey confirm that the service is useful in improving the patients' stay in hospital.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 4 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1469W on hospitals, in which year of the rolling breakeven period each of the NHS trusts listed was at the end of 2003–04; which of the NHS

trusts were given an exception to have a five year rolling breakeven period; and what the 2003–04 turnover for each NHS trust was. [223577]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 24 March 2005]* The information requested will be placed in Library shortly.

Exceptionally, strategic health authorities (SHAs) have the authority to extend the period of breakeven recovery from three years to either a four or five year period. Such extension requires the express agreement of the relevant SHA in the knowledge of the national health service trust's particular circumstances. Exceptional circumstances may arise where the four/five year period is consistent with the terms of, and targets included in, a financial recovery plan approved by the relevant SHA, or there are other exceptional circumstances, defined and approved in writing by the relevant SHA.

Nurses

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total expenditure in the NHS in England sourced *(a)* from NHS banks, *(b)* from nursing agencies and *(c)* by NHS professionals was in each financial year since 1997–98 on temporary qualified nursing staff. [224843]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect information from trusts according to the categories identified. Information is collected from trusts on their total spend on non-national health service nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff. For figures since 1997–98, I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Sutton and Cheam (Mr. Burstow) on 16 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1329W. The figure provided for 2003–04 has now been audited and is correct.

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the expenditure by West Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service NHS Trust was in each of the financial years since 2001–02 on employing *(a)* qualified nursing staff and *(b)* qualified temporary nursing staff. [224844]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows expenditure by the West Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service National Health Service Trust (WYMAS) on NHS qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff and non NHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, for the years 2001–02 to 2003–04.

(£)

	Qualified NHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	*Non-NHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff*
2001–02	13,599,638	12,460,320
2002–03	22,972,181	38,150,587
2003–04	26,596,911	21,660,434

Notes:

1. The Department collects expenditure information on NHS and non-NHS staff by NHS trusts. Non-NHS staff expenditure figures include all agency staff and any other staff not directly employed by the trusts.
2. WYMAS was a lead organisation for NHS Professionals. The non-NHS figures shown in the table relate to expenditure on NHS professionals. These figures have not been used in previous parliamentary responses (to avoid double counting) due to the fact that other NHS trusts included the expenditure in their financial returns when reporting NHS professionals that they employed via WYMAS.

Source:

Annual financial returns of NHS trusts.

Occupational Code Definitions

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the definitions of NHS occupational codes found under the NHS work force statistics for *(a)* all non-clinical jobs, *(b)* all clinical jobs, *(c)* managers and *(d)* senior managers are the same in 2003–04 as in each year since 1997–98. [223044]

Mr. Hutton: Since 1997, the national health service has undergone a radical reorganisation aimed at ensuring services are managed closer to patients, in particular through Shifting the Balance of Power and the creation of primary care trusts. In addition, the NHS has introduced a range of new clinical and non-clinical roles aimed at better meeting patients needs and the skills of staff. These include, for example, nurse consultants, and will in future include community matrons.

The occupation codes used in NHS work force statistics have been amended to reflect these changes. All such changes are includes in the occupation codes manuals and Data Set Change Notices, which are available at: www.nhsia.nhs.uk/dscn/pages/default.asp.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the NHS occupational codes and their definitions for all *(a)* non-clinical and *(b)* clinical jobs, broken down by (i) strategic health authority and (ii) NHS hospital trust in (A) 2003–04 and (B) 2002–03. [223045]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested will be placed in the Library shortly.

Out-of-hours Services (Northumberland)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he received a copy of the Review of Out-of-Hours Services in Northumberland, undertaken by Northumberland Care Trust and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust; what further reviews of out-of-hours services are being undertaken; and if he will make a statement on the operation of the out-of-hours service under the new general medical services contract. [224311]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The review of urgent care services across Northumberland was carried out by Northumberland Care Trust and Northumbria Healthcare National Health Service Trust. The outcome was shared with Northumberland, Tyne and Wear strategic health authority (SHA), which will continue to work with the local NHS to ensure that the action plan is fully implemented. The findings of the review have already been discussed publicly at the board meetings of Northumberland Care Trust and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust. They have also been shared with the overview and scrutiny committee in Northumberland and with the right hon. Member for Berwick-upon-Tweed (Mr Beith).

In addition, the Northumberland, Tyne and Wear SHA is also carrying out a formal assessment of adherence to the new out-of-hours quality requirements across the region. That process is still ongoing.

The Department is not currently undertaking any reviews of out-of-hours services. It would also not be appropriate for the Department to be involved with a review such as the one undertaken by Northumberland Care Trust and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust. Responsibility for local health services lies with the local NHS.

The new general medical services contract supports the development of an integrated system of high-quality out-of-hours care. It provides primary care trusts with an opportunity to address service fragmentation and introduce an integrated network of urgent care provision—bringing together primary, secondary and social care, to offer patients an integrated, responsive and locally appropriate service—delivered to nationally set quality requirements—which addresses all their urgent care needs.

Overseas Nurses

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to propose *(a)* bilateral agreements and *(b)* memoranda of understanding with countries other than India, Spain, Philippines and Indonesia on recruitment of nurses. [224841]

Mr. Hutton: We have no plans to propose further bilateral agreements and memorandum of understanding but are happy to discuss other countries' proposals.

Passive Smoking

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to inform the public of the effects of inhaling secondhand tobacco smoke; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of these steps. [224288]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We are continuing to act to inform and educate the public about the harmful effects of exposure to secondhand smoke. The hard-hitting television campaign depicting the dangers of smoking around babies and children has received advertising industry awards for effectiveness.

Details of the effectiveness of Government campaigns on the dangers of smoking are in the British Market Research Bureau tobacco education tracking study. A report of this evidence is to be published every six months on the Department's website.

PFI Projects

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total value is of private finance initiative projects granted approval by his Department since 1997. [223571]

Mr. Hutton: The total value for the private finance initiative projects given the go-ahead since 1997 is £17.1 billion. This is made of 78 major capital schemes approved since May 1997 with capital values ranging from £22 million to £1.2 billion, totalling £16.2 billion, and 44 non-prioritised schemes.

Pharmaceutical Companies

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received in relation to conduct of research involving pharmaceutical companies; and if he will make a statement. [224266]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In the context of the United Kingdom Clinical Research Collaboration, pharmaceutical industry representatives and others have drawn attention to inconsistent local administrative requirements of national health service organisations that can delay clinical research. The UK Clinical Research Collaboration includes a work stream on regulatory and governance issues through which the Department is working with its partners to promote processes which operate more efficiently while continuing to providing effective protection for patients.

Representatives of the pharmaceutical industry also recently submitted evidence to an ad hoc group reviewing the operation of the NHS Research Ethics Committee system.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Department has received a request for information about clinical trials conducted in the NHS for pharmaceutical companies.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list regulatory impact assessments which have included health impact assessments. [224278]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since November 2004, the Department and the Food Standards Agency have published the following regulatory impact assessments, which include a consideration of the impact on health:

Department of Health:

"Choosing Health" White Paper: overarching partial regulatory impact assessment and annexes

Action on food advertising and promotion to children.

Action reducing salt, fat and sugar intakes in England.

Action on second-hand smoke.

Action on sales of tobacco to under-16s.

Supporting national health service frontline staff in health improvement.

"Safer Management of Controlled Drugs": the Government's response to the fourth Shipman inquiry.

Medicines (Marketing Authorisations and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2004.

The Medicines (Pharmacies) (Applications for Registration and Fees) Amendment Regulations 2004.

National service framework (NSF) for renal services, part two: chronic kidney disease, acute renal failure and end-of-life care.

European Blood Safety: Blood Safety and Quality Regulations 2005 to implement European directives 2002/98/EC and 2004/33/EC.

The Opticians Act 1989 (Amendment) Order 2005.

The Water Fluoridation (Consultation) Regulations 2005.

NSF for long-term conditions.

The National Health Service (General Ophthalmic Services Supplementary List) and (General Ophthalmic Services Amendment and Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2005.

The Medicines for Human Use (Prescribing) Order 2005 (Extension of Supplementary prescribing to Chiropodists, Physiotherapists and Radiographers).

The Medicines for Human Use (Prescribing) Order 2005 (Extended Formulary Nurse Prescribing: Amendments to the Prescription only Medicines (Human Use) Order 1997).

The Medicines for Human Use (Prescribing) Order 2005.

NHS (Pharmaceutical Services) Regulations 2005:

Introduction of new community pharmacy contractual framework.

Implementation of the Government response to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) report on community pharmacy services.

Introduction of "Fitness to Practice" requirements for community pharmacy contractors and pharmacists providing NHS pharmaceutical services.

Food Standards Agency:

The Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2004: Maximum levels for dioxins in foodstuffs.

The Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2004: Maximum levels aflatoxins in maize.

The Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2004: Maximum levels for patulin in foodstuffs.

The Contaminants in Food (England) Regulations 2004: Maximum levels for tin in canned foodstuffs.

The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004.

The General Food Regulations 2004.

The Sweeteners in Food (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2004.

The Food with Added Phytosterols or Phytostanols (Labelling) (England) Regulations.

The Plastic Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2005–04–05.

The TSE (Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005–04–05.

The Contaminants in Food (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 (Maximum levels for nitrate in foods for infants and young children).

The Contaminants in Food (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2005 (Maximum levels aflatoxins or ochratoxin A in foods for infants and young children).

The Smoke Flavourings (England) Regulations 2005–04–05.

The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (England) Regulations 2005.

Student Grant Applications

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation has been made of the performance of the unit processing student grant applications for postgraduate courses in terms of *(a)* accuracy of information given, *(b)* quality and speed of responses to telephone calls and *(c)* quality and speed of responses to written communications. [221597]

Mr. Hutton: The students grant unit (SGU) is now part of the NHS Pensions Agency. It is for the agency to manage and account for the performance of the SGU. The chief executive of the agency informs me that he is aware of the criticisms made of the SGU in the recent past and has highlighted these as key performance indicators for the future. I have asked my officials to raise the SGU's performance at their regular review meetings with the agency.

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the Public Service Agreement target to increase year on year the proportion of drug users successfully sustaining or completing treatment programmes has been met thus far. [219241]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The proportion of drug users successfully sustaining or completing treatment programmes fell from 59 per cent. In 2001–02[1] to 57 per cent. In 2002–03[1], rising to 72 per cent. in 2003–04[2].

[1] Figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are provisional.

[2] In 2003–04, the methodology used for counting the numbers in drug treatment in England was revised to reflect numbers in treatment more accurately.

Note:

The definition of structured drug treatment has also tightened with the implementation of Models of care for the treatment of adult drug misusers, which was published in 2002.

Sources:

1. Provisional statistics from the national drug treatment monitoring system in England, 2001–02 and 2002–03, available on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/spndrugs0312.htm

2. Key statistics on drug misusers in treatment, England 2003–04, available at www.nta.nhs.uk/programme/national/ntdms_data_0304.htm

Tattoos

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he takes to ensure that the contents of inks used by tattooists do not contain chemicals at a level which is prejudicial to public health. [222402]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The European Commission division responsible for Consumer Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection (DG SANCO) has been collecting information on the safety of tattoos and body piercing and related practices via its Joint Research Centre (Institute for Health and Consumer Protection, Physical and Chemical Exposure Unit) to establish whether there is a need for specific EU legislation in this area. The Department supports the Council of Europe Resolution advising that tattoo pigments used should comply with the Cosmetics Directive, that is that only permitted colours are used, even though they are not legally covered by that Directive.

The supply of pigments that could cause harm to consumers would be against the law under General Product Safety Regulations 1994.

Tea Tree Oil

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether he has identified potential risks to human health from the use of products containing tea tree oil; and if he will make a statement on EU proposals to stop the sale of such products. [224138]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* The major risk identified from the use of consumer products containing tea tree oil comes from the sensitising potential of concentrated (greater than 2 per cent.) solutions, particularly if the product has been exposed to oxygen, sunlight or higher temperatures. However, the European Scientific Committee on

consumer products has advised that the data available are currently insufficient to assess the potential risk of a range of toxic effects.

The Committee requested that a complete package of data be provided in order for them to give an opinion on the potential risks. The conclusions will then be used to amend the cosmetics directive in order to make any restrictions on the use of tea tree oil in cosmetic products legally enforceable. In the meantime, industry has advised that tea tree oil should only be used in cosmetic products at concentrations at or below 1 per cent., and should be formulated and packaged in a way to minimise degradation.

15 medicinal products containing tea tree oil, licensed under medicines legislation, are available in the United Kingdom. There may be other medicines that contain tea tree oil, which currently reach the market as unlicensed herbal remedies. These will potentially qualify to be registered under Directive 2004/24/EC when it is implemented on 30 October this year. To qualify for registration, products will have to demonstrate that they comply with the required evidence of traditional usage and that they meet the required standards of safety and quality.

As with all medicines, the safety of medicinal products containing tea tree oil is closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. There are no safety concerns specific to the medicinal use of tea tree oil but all effective treatments may cause unwanted side effects in some patients, which may be the result of individual sensitivity to the medicine concerned.

University Hospital, North Durham

Mr. Kevan Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average cost of a scan undertaken by the University Hospital North Durham was in 2004–05. [224213]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the average costs of scans at individual trusts is not held centrally.

The national average cost of an magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan in direct access, where a general practitioner refers a patient directly to a trust for treatment, for the 2003–04 financial year was £309.63.

Source:

National schedule of Reference costs Appendix 1 relating to financial year 2003–04.

Vulnerable Adults

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are in place to monitor the effectiveness of procedures that ensure that all appropriate information about vulnerable adults, including information relating to risk, is made known when these adults move from English to Welsh counties. [224948]

Dr. Ladyman: Councils locally determine the procedures that ensure information about vulnerable adults, including information relating to risk, is appropriately managed. It is for councils to decide how information, identified through a needs assessment, is to be collected, stored and shared, with due regard to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The effectiveness of these measures is not monitored centrally.

Waiting Times (Leeds)

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average waiting times for *(a)* inpatient and *(b)* outpatient treatment in hospitals in Leeds were in (i) 1993, (ii) 1995, (iii) 1997 and (iv) the latest year for which figures are available, broken down by specialty. [223761]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

CABINET OFFICE

Sikh Community

Rob Marris: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what guidance the Cabinet Office has issued to Government Departments on separately *(a)* recognising and *(b)* monitoring service provision to British Sikhs in relation to race relations legislation. [224495]

Fiona Mactaggart: I have been asked to reply.

It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

DEFENCE

Agency Budgets

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the (i) Warship Support Agency, (ii) Veterans Agency and (iii) UK Hydrographic Office spent in Scotland in (A) monetary terms and (B) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [218260]

Mr. Caplin: Both civilian and Service personnel data by agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at http://www.dasa.mod.uk

The number of Service personnel employed by agency and location is not collated centrally, although the UK Hydrographic Office have confirmed from locally held records that no Service personnel have been employed in Scotland.

A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MOD agency, for the agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, is available on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, http://www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House.

Information relating to the total personnel costs of each of these agencies is available from their respective Annual Report and Accounts, copies of which are available in the Library of the House.

In the case of the Veterans Agency, the relevant publications relate to the War Pensions Agency, which was transferred to the MOD in April 2002 and subsequently took the name Veterans Agency.

Before 1 April 2001, the Warship Support Agency was split between two organisations, the Ships Support Agency and the Naval Bases and Supply Agency.

More detailed analysis of personnel costs by region could be supplied only at disproportionate costs, as the information is not held centrally.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the (i) Queen Victoria School, (ii) Pay and Personnel Agency and (iii) Naval Recruiting and Training Agency spent in Scotland in (A) monetary terms and (B) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in these years; and if he will make a statement. [218315]

Mr. Caplin: Total staff costs are published in the agencies' annual report and accounts for the relevant financial years, copies of which are available in the House and from the following agency websites at http://www.qvs.org.uk/and http://www.ppa.mod.uk/.

Agency personnel costs on a regional basis are not recorded centrally or by the agency. However, the Queen Victoria school is based solely in Scotland, whereas the pay and personnel agency has confirmed from locally held records that it has attracted no staff costs in Scotland since its formation in 1996.

Both civilian and Service personnel data by agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at http://www.dasa.mod.uk

The number of Service personnel employed by agency and location is not collated centrally. In the case of the pay and personnel agency, locally held records confirm that no Service personnel have been employed in Scotland since the agency formation in 1996.

A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MOD agency, for the agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, is available on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, http://www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House.

Charge Cards

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what use is made of charge cards by officials in procuring defence equipment in excess of a value of £5,000. [225036]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Advertising Contracts

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many advertising contracts, and to what value, were signed by his Department in the periods *(a)* 1 September 2004 to 1 March 2005 and *(b)* 1 September 2003 to 1 March 2004, broken down by (i) television, (ii) radio, (iii) press, (iv) direct mail and (v) other advertising. [219383]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 2 March 2005]*: Data on advertising contracts is not recorded by the categories requested and can be identified only from the UK Standard Industrial Classification Code 2003 allocated to the contract. The SIC code is used to record activities and products and is published and approved for use by the Office of National Statistics. Therefore, contracts and their values identified by Advertising SIC Codes for the periods in question are as follows.

SIC Code	*Description*	*Date placed*	*Contract value (£)*
	Advertising Contracts for Period 1 September 2003 to1 March 2004		
22120	Advertising covering: newspaper publishing (manufacture)	19 February 2004	25,000
22220	Advertising covering: catalogue printing and printed matter (manufacture)	8 September 2003	30,000
		22 December 2003	3,800
		20 January 2004	60,000
		3 October 2003	2,900
		13 November 2003	288
25240	Advertising covering: advertising material made of plastic (manufacture)	4 December 2003	4,500
		23 October 2003	7,900
		8 January 2004	1,300
		17 November 2003	14,300
		26 September 2003	75,000
		26 November 2003	29,400
		10 December 2003	7,100
		11 November 2003	11,200
		11 February 2004	3,000
		7 January 2004	13,000

SIC Code	Description	Date placed	Contract value (£)
		11 February 2004	1,500
		11 February 2004	753
		18 February 2004	257
		11 February 2004	464
		11 February 2004	420
		11 February 2004	496
		11 February 2004	1,000
		1 September 2003	211
		23 December 2003	452
		16 February 2004	83
		17 November 2003	2,600
		26 February 2004	452,000
		18 February 2004	25,300
		18 December 2003	3,600
		16 February 2004	11,300
		9 September 2003	92,000
31500	Advertising covering: light (manufacture)	15 December 2003	180,000
		24 October 2003	1,700
		28 January 2004	77,400
		30 September 2004	37,200
		20 October 2003	9,100
		24 March 2004	2,000
		24 November 2003	32,200
		5 February 2004	17,100
		17 February 2004	7,700
		13 February 2004	48,400
		22 December 2003	370,200
		3 November 2003	26,100
		27 February 2004	139,300
		26 January 2004	1,800
		17 December 2003	6,400
74400	Advertising covering: campaign creation and realisation; advertising consultants; advertising material or samples delivery or distribution; advertising space or time sales or leasing activities	17 November 2003	122,000
92110	Advertising covering: film production	2 September 2003	46,500
		4 November 2003	14,800
		6 February 2004	58,700
	Advertising contracts for period 1 September 2004 to March 2005		
22220	Advertising covering: catalogue printing (manufacture)	20 September 2004	7,900
		2 February 2005	14,800
		16 December 2004	455,000
25240	Advertising covering: material made of plastic (manufacture)	6 December 2004	14,400
		25 November 2004	87,900
		10 November 2004	364
		21 December 2004	4,100
		6 October 2004	463,700
		6 September 2004	663
		6 October 2004	672,900
		3 September 2004	845.00
		9 September 2004	2,500
		1 December 2004	16,800
31500	Advertising covering: light (manufacture)	10 December 2004	180,000
		17 January 2005	25,000
		21 December 2004	15,000
		22 October 2004	24,900
174400		17 January 2005	24,700
		20 January 2005	8,500
		30 November 2004	57,300
		1 November 2004	25,300
		6 September 2004	11,000
		22 November 2004	920

SIC Code	Description	Date placed	Contract value (£)
74400	Advertising covering: campaign creation and realisation; advertising consultants; advertising Material or samples delivery or distribution; advertising space or time sales or leasing activities	1 October 2004	600,000
		22 November 2004	16,000
		7 September 2004	127,600
92110	Advertising covering: film production	1 October 2004	45,000
		1 October 2004	34,000
		1 October 2004	36,000
		1 October 2004	36,000
		1 October 2004	33,000

Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the outcome of the appeal referred to in Note 13 (ii) of his Department's Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04. [209337]

Mr. Ingram: The appeals process is still continuing, and may not be concluded for about three years.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the new Armed Forces Compensation Scheme for injuries and deaths occurring after 6 April provides an exemption to the five-year limit for claims for deafness; and if he will make a statement. [224796]

Mr. Ingram: The general time limit for claiming injury benefits under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme is five years from the date on which the injury occurs or, in the case of an illness, five years from the date the claimant first sought medical advice in relation to that illness. The time limit does not apply in certain circumstances to conditions that have late onset—for example a cancer which is caused by an occupational exposure occurring more than five years before the onset of the disease. Hearing loss due to a service cause—for example a blast injury—has onset in close time proximity to the cause and so does not fall within the late onset provision.

Arms Exports (India)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the benefit to the UK *(a)* economy and *(b)* labour market of India's proposed purchase of 125 fighter jets; and if he will make a statement. [216256]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Army Costs

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of a fully equipped infantry regiment was in the last year for which figures are available; how this cost would change if it were deployed to *(a)* combat and *(b)* non-combat roles overseas; and if he will make a statement. [223738]

Mr. Ingram: Such information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Army Discipline

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers who made complaints under Army redress procedures since 1997 subsequently committed suicide. [201840]

Mr. Ingram: Our records indicate that since 1997 one soldier whose death was recorded by a coroner as suicide is known to have submitted a redress of complaint. There is no evidence to suggest that the redress, which was withdrawn, and the soldier's death were linked.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what have been the total *(a)* damages awarded against the Department and *(b)* Department's legal costs since 1997 with respect to cases in the British courts which relate to a decision of the Army Board under the redress system. [201842]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints that have been considered under Army redress procedures have resulted in legal action before the *(a)* employment tribunal, *(b)* High Court and *(c)* European Court of Human Rights since 1997. [201844]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence does not hold complete records dating back to 1997. During the period January 1999 and December 2004, our records indicate that there have been 33 Army redress of complaint cases which were the subject of an employment tribunal, and two cases which were the subject of a judicial review in the courts.

We are not aware of any redress of complaints considered under Army procedures between January 1999 and December 2004 being subject to legal action in the European Court of Human Rights.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many decisions of the Army board on complaints under the redress system have been overturned by a court of law since 1997; for what reasons these decisions were overturned; and if he will make a statement. [201845]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence does not hold complete records dating back to 1997. Since 1999, our records indicate that no redress of complaint decisions taken by the Army board have been overturned in a UK court of law.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many complaints have been considered by the Army board from soldiers who are serving, or who have served, at *(a)* Deepcut barracks and *(b)* ITC Catterick since 1997; and how many of those complaints related to issues of bullying or harassment; [201846]

(2) how many of the 197 complaints considered by the Army board between 1999 and 2003 related to issues of bullying or harassment; [201831]

(3) how many of the 63 complaints under Army redress procedures upheld or partially upheld between 1997 and 2003 related to issues of bullying or harassment; and how many *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers and *(c)* private soldiers were disciplined as a result. [201832]

Mr. Caplin: These questions relate to information I gave to the hon. Member in a written answer on 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1806W. It has subsequently been found that there was an error in the statistics given in that answer relating to the number of redress cases considered by the Army board.

Officials have urgently been examining those records. I wrote to the hon. Member on 6 April and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers and *(c)* private soldiers have been disciplined following the outcome of (i) an Army board decision, (ii) a divisional level decision and (iii) a unit level decision since 1997. [217452]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 5 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1373W.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many of the complaints under Army redress procedures upheld or partially upheld between 1997 and 2003 related to issues of bullying or harassment; and how many *(a)* officers, *(b)* non-commissioned officers and *(c)* private soldiers were disciplined as a result. [217457]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many complaints have been considered by the Army Board from soldiers who are serving, or who have served, at *(a)* Deepcut Barracks and *(b)* ITC Catterick since 1997; and how many of those complaints related to issues of bullying or harassment. [217458]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the conformity of the practice of administrative discharge through manning controls with *(a)* European Union legislation, *(b)* the European Convention on Human Rights and *(c)* the Employment Rights Act 1966. [217459]

Mr. Caplin: European Union employment legislation is reflected in the Employment Rights Act 1996, from which the armed forces are exempt. The European Convention on Human Rights contains no provision relating to the right to work. Notwithstanding the provision of law, the armed forces are governed in large measure by the "royal prerogative" which allows for the discharge of personnel through manning control measures.

Atomic Weapons Establishment

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the current book value of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) was purchased from *(a)* foreign companies and *(b)* US companies; and what proportion of planned new expenditure at AWE sites is expected to be paid to (i) foreign companies and (ii) US companies. [211313]

Mr. Ingram: Historic site valuation records for the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) are not held in a form that allows the provision of the valuation information requested. As regards future expenditure, allocations for which have yet to be finalised, the sub-contractors chosen by the AWE management and operation contractor, AWE plc, will depend on the outcome of commercial negotiations and activities conducted by that company. Projections relating to the likely nationality of such sub-contractors are not available and would in any case be speculative.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what expenditure the Atomic Weapons Establishment has been authorised to make in the United States in each year since 1997. [224554]

Mr. Hoon: As the appointed Management and Operation (M and O) contractor at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, AWE plc is not required to seek authorisation to make individual commitments in the United States within the scope of the M and O contract that fall outwith the Government-to-Government arrangements managed on behalf of the United Kingdom by Ministry of Defence officials.

Baha Mousa

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what insurgency material was seized in the raid that led to the apprehending of Baha Mousa. [207151]

Mr. Hoon: This case may be the subject of possible prosecution. I am therefore withholding this information for reasons of law enforcement and to avoid prejudicing any future legal action.

Beef Supply Contracts

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the monetary value of beef supply contracts for his Department has been in each year since 1997, broken down by contracts with *(a)* Scottish suppliers, *(b)* suppliers in the rest of the United Kingdom and *(c)* suppliers outside the United Kingdom. [209143]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Belgrano Files

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what circumstances have led to the proposed publication of the Government files on the sinking of the Belgrano in 1982. [224946]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Biometric Recognition Technology

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what use his Department is making of biometric facial recognition technology; and if he will make a statement. [207690]

Mr. Ingram: The MOD is currently aware of commercial technologies and is willing to exploit them as required for defence needs.

British Forces Post Office

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many people worked for the British Forces Post Office on *(a)* 1 January and *(b)* 1 January 2004; how many were employed in Scotland in each case; and what the personnel costs of the agency (i) are in 2004–05 and (ii) will be in 2005–06. [215429]

(2) how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the British Forces Post Office spent in Scotland in (i) monetary terms and (ii) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [217965]

Mr. Caplin: The information is as follows:

Staff employed by British Forces Post Office

Number

	Agency totals		*Employed in Scotland*	
	January 2004	*January 2005*	*January 2004*	*January 2005*
Civilian personnel	360	330	10	10
Service personnel	210	200	0	0

Notes:
1. This table uses the revised definition of civilian personnel (see www.dasa.mod.uk for details).
2. The figures shown are full-time equivalents.
3. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
4. Details of civilian personnel in Defence Agencies and MoD owned trading funds by UK country can be found in UKDS 2004 Table 2.36, available in the House of Commons Library

Both civilian and service personnel data by Agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk

The number of service personnel employed by Agency and location is not collated centrally. However, locally held records indicate that no service personnel have been employed in Scotland. A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MoD Agency, for the Agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, has also been published on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House.

The civilian workforce numbers have been collated from centrally held records and may be different to locally produced numbers. However, all numbers in the table are produced using the agreed standard definition of civilian workforce, in full-time equivalent terms (part-time staff are counted only in proportion to the number of hours worked compared to the normal full-time hours) and are rounded to the nearest 10 to preserve confidentiality.

Data on projected personnel costs for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are not currently available.

Bugaled Breizh Trawler

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 410–12W, on the Bugaled Breizh trawler, whether HMS Turbulent was due to participate in ASWEX 04 prior to suffering damage on 16th January 2004. [224883]

Mr. Ingram: Yes.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 410–12W, on the Bugaled Breizh trawler, how long HMS Turbulent remained in Devonport after 16 January 2004. [224884]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Turbulent remained in Devonport until 19 January 2004, when she sailed for Gibraltar.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 410–12W, on the Bugaled Breizh Trawler, what the itinerary was of the two Dauphin helicopters from FOST flying in the vicinity at the time of the sinking of the Bugaled Breizh on 15 January 2004. [224885]

Mr. Ingram: The two Dauphin helicopters operating from FOST on 15 January 2004 were transporting personnel from Plymouth Airport to HMS Cumberland and HMS Edinburgh.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 410–12W, on the Bugaled Breizh trawler, which UK and French submarines participated in joint exercises in the vicinity at the time of the sinking of the Bugaled Breizh on 15 January 2004; and what their itinerary was. [224886]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Torbay was participating in a UK-led Anti-Submarine Warfare exercise on 15 January 2004. She was a little over 100 nautical miles west of the Bugaled Breizh's reported position at the time of her sinking. FS Rubis was under French Operational Control in French exercise areas south of Ushant on the 15 January 2004 en route to participating in ASWEX 04.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 410–12W, on the Bugaled Breizh trawler, which French and Dutch vessels were in Devonport on 15 January 2004. [224887]

Mr. Ingram: HNLMS Willem Van Der Zaan was alongside in the naval base throughout the day.

The following French and Dutch vessels were under way in the harbour on 15 January 2004:

FS Primauguet

HNLMS Karel Doorman

HNLMS Van Nes

Chinook

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the airworthiness review of the Chinook HC2 helicopter was conducted; and if he will place a copy of the review in the Library. [206979]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place copies of the 14 annexes and nine enclosures listed on Page 52 of the Chinook HC1 Airworthiness Review Report in the Library. [206982]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when each of the source software codes necessary for testing the airworthiness of the HC2 and HC2a Chinook helicopters were provided by the manufacturers in the USA to his Department. [223781]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the complete RAF Board of Inquiry into the crash of a RAF Chinook HC1 helicopter ZA672 on 6 May 1988. [218779]

Mr. Ingram: I will place a copy of the Board of Inquiry into the crash of Chinook ZA672 in the Library. This has been redacted in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the legal advice provided to the reviewing officers in relation to the crash of RAF Chinook ZD576. [218776]

Mr. Ingram: I am withholding the document requested as it is subject to legal professional privilege.

Conferences

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many conferences were *(a)* attended by officials from his Department, *(b)* cancelled by and *(c)* facilitated by his Department in each year since 1997; and what the (i) cost to the Department and (ii) location was in each case. [205754]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Correspondence

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr for answer on 21 February concerning the British Deputy Senior Judge Advocate in Iraq; and what the reason is for the delay in answering. [224891]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Cost Recovery (DFID)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the costs recovered by his Department from the Department for International Development in the most recent year for which figures are available. [214419]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 9 February 2005]:* Costs recovered by the Ministry of Defence from the Department for International Development (DfID) for the 12 month period from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 are set out as follows:

	£
Payroll services to DfID including: payroll and sickness incident reporting quarterly telephone line rental	20,786
Relocation, travel and subsistence costs associated with secondment of MOD personnel to DfID and DfID-led overseas visits	77,877
Cost of conveying DfID personnel in military aircraft	8,869
Total	107,532

Databases

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the fields of the *(a)* Force Structure database, *(b)* Procurement Plans database and *(c)* Defence Bills Authority databases. [199833]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Dean May

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the recommendations made by the judge following the conviction of Staff Sergeant Dean May for manslaughter at Winchester Crown court in July 2002; and what measures were taken to act upon these recommendations. [220494]

Mr. Ingram: Although the Judge made a number of comments in his summing up of the case against Staff Sergeant Dean May he did not make any recommendations for further action. However, a number of measures were taken by the Ministry of Defence as a result of this incident.

Following the court case, a Board of Inquiry investigated the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Pierre Bolangi. While the Board noted that actions to prevent a recurrence had already been taken locally and within the chain of command, it made a number of wider recommendations related to the policy and conduct of income generation activity. The Board also recommended revised procedures for dealing with the media and families after such an incident. The Defence Wider Markets Policy Group was tasked to look at the wider issues raised by the Board of Inquiry report on income generation. This led to the publication of a further guidance note clarifying the framework for conducting income generation activities and the constraints that govern them.

Deaths in Service

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many deaths in combat of *(a)* Iraqis and *(b)* British Forces occurred (i) during formal hostilities in Iraq and (ii) since the conclusion of formal hostilities in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [224549]

Mr. Hoon: Hostilities in Iraq concluded on 1 May 2003. Prior to that, 27 UK service personnel were killed in action. Since then, 22 UK service personnel have been killed in action. This does not include 10 UK service personnel missing believed killed following the C130 crash on 30 January 2005. The cause of that crash is still being investigated.

There are no wholly reliable and comprehensive figures for Iraqis killed during or since military operations began in March 2003. The Iraqi Minister of Health's most recently released figures, based on records from some 180 hospitals, show that between 5 April 2004, when figures began to be collated, and 1 March 2005,6,265 Iraqis were killed. The Ministry of Health points out that this figure includes all Iraqis, including civilians, Iraqi Security Forces and insurgents, killed as a result of violence.

The Ministry of Defence does not produce estimates of Iraqi military or civilian casualties. This is because UK military reporting is limited to the UK area of operations. But even within the UK area of operations reporting is limited to what troops see on the ground. So military reporting is incomplete and cannot provide the basis of Iraqi civilian or military casualty estimates.

Defence Employment (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people work for the MOD Police; how many are employed in Scotland; what the figures were in each case in January 2004; what the personnel costs of the Agency are in 2004–05; and what they were in 2003–04. [212156]

Mr. Caplin *[pursuant to the reply, 7 February 2005, Official Report, c. 1253]:* I have to correct that information.

The current Agency was formed in April 2004 by merging the Ministry of Defence Police and the Ministry of Defence Guard Service. The personnel in the Ministry of Defence Guard Service were dispersed across the Department and their number and personnel costs are not available prior to the merger. The full overall budget for the Agency in 2004–05 is £158.6 million.

The number of people working in the Agency is shown in the following table:

Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency

	Full-time equivalents (FTE) as at 1 January			
	2004		*2005*	
	Total	*Scotland*	*Total*	*Scotland*
Ministry of Defence Police and Guarding Agency (police officers, MGS officers and civilian support staff).	—	—	7,230	1,310
Ministry of Defence Police (police officers)	3,680	840	—	—

Defence Expenditure (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year from 1997–98 to 2001–02 the Service Children's Education Unit spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each year; and if he will make a statement. [215909]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Defence Science

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures his Department has in place to encourage the retention of scientists *(a)* within DSTL and *(b)* engaged in research in other parts of the Department. [219028]

Mr. Ingram: We recognise the value of scientific staff to the Department and have in place a number of measures to retain their expertise and experience. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has strong head of profession leadership through the Defence Engineering and Science Group (DESG). The group supports technical staff by coordinating training, development, career progression and Chartership. In general, the Department is on a par with the best of major employers of specialists in terms of retention rates.

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), with a turnover of £340 million, is the biggest employer of research scientists in the MOD. DSTL

provides considerable training and development opportunities—technical training programmes are offered to develop and refresh technical knowledge and there is a Chartership Scheme accredited to eight professional institutions which is open to all staff.

DSTL staff are also allowed time off to undertake further study such as MSc or PhD qualifications with relevant tuition fees paid. There are links with five universities for research purposes and staff are encouraged to spend time in other laboratories to ensure that knowledge remains current. Secondments are available to other areas of the Department and Government, UK industry and international laboratories. There is an internal symposium held annually to encourage networking and debate on topical research areas. There is a Scheme for Technical Education and Professional Support to encourage networking, conferences and events for junior staff and a Fellowship Scheme which gives recognition to senior staff who are acknowledged as national or international experts in their field.

Similar benefits are available for scientists engaged in research in other parts of the Department, including the Hydrographic Office, the Meteorological Office and central MOD.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what plans he has to increase DSTL funding for research projects. [219029]

Mr. Ingram: The main role of DSTL is to provide core defence science and technology, that can only be performed within government. The MOD's Chief Scientific Adviser funds the majority of research at DSTL. There are currently no plans to significantly increase the funding for research in real terms at DSTL. However, MOD expenditure is reviewed biannually.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what is the ratio of DSTL research spending, excluding spending contracted out to third parties, to DSTL spending on other activities in the last period for which figures are available. [219030]

Mr. Ingram: The figures for the first 11 months of the financial year 2004-05 for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory indicate that the ratio of the amount spent on scientific activities, including research but excluding that contracted out to third parties, to the amount spent on other activities was 4.2 to 1. The term "other activities" has been interpreted as costs of non-scientific functional support.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence through what methods DSTL scientists acquire hands-on research expertise in the *(a)* science and technology projects and *(b)* equipment procurement areas of the technical projects upon which they are required to advise. [219031]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, DSTL, has a range of approaches to ensure that its scientists and engineers acquire and retain the knowledge and expertise required to discharge its roles within the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Hands-on practical research expertise is only one element, and DSTL is tasked to undertake part of the MOD's Research Building Block itself in a range of systems areas and a sub-set of sensitive defence technologies. In addition, DSTL undertakes the knowledge integration role for the Research customers which requires it to work closely with the other organisations in industry and academia engaged in hands-on research.

DSTL encourages its staff to undertake research based MSc and PhD activities as well as having a commitment to their continuous professional development through membership of the appropriate professional institutes. To strengthen engagement in underlying technical areas where DSTL has limited hands-on work of its own, it has set up Co-operative Research Centres with academia to facilitate the exchange of staff and resources between DSTL and partner Universities. This allows DSTL staff to work within the partner University alongside external researchers who are engaged in MOD funded work, for example through the Joint Grant Scheme. DSTL has also entered into arrangements with industry to encourage staff secondment and established opportunities for staff interchange with other national and international laboratories.

DSTL staff are also involved in oversight of the MOD Defence Technology Centres which are formal collaborative arrangements between industry and academic experts in particular technologies.

These kinds of arrangement enable DSTL scientists to develop and extend their knowledge networks and improve the quality and context of its advice.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average salary of DSTL research scientists is. [219032]

Mr. Ingram: The average salary of a research scientist working at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory is currently £32,933.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the Government's science and technology projects and equipment procurement spending in each of the last five years occurred without advice from *(a)* DSTL and *(b)* other technical sources. [219033]

Mr. Ingram: All significant spending on Ministry of Defence science and technology projects and equipment procurement spending involves advice from a variety of appropriate technical sources, which include DSTL, QinetiQ, industry and academia. Such advice is synthesised by MOD technical experts.

I am unable to comment on other Government Departments' science and technology projects and equipment procurement spending.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what technical sources the Department used for impartial advice on the Government's *(a)* science and technology projects and *(b)* equipment procurement spending in addition to DSTL in each of the last five years. [219034]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has its own staff within the Department in addition to Dstl to provide advice on both science and technology projects and equipment procurement. These resources have been available since before the formation of DSTL. MOD

does use QinetiQ, industry and academia where appropriate and when impartiality can be assured. In these cases, the majority of final synthesis of technical advice is performed by MOD's own resources.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* science, *(b)* technology projects and *(c)* equipment procurement budgets were for 2001–04; and what the value was of projects that overspent or overran by more than 10 per cent. [219035]

Mr. Ingram: The budgets for MOD *(a)* research, *(b)* development and *(c)* equipment procurement are published in UK Defence Statistics 2004 (Tables 1.1,1.7 and 1.15). The research budget is generally applied to exploring speculative subjects and it is not amenable to the type of analysis requested. The chief scientific adviser supervises this work and the majority of the programme is contracted at ascertained costs. In the last few years this programme has been delivered substantially on budget.

The performance of the equipment programme is reported within the MOD's Annual Report and Accounts 2003–04 (sections 121–123 procurement performance) and further, more detailed, analysis is contained within the Report by Comptroller and Auditor General on MOD Major Project Report.

The latest versions of the relevant publications are in the Library of the House.

Defence Service Agencies (Scotland)

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people work for the *(a)* Defence Bills Agency and *(b)* Defence Dental Agency; how many in each agency are employed in Scotland; and what the personnel costs of the agency (i) are in 2004–05 and (ii) were in 2003–04. [213082]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people worked for the Veterans Agency *(a)* in 2003–04 and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available; how many were employed in Scotland in each case; and what the personnel costs of the agency (i) were in 2003–04 and (ii) are expected to be in 2004–05. [215947]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people work for the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency; how many are employed in Scotland; what the equivalent figures were in 2004; what the personnel costs of the agency are; and what they were in 2004. [214250]

Mr. Caplin: The average number of people employed by DMETA during the financial year 2003–04 was 2,270, less than five of whom were employed in Scotland. The Agency's personnel costs in the financial year 2003–04 were £95.74 million. Personnel numbers and associated costs for the current financial year will be subject to the outcome of routine audit by the National Audit Office and will form part of the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts which will be published and placed in the Library of the House later this year.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Meteorological Office spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215435]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Medical Supplies Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215436]

Mr. Ingram: MSA staff costs for each year from 1997–98 to date, along with what was spent in Scotland in monetary terms and as a percentage of the total staff costs with the number of personnel employed in Scotland is shown in the following table:

Financial year	*MSA total staff costs (£ million)*	*MDC Greenock staff costs (£ million)*	*MDC Greenock staff costs (percentage)*	*Number of staff employed MDC Greenock*[1]
1997–98	5.170	n/a	n/a	10
1998–99	5.574	n/a	n/a	10
1999–2000	6.332	n/a	n/a	10
2000–01	6.412	0.108	1.68	10
2001–02	6.225	0.131	2.11	10
2002–03	7.310	0.130	1.77	10
2003–04	7.596	0.125	1.65	10
2004–05	[2]	[2]	[2]	10

[1] Figures have been rounded to preserve individuals' confidentiality.
[2] Not yet available.
Note:
Medical Distribution Centre, Greenock, closed March 2005.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Defence Vetting Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215448]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Defence Transport and Movements Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215449]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Transport and Movements Agency (DTMA) formed in April 1999. None of its personnel was employed in Scotland during financial years 1999–2000 to 2003–04. During the current financial year 2004–05 around 20 personnel have been employed in Scotland, amounting to an estimated cost of £690,000, which is about 4.5 per cent. of the total personnel budget for DTMA.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215450]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Storage and Distribution Agency (DSDA) was formed in 1999 and merged with Defence Munitions on 1 April 2003. Prior to the merger the agency only had a small number of employees located in Scotland at the Defence Regional Distribution Centre in Stirling. As a result of the merger DSDA inherited sites at Beith, Crombie and Glen Douglas, details of expenditure on personnel in Scotland, as a percentage of total personnel expenditure and numbers employed in Scotland for each of the respective years are as follows:

Financial year	*Expenditure on personnel in Scotland (£)*	*Percentage of total personnel expenditure*	*Number employed in Scotland*
1999–2000	437,841	1	40
2000–01	391,767	1	40
2001–02	417,966	1	30
2002–03	449,766	1	20
2003–04	18,527,495	16	800

Note:
Figures for the last financial year are not yet available.

The expenditure refers to DSDA employees only while the numbers employed in Scotland, provided by the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) include other Ministry of Defence employees working at DSDA sites.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215452]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Army Base and Repair Organisation spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215454]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for each financial year since 1997–98 the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency spent in Scotland *(a)* in monetary terms and *(b)* as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland in each case; and if he will make a statement. [215458]

Mr. Caplin: The Defence Medical Education and Training Agency (DMETA) was established on 1 April 2003, so no figures are available for financial years prior to 2003–04. In the financial year 2003–04 DMETA spent £80,000 on personnel in Scotland, which was 0.08 per cent. of the agency's total personnel budget.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2000–01, *(c)* 1999–2000, *(d)* 1998–99 and *(e)* 1997–98 the Army Training and Recruiting Agency spent in Scotland in (i) monetary terms and (ii) as a percentage of the total personnel budget for that year; how many personnel were employed in Scotland; and if he will make a statement. [217966]

Mr. Caplin: Both civilian and service personnel data by agency are collated annually at 1 April and presented in Table 2.6 of UK Defence Statistics, a copy of which is held in the Library of the House. Further information on personnel figures is available on the DASA website at www.dasa.mod.uk.

The number of service personnel employed by agency and location is not collated centrally. However, locally held records indicate that in 1997 there were 130 personnel employed in Scotland, and 140 personnel from 1998 to 2002. These figures exclude any personnel employed in armed forces careers offices and Army career information offices in Scotland, for which no data are available.

A table showing numbers of civilian personnel by MoD agency, for the agency as a total and those employed in Scotland specifically, for the period 1 April 1997 to 1 January 2005, is available on the Defence Analytical Services Agency website, www.dasa.mod.uk, and is also lodged in the Library of the House.

The following table shows the personnel budget data available, showing the amount spent in Scotland in monetary terms, and as a percentage of the total personnel expenditure. Unfortunately, figures for 1997–98 are not readily available.

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Total				
Scotland	5,182,396	5,674,874	5,968,815	5,760,019
Total	428,893,609	455,442,962	471,740,366	510,427,591
Percentage	1.21	1.25	1.27	1.13
Military				
Scotland	4,116,831	4,505,901	4,758,944	4,575,438
Total	350,039,005	376,293,991	389,471,076	421,851,608
Percentage	1.18	1.20	1.22	1.08

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Civilian				
Scotland	1,065,565	1,168,974	1,204,555	1,184,581
Total	78,854,604	79,148,971	82,256,959	88,575,983
Percentage	1.35	1.48	1.46	1.34

Departmental Accounts

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether Ministers in his Department have issued written instructions to override his Department's accounting officer's objections since 1997. [221107]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Financial Secretary (Mr. Timms) on 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 80W.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223441]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. Friend, the Financial Secretary (Mr. Timms), on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1170W.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total cost to his Department was for accountancy services in each of the last two years. [200796]

Mr. Caplin: Ministry of Defence expenditure on External Assistance (EA), of which accountancy services are a part, is contained in the MOD's annual return of expenditure on external assistance. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses for the years 1995–96 to 2003–04. This includes expenditure broken down by top level budget holders and trading funds. However, expenditure on accountancy services is not recorded as a specific category of EA and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of the cost of building refurbishment carried out by his Department in each of the last two years. [200801]

Mr. Caplin: "Refurbishment" is not a term which the Ministry of Defence uses in gathering or recording financial information about the estate, as it can be regarded as capital or maintenance expenditure depending on the circumstances. Work on buildings, which might be categorised as "refurbishment", can range from minor modifications and maintenance to the complete restoration of buildings, and the replacement of machinery such as lifts. Historic information is not currently held centrally or on a consistent basis and it would be impossible to answer the question without disproportionate cost and effort.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of *(a)* in-house canteen and *(b)* other catering services provided by his Department in each of the last two years. [200803]

Mr. Caplin: The cost of in-house canteen services is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The cost of other (contracted out) catering services was £89.5 million in 2002–03 and £98.6 million in 2003–04.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his estimate is of the cost of *(a)* ministerial cars and drivers and *(b)* taxis for his Department in each of the last two years. [200804]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on congestion *(a)* charges and *(b)* penalty charge notices by the Department since the commencement of the congestion charging scheme. [213819]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much has been spent on entertainment by his Department in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* food, *(b)* alcohol, *(c)* staff and *(d)* accommodation. [204350]

Mr. Ingram: Information on expenditure on "hospitality and entertainment" for financial years 1990–2000 to 2003–04 (inclusive) has been published in our annual resource accounts. For earlier financial years, expenditure has been:

	Cost (£ million)
1997–98	5
1998–99	5.6

These figures reflect expenditure incurred by the MOD and by establishments and formations of the armed forces at home and abroad. I regret that a breakdown of the total figure by subcategory is not held and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Expenditure on official entertainment is subject to strict departmental rules and compliance with the principles of propriety set out in government accounting.

Departmental Events

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the *(a)* conferences, *(b)* seminars, *(c)* workshops, *(d)* exhibitions and *(e)* press conferences which have been sponsored by his Department and which took place on non-departmental premises in each of the last two years giving the (i) title, (ii) purpose, (iii) date and (iv) cost of each. [200805]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how much has been spent by his Department on lighting in each year since 1997; [205873]

(2) how many items of electrical equipment were used by his Department in the last year for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* cost and *(b)* number of each type of item. [205730]

Mr. Ingram: The costs of lighting equipment are not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The energy costs of lighting are subsumed in the appropriate utility heading; I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 25 January 2005. A copy of the letter was placed in the Library of the House.

Departmental Finances

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value was of receipts from *(a)* royalties, *(b)* compensation and insurance receipts and *(c)* sales of licences that were (i) appropriated in aid of his Department and (ii) surrendered to the Consolidated Fund in each financial year since 1997–98. [217992]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Disabled People (Access)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether all Government buildings in his Department within the Greater London area are fully accessible to disabled people; and if he will make a statement. [203609]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Dr. Wouter Basson

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) who authorised the visit of Dr. Wouter Basson of South Africa to Porton Down in 1985; for what purpose; and if he will make a statement. [215519]

(2) which UK Government *(a)* officials and *(b)* scientists are recorded as having met Dr. Wouter Basson of South Africa between 1975 and the collapse of the apartheid regime in South Africa; and if he will make a statement. [215585].

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Equal Pay (Northern Ireland)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will investigate whether there are salary disparities between staff at the same grades within the civilian security staff employed by his Department in Northern Ireland. [215809]

Mr. Ingram: Civilian security staff in Northern Ireland, in common with most MOD civilian staff, are paid in accordance with pay scales for staff at their appropriate levels, rather than be paid a single rate for the job. Consequently, staff at the same level may receive different salaries dependent upon where they are on the pay scale. Following the negotiation and introduction of a multi-year pay deal in 2002, some civilian security staff were overtaken by others joining the Department later. The trades unions raised this with the Department and pay parity has since been restored for those affected.

EU Directives

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the European Union directives and regulations relating to his Department that have been implemented in each of the last two years, specifying *(a)* the title and purpose of each, *(b)* the cost to public funds of each and *(c)* the cost to businesses of each. [200811]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Euratom Regulation

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which installations and bases operated by or on behalf of his Department are subject to Euratom regulation; and which nuclear materials are subject to such regulation at each such establishment. [224046]

Mr. Ingram: The UK position is that defence related installations and bases are not subject to Euratom regulation. Nuclear materials required for defence purposes are outside the safeguards provisions in Chapter 7 of the Euratom treaty. However, as announced in the Strategic Defence Review (Supporting Essay 5, paragraph 26), materials no longer required for defence purposes have been placed under Euratom safeguards. These are held on non-MOD sites.

Eurocorps

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 27 January 2005, *Official Report*, columns 539–40W, on Eurocorps, if he will place a copy of the register listing the reports submitted in the Library. [215337]

Mr. Hoon: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

European Constitution

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the effect of the coming into force of the European Constitution on the operation of his Department, with reference to *(a)* changes in legislative competence, *(b)* the extension of qualified majority voting, *(c)* the increased legislative role of the European Parliament, *(d)* the cost of implementation of regulations, *(e)* the requirements of adherence to the Charter of Fundamental Rights and *(f)* the quantity of legislation originating in the EU institutions. [200171]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

External Suppliers

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many tenders were let by his Department to external suppliers in the financial year 2003–04; and what the value was. [209101]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Fallujah

Glenda Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ask the US Administration to furnish him with information on the *(a)* numbers and *(b)* type of aerial attacks upon Fallujah between 1 and 15 November. [200110]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

First World War Medals

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he plans to destroy any of the records of medals issued to First World War personnel. [224834]

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on the preservation of military index cards relating to British servicemen in the First World War. [224965]

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements he will put in place to ensure that *(a)* all medal index cards are fully scanned when they are put on microfiche and *(b)* families have the option of receiving the originals if they express a desire to do so. [224967]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence, together with The National Archives, has been actively seeking to identify a suitable institution prepared to take these cards. So far, a home for just a small part of the collection has been found. No decision on the retention or destruction of the cards will be taken until all such avenues have been explored.

Freedom of Information

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what categories of information are available under Freedom of Information legislation that have not been provided in written parliamentary answers by his Department in the last three years. [207826]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my hon. Friend, the Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Leslie) on 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 140W.

Gaelic Language

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's policy is on the use of the Gaelic language; and what plans his Department has to prepare and implement a Gaelic language scheme. [217093]

Mr. Ingram: Action to support the Gaelic language is primarily the responsibility of Scottish Ministers.

The Ministry of Defence attaches great importance to the promotion and protection of the Gaelic language in line with the United Kingdom's obligations under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament does not extend statutory obligations on UK public bodies in Scotland in relation to the preparation or implementation of Gaelic language plans. However, UK Departments and public bodies which operate in Scotland may—like comparable Scottish public bodies—have a role to play in facilitating the use of the language.

The Ministry of Defence has been working closely with colleagues in the Scotland Office and the Scottish Executive on the role we can play, voluntarily, in securing the status of Gaelic.

Gibraltar

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *(b)* the Governor of Gibraltar and *(c)* the Government of Gibraltar on the future of the RAF runway at Gibraltar. [218622]

Mr. Ingram: None, although the future of the airport in Gibraltar is being discussed within the Trilateral Forum, in which the Governments of the United Kingdom, Spain and Gibraltar are represented.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the basis is for the analogue parity agreement in pay and conditions between the Ministry of Defence Police and the Gibraltar Services Police. [223349]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* Following negotiations in 1979 between the Ministry of Defence and Gibraltar Service Police Staff Association agreement was reached re-affirming their commitment to the analogue principle enunciated by Sir Jack Scamp in his report dated 1975. The Gibraltar Services Police (GSP) analogue is the Ministry of Defence Police in the United Kingdom. Any pay conditions applicable to Ministry of Defence Police are automatically applied to GSP.

Gliding

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the value of gliding training and practice to the armed forces. [224923]

Mr. Ingram: Gliding training and practice is challenging outdoor training for service personnel in specific adventurous activities, involving controlled exposure to risk, to develop leadership, teamwork, physical fitness, moral and physical courage, among other personal attributes and skills vital to operational capability.

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which gliding clubs are supported by his Department in the Portsmouth/Gosport area; and whether this support is projected to continue. [224924]

Mr. Ingram: There is one Naval Gliding Club in the Portsmouth area, but this is not supported by public funds. However, the Royal Naval Gliding and Soaring Association (RNGSA) do have access to bursary funding, which is available to encourage young persons into flying and eventually careers in the Royal Navy.

Gulf War Syndrome

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many claims in respect of Gulf War related illness have been *(a)* rejected and *(b)* accepted by the Veterans Agency, Blackpool; and how many claims have been allowed the right of appeal. [218710]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Gulf War Veterans

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Gulf War veterans are in prison; for what reason each was imprisoned; and what treatment has been provided to them. [223886]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence does not monitor the number of ex-Service personnel (including veterans of the 1990–91 Gulf Conflict) in HM Prisons, as prison records do not contain data of the type which permits the identification of ex-Service personnel.

Harrier Aircraft

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the value was of the contracted task raised against the Harrier Post Design Services Contract. [220838]

Mr. Ingram: There are a large number of contracts in place to provide logistic support to the Harrier GR7 and Sea Harrier aircraft and many of these will include provision for Post Design Services (PDS). To separately identify individual contracted PDS tasks would be very time consuming and at disproportionate cost.

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the expected in-service date of the Harrier GR9 jet is. [211035]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Hearing Loss

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of whether an additive relationship exists between noise-induced hearing loss and age-related hearing loss; and if he will make a statement. [224846]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence's clinical practice in this area is based on publicly available knowledge that an additive relationship does exist between noise-induced hearing loss and age-related hearing loss. This is based on information in the following references:

King P. F., Coles R. R. A., Lutman M. E., Robinson D. W. (1992) Assessment of Hearing Disability, Whurr Publishers, London

Coles R. R. A., Lutman M. E., Buffin J. T. (2000) Guidelines on the diagnosis of noise-induced hearing loss for medicolegal purposes. Clin. Otolaryngol. 25, 264–273

Copies of these will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the armed forces are recorded as having sustained noise-induced hearing loss on service in Iraq since March 2003. [223986]

Mr. Caplin: *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Information on specific injuries sustained on Operation Telic is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Helicopters

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place copies in the Library of all *(a)* reports, *(b)* memoranda, *(c)* audits and *(d)* other evaluations that were produced (i) by Boscombe Down and (ii) on behalf of Boscombe Down during flight trials of the Chinook Mark 2 helicopter, including those covering the engine-control software before 3 June 1994. [218162]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of all *(a)* reports, *(b)* documents and *(c)* memoranda produced by, or on behalf of, Boscombe Down in 1988, concerning software in the Chinook HC2 helicopter. [218191]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 2 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1231W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames), on helicopters, whether he expects the Chinook Mark 3 helicopter, including the six aircraft delivered to the UK during 2001–02, to enter service before the planned phasing out of the Mark 2 and Mark 2a Chinooks in 2015 and 2025. [223194]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Heroes Return Programme

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many grants have been made under the Heroes Return scheme to *(a)* organisations and *(b)* individuals in Banff and Buchan; and if he will give details of the amounts of the grants. [222018]

Mr. Ingram: To date eight awards to individuals in Banff and Buchan have been made totalling £7,685.00. No organisations have made applications.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people from Chorley have participated in the Heroes Return programme. [221041]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has been advised by the Big Lottery Fund that to date a total of 61 people (27 veterans, 12 spouses, four widows and 18 carers) from Chorley have participated in overseas commemorative visits funded by the "Heroes Return" programme.

HRH Prince Andrew

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on how many occasions HRH Prince Andrew has used the Department's vehicles, vessels and planes for private use in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; and at what cost. [200125]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Illegal Drug Crops

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost of military intervention to eradicate the cultivation of illegal drug crops internationally was in each of the last 20 years, broken down by country. [224562]

Mr. Ingram: The United Kingdom has not conducted military intervention operations in any country over the past 10 years to eradicate illegal drug crop cultivation.

Inglis Barracks

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with *(a)* Barnet council and *(b)* the Mayor of London concerning the future of the site at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill when it is no longer required by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [211271]

Mr. Ingram: Discussions with the London borough of Barnet as to the future use of the site and the council's intention to establish a Development Framework Agreement for Mill Hill East are in progress. As part of this process, officers from the London borough of Barnet visited the barracks on 10 March 2005, together with representatives from the Greater London authority, Transport for London and English Partnerships.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when his Department will start to market the site at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill; and if he will make a statement. [211272]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply given by my hon. Friend, the Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Caplin) on 24 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 51W. Decisions about marketing have yet to be made.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to preserve the historic officers' mess building at Inglis Barracks, when British Forces Post Office vacate the premises; and if he will make a statement. [211273]

Mr. Caplin: The future of the Officers' Mess building at Inglis Barracks, once the British Forces Post Office vacates the site, is being considered in conjunction with the local planning authority (and other bodies, including English Partnerships) as part of discussions to formulate a development framework for the site and its surrounds.

The Mill Hill Preservation Society has expressed an interest in purchasing the Inglis Barracks Officers' Mess and the immediate environs for the benefit of the people of Mill Hill.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to ensure a continuation of light industrial use of *(a)* all and *(b)* part of the Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill site when it is no longer required by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [211275]

Mr. Caplin: Future uses for the Inglis Barracks site will be identified in the planning framework agreement for the site and adjoining land. This is being commissioned by the planning authority, the London borough of Barnet.

Interrogation/Counter-Resistance Policy

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason and in what capacity Colonel Chris Terrington saw a version of the CJTF-7 Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy document in December 2003. [224892]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether the UK officer acting as Deputy Senior Judge Advocate in Iraq advised his superiors in the UK chain of command that interrogation techniques included in the CJTF-7 Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy document were *(a)* inhumane under UK case law and *(b)* constituted a potential breach of the Geneva Conventions in the view of the Government; [224893]

(2) whether the UK officer acting as Deputy Senior Judge Advocate in Iraq advised the United States authorities that some of the interrogation techniques included in the CJTF-7 Interrogation and Counter-Resistance Policy document were *(a)* inhumane under UK case law and *(b)* constituted a potential breach of the Geneva Conventions in the view of the Government. [224894]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the letter to the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr of 31 January 2004 from the Minister of State in his Department (1) what general

comments were made by the British Deputy Staff Judge Advocate on the draft of the interrogation and counter-resistance policy document; [217286]

(2) which sections and which drafts of the interrogation and counter-resistance policy were seen by the British Deputy Staff Judge in the Office of Colonel Marc Warren; [217287]

(3) whether the British Deputy Senior Judge Advocate submitted regular reports to his British superiors; [217288]

(4) whether the British Deputy Senior Judge Advocate saw the 12 October update of the interrogation and counter-resistance policy document. [217292]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ask his United States counterpart to investigate claims made by former US Marine Jimmy Massey that US Coalition Forces in Iraq shot dead unarmed Iraqi civilians at roadblocks in Iraq. [205022]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether private security firms and personnel are employed in the *(a)* management and *(b)* running of prisons and detention centres under the control of the UK in Iraq. [208650]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to hold an independent investigation into deaths that have occurred in British custody in Iraq. [209940]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 20 January 2005]:* All deaths of Iraqis in British custody in Iraq have been or continue to be subject to rigorous Service police investigation. Where there is a case to answer, individuals will be called to account before an independent court, either military or civilian.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many investigations have been held into deaths and injuries allegedly caused by UK forces in Iraq; and what the status of each investigation is. [209941]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 January 2005]:* I refer the hon. Member to my answer given on 3 March 2005 *Official Report*, column 1341W.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many representations have been made to UK military authorities in Iraq by prisoners of war of *(a)* Iraqi and *(b)* other nationality in accordance with their rights under article 78 of the third Geneva convention. [211082]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps his Department took to secure the United Nations World Food Programme sites on the outskirts of Basra; what assessment he has made of what was looted from the programme at the site; and if he will make a statement. [211390]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his reply of 18 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1830W, on Iraq, when he will write to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak. [215336]

Mr. Ingram: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 30 March 2005.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many persons arrested in Iraq by UK forces have been transferred to the custody of the United States. [215477]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British service personnel have made allegations of mistreatment of detainees by US service personnel at Camp Bucca in Um-Qasr. [215480]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 10 February 2005]:* We are not aware of any such claims. Throughout the period that UK detainees were at US Camp Bucca (10 April—15 December 2003) there were two teams of UK service personnel, a UK PW Registration Unit and a Prisoner Monitoring Team. The monitoring team regularly inspected prisoner conditions and monitored family visits and the release of UK prisoners. They did not report any incidents of deliberate detainee mistreatment at the Camp.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what reports *(a)* Ministers, *(b)* officials and *(c)* armed services personnel have received on alleged kidnappings by members of the Badr Brigade in South-East Iraq. [216366]

Mr. Ingram: There have been numerous reports relating to the activities of the Badr Corps that have been seen by the Ministry of Defence.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether the British Deputy in the Office of the Senior Judge Advocate in Iraq asked Major George O'Kane to investigate allegations of abuse at Abu Ghraib; [218301]

(2) whether the British Deputy in the Office of the Senior Judge Advocate in Iraq received a copy of the International Committee of the Red Cross working paper based on a visit to Abu Ghraib in October 2003. [218302]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answers 25 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his letter to the hon. Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr of 31 January, what the remit was of the British Deputy in the Office of the Judge Advocate in the areas of *(a)* detainees and *(b)* operational law. [218303]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 25 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of *(a)* combatant and *(b)* non-combatant deaths during the conflict in Iraq; and how this number was calculated. [222936]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* A total of 76 UK Service personnel have died while serving on Operation Telic, 49 of whom were killed in action. A further 10 are missing believed killed in the C130 crash on 30 January, the cause of the crash is under investigation.

The United Kingdom armed forces do not have the information that would enable a reliable estimate of the total number of combatant or non-combatant Iraqi casualties arising from the conflict to be made. This is because UK military reporting is limited to UK area of operations. But even within the UK area of operations reporting is limited to what troops observe directly or learn from reliable sources.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether any detainees originally captured by UK forces have been detained in Camp Cropper. [223046]

Mr. Ingram: Two high value detainees initially taken into custody by the UK were held at Camp Cropper. Their cases have now been transferred to the Iraq special tribunal, and as such they are no longer being detained under UK authority.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* Ministers and *(b)* officials of his Department played a part in the preparation of the Iraqi casualty figures released on 29 October 2004 by the interim Iraqi health minister; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the original Iraqi statement. [224002]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Iraqi casualty figures were collated and prepared by the Iraqi Ministry of Health. I have placed a copy of the statement in the Library of the House.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if his Department will offer assistance to the Iraqi Government for testing Iraqi citizens who have been exposed to depleted uranium ammunition deployed by the UK in Iraq. [224762]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) will provide appropriate advice to the Iraqi Government on testing for Iraqi citizens if requested.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British troops are under investigation with regard to activities in Iraq but have not yet been charged. [210576]

Mr. Ingram: As at 4 April 2005, 46 members of the armed forces have been reported in relation to incidents where non-UK third parties have allegedly been killed or injured. The bringing of charges against 23 of these is under consideration by prosecuting authorities.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what advice was given to armed service personnel on appropriate material with which to hood prisoners in Iraq prior to the prohibition of this practice. [210890]

Mr. Ingram: The hooding of detainees for the purposes of arrest or transit was used by UK troops when there was a strong military reason to do so, during the early stages of Operation Telic. Sacking material was used to hood the detainees.

The practice of hooding was discontinued when there was no longer a military justification for continuing to do so.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the number of *(a)* UK forces killed, *(b)* UK forces seriously injured, *(c)* Iraqi forces killed, *(d)* Iraqi forces severely injured, *(e)* Iraqi civilians killed and *(f)* Iraqi civilians severely injured in Iraq since March 2003. [221419]

Mr. Ingram: 76 UK Service personnel have been killed in Iraq since March 2003 and 10 are missing believed killed. As at 28 February 2005, 2,937 personnel have been medically evacuated, the majority of these are due to illness. The MOD statistics held centrally on personnel medically evacuated since the beginning of Operation TELIC are not broken down into seriously or non-seriously injured or into combat and non-combat injuries prior to August 2004. Between August 2004 and 28 February 2005, 82 Service personnel have been injured in action in Iraq.

There are no wholly reliable and comprehensive figures for Iraqis killed during or since military operations began in March 2003. The Iraqi Minister of Health's most recently released figures, based on records from some 180 hospitals, show that between 5 April 2004, when figures began to be collated, and 1 March 2005, 6,265 Iraqis were killed. The Ministry of Health points out that this figure includes all Iraqis, including civilians, Iraqi Security Forces and insurgents, killed as a result of violence.

The Ministry of Defence does not produce estimates of Iraqi military or civilian casualties. This is because UK military reporting is limited to the UK area of operations. But even within the UK area of operations reporting is limited to what troops see on the ground. Military reporting is therefore incomplete and cannot provide the basis of Iraqi civilian or military casualty estimates.

IT Projects

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list his Department's IT projects in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* amount spent, *(b)* purpose, *(c)* cost of over-run and *(d)* time of over-run. [205785]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

IVF Treatment

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons IVF treatment is not available to service personnel or their spouses in Germany through *(a)* his Department, *(b)* the British Forces Germany Health Service and *(c)* primary care trusts while they are posted overseas. [223720]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 5 April 2005]:* A number of options are available to service personnel and their dependants requiring IVF treatment while posted to Germany:

Although the British Forces Germany Health Service (BFG HS) is not funded for the provision of full IVF and equivalent treatment, it does fund the investigation of infertility and the provision of drug treatments following IVF. This takes place in our primary care facilities or our regional contracted German hospitals. It will also fund correction of any anatomical abnormality that may be causing infertility. In addition Artificial Insemination by Husband (AIH) is available at one of our contracted German hospitals.

A patient can seek private treatment in Germany bearing the full cost themselves. In unusual cases, presenting strong medical/social reasons for IVF treatment, BFG HS may pay for treatment.

If a patient has embarked on investigation or treatment in the UK on a NHS programme and is then posted to Germany, they receive full administrative support, including the provision of transport by air trooper. The MOD also takes a sympathetic view with regard to the posting of personnel while they are undertaking a course of treatment in the UK by deferring the posting if it is the individual's wish and if it is possible to do so.

For patients wishing to return to the UK to begin treatment for IVF, the BFG HS makes use of the excellent facilities offered by a charity based service which is provided at Hammersmith Hospital in London at no cost to the patient or the MOD. In these cases BFG HS authorises transport by air trooper. In other instances where personnel wish to be posted back to the UK and this is supported by their posting authority, they can be referred to their local Primary Care Trust (PCT) in the UK for the duration of the treatment.

The Department is currently re-formulating its policy on IVF treatment to ensure it is consistent with the standards contained in the current National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines.

Joint Service Publications

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a list of his Department's extant Joint Service Publications. [213582]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Joint Strike Fighter Programme

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the Joint Strike Fighter programme. [218136]

Mr. Ingram: The Joint Strike Fighter will replace the Harrier GR7 and GR9. The UK is the only Level One partner with the US on the programme. There are seven other nations at lower levels within the System Design and Development (SDD) Phase under an International MOU signed in 2001. The weight difficulties which emerged last year with the STOVL variant have been satisfactorily resolved.

Lancashire Regiment

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on how the new name of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment, King's Own Borderers Regiment and King's Regiment was arrived at. [214542]

Mr. Ingram: The process of restructuring the infantry has been worked through by the Army who consulted widely. Colonels of individual regiments were directly involved in the consultation process through the Colonels Commandants of the Divisions of Infantry. As part of this process those infantry divisions affected by the changes were asked to suggest options for new regimental titles. Of the options put forward by the King's Division, the proposed title of the "King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment", was felt by the Executive Committee of the Army Board to best reflect the antecedent regiments from which it will be drawn.

Leasing

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the equipment leasing arrangements entered into by his Department in each of the last two years; and what the cost is to public funds in each case. [200810]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Lockheed F-22

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations the Department has received from the United States on purchasing the Lockheed F-22. [218137]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

MARS Project

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the MARS project. [216102]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 572W, to the hon. Member for Blaby (Mr. Robathan).

Medals

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* campaign and *(b)* war medals have been issued in each of the last five years; and how many of each were made of (i) silver and (ii) cupro nickel. [204989]

Mr. Caplin: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave him on 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 76W.

Military Abuse (Investigation)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the terms of reference are of the general investigation into abuse announced by General Sir Mike Jackson on Friday 25 February. [212344]

Mr. Hoon *[holding answer 3 March 2005]:* The review announced by the chief of the general staff (CGS) will be wide- ranging and will involve extensive consultation both within and beyond the Army and the Ministry of Defence. Presently the review is looking at three main strands: doctrine (particularly the preparation of personnel for all tasks and scenarios they may face); secondly, officer and non-commissioned officer training and performance; and the disciplinary system. Its scope will be widened if new issues arise from any further cases which may come to trial. It will also examine issues surrounding recent and current investigations into individual training.

The Terms of Reference for the review are as follows:

1. You are to consider what measures need to be taken in order to safeguard and improve the Army's operational effectiveness in the light of:

(a) Allegations of abuse in Iraq[1].

(b) Criticism in the House of Commons Defence Committee and Adult Learning Inspectorate reports on the training organisation, and other relevant reports into Deepcut.

2. You are to consider issues of both substance and perception, in the short and long term.

3. You are to take your direction from assistant chief of general staff, and are to make recommendations as required, reporting formally in three and six months time, through assistant chief of the general staff to chief of the general staff.

4. You are to consult as necessary with:

(a) MOD—Director general media and communications, deputy chief defence staff (personnel) and Iraq secretariat.

(b) HQ's adjutant general and LAND (including appropriate legal staffs).

(c) Permanent joint headquarters.

(d) Royal Navy and RAF.

(e) Chief of the general staffs briefing team, the continuous attitude survey, other sources of internal and external data.

5. Where necessary you are authorised to communicate with the media under normal media rules.

[1] This will require, among other things, detailed scrutiny of issues arising from Iraq related abuse trials.

Military Bodies (Funding)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the grant in aid for the *(a)* Royal Navy Sports Board, *(b)* Army Sports Board, *(c)* Royal Air Force Sports Board, *(d)* Association of Royal Navy/Royal Marine Families and *(e)* Army Families Federation was for financial years 1997–98 to 2003–04. [221978]

Mr. Ingram: The grants in aid were as follows:

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Royal Navy Sports Board	62	84	108	149	25	96	258
Army Sports Board	315	259	263	264	316	306	317
Royal Air Force Sports Board	104	15	42	70	139	99	122
Association of Royal Navy Royal Marine Families	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Army Families Federation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Ministerial Visits

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the official engagements that he has undertaken in the UK in the last three months on which he has been accompanied by the local hon. Member; and what the costs were of each visit. [219655]

Mr. Hoon: In the last three months I have undertaken the following official engagements at which the local hon. Member was present:

25 January

Visit to the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia)

Huw Edwards MP

Cost-Nil

8 February

Repatriation Ceremony at RAF Lyneham

James Gray MP

The cost of the RAF BAe 146 aircraft which was used to transport all the senior MOD officers and officials who attended the ceremony, including the Secretary of State, was £1,835.

24 February

Visit to RAF Cosford and the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency

Peter Bradley MP

It was necessary to use a Royal Navy Jetstream aircraft to transport the Secretary of State plus officials, at a cost of £1,153, as road or rail travel did not allow time to complete morning engagements in London, as well as to undertake this programme.

28 February

FSTA preferred bidder announcement at AirTanker, Broughton and visit to Raytheon, Broughton

Mark Tami MP

Cost—Nil

Navigational Aids

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's expenditure on naval navigational aids was in each of the last 10 years for *(a)* Northern Ireland, *(b)* England and Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* each military port in the UK. [224604]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross (John Thurso) on 17 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1536W.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has conducted into the provision of naval navigational aids for *(a)* military ports and *(b)* other Ministry of Defence maritime installations in the UK. [224605]

Mr. Ingram: None.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has received from *(a)* other Government Departments and *(b)* Trinity House regarding the provision of naval navigational aids by providers other than his Department; [224606]

(2) what consultations he has had with *(a)* public and *(b)* private sector bodies regarding the provision of navigational aids for military ports by other providers within the UK; [224607]

(3) if he will make a statement on the result of the assessment phase undertaken for the long term public-private partnership/private finance initiative acquisition programme for the future provision of marine services. [224608]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave the hon. Member for Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross (John Thurso) on 16 November 2004, *Official Report*, column 1288W. Since then, the two UK registered bidders have each submitted two proposals; one for the complete scope of work and one incorporating, as a partner, the MOD's royal maritime auxiliary service who, together with Serco Denholm, are responsible for the current services through a Government owned-contractor operated arrangement. On current plans, a preferred bidder will be announced by the end of the year.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recent assessment he has made of the value for money of the present arrangements for provision of navigational aids at naval installations. [224934]

Mr. Ingram: I refer to hon. Member to the answers I gave today on OD arrangements for the provision of navigational aids were last tested in 2001, following the submission of a proposal from another Government Department. The scope of the present arrangements has been included in the Statement of Requirement for the PPP/PFI acquisition programme competition that is currently being carried out for the future provision of marine services and will form the benchmark against which the value for money of the four proposals will be assessed.

Newspapers/Periodicals

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the *(a)* newspapers and *(b)* periodicals taken by his Department in each year since 1997; and how much the Department spent on each in each year. [207644]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Nuclear Weapons

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to alter the alert status of British nuclear weapons. [224982]

Mr. Hoon: None.

Oil for Food Programme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions took place between the military authorities in the UK and their counterparts in *(a)* Russia, *(b)* France and *(c)* China before the military action in Iraq of 2003 concerning the interruption of the Oil for Food programme. [220758]

Mr. Hoon: We have been unable to locate any records that indicate discussions concerning the interruption of the Oil for Food programme took place between the military authorities in the UK and their counterparts in Russia, France and China before the military action in Iraq of 2003.

Overseas Deployments

Ms Abbott: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British service personnel have been deployed or seconded to *(a)* Guantanamo Bay, *(b)* Guam and *(c)* Diego Garcia since 1994. [206226]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the projects being undertaken by his Department in respect of which information cannot be given in answer to parliamentary questions as a result of commercial confidentiality. [216533]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will answer the questions, reference *(a)* 204944 and *(b)* 204945 tabled for answer on 13 December 2004. [219726]

Mr. Ingram: In respect of parliamentary question 204945 my hon. Friend, the Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Caplin) replied to the hon. Member on 1 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1144W, and on 3 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1342W, in respect of parliamentary question 204944.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will reply to question reference *(a)* 217452 tabled on 18 February and *(b)* (i) 201842, (ii) 201845 and (iii) 201832 tabled on 30 November 2004 by the hon. Member for Hereford. [222339]

Mr. Caplin: I replied to the hon. Member today.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will answer questions reference *(a)* 219028, *(b)* 219029, *(c)* 219030, *(d)* 219031, *(e)* 219032, *(f)* 219033 and *(g)* 219034 tabled on 24 February. [224473]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* I replied to the hon. Member today.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight for answer on 21 March 2005, reference 222937. [224971]

Mr. Caplin: I am answering the hon. Member's question today.

Porton Down

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many war pensions have been awarded since 1 January 2002 to service personnel who took part in experiments at the chemical defence establishment, Porton Down; and which of these are attributable to the experiments. [205184]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* production and *(b)* testing on animals of botulinum toxin takes place at (i) Porton Down and (ii) other Departmental establishments. [216463]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what investigation there has been as to what manuals, documents, other materials, and information Dr. Wouter Basson of South Africa was given during and subsequent to his visit to Porton Down in 1985; and if he will make a statement. [217707]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which employees of Porton Down visited South Africa in the period from 1975 until the collapse of the apartheid regime; for what purpose; and if he will make a statement. [217708]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what records his Department has retained relating to pre-1975 visits to South Africa by employees of Porton Down. [217709]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements have been made for soldiers in Perth constituency suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder following their tour of duty in Iraq. [224116]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Information on arrangements for personnel suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), further to their tour of duty in Iraq, cannot be broken down into specific geographical areas.

In-patient treatment for service personnel returning from Iraq and suffering from PTSD is provided through the MOD's contract with the Priory Group for the provision of all in-patient mental health care services for the MOD across the UK.

Prisoners of War

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* detainees, *(b)* security internees and *(c)* enemy prisoners of war in Iraq transferred by British forces to the United States military have been subject to any form of sensory deprivation. [218259]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many reports he has received from the *(a)* UK Prisoner of War Registration Unit and *(b)* Prisoner Monitoring Team at Camp Bucca. [223311]

Mr. Ingram: None. The UK Prisoner of War Registration Unit and the Prisoner Monitoring Team, both at Camp Bucca when it held prisoners for whom the U.K responsibility, reported to Multi-National Division (South East).

Private Contractors

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions have taken place with private contractors on replacing work currently undertaken by departmental staff. [217599]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 24 February 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Procurement

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many procurement contracts were entered into by his Department in each year since 1981 in which *(a)* Northrop Grumman Corp and *(b)* a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corp was designated as (i) the prime contractor and (ii) subcontractor; and if he will make a statement. [224516]

Mr. Ingram: A list of the number of contracts entered into by the Department in each year since 1981 in which *(a)* Northrop Grumman Corp or *(b)* a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corp acted as (i) the prime contractor or (ii) subcontractor cannot be given in full as departmental records are only available from 1991 onwards. In addition, information relating to subcontracts is not held centrally by the Department and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However, the company has provided information on numbers of subcontracts relating to UK subsidiaries, although this covers a limited period from 2000 onwards.

According to departmental records the number of contracts entered into by the Department in each year since 1991 in which *(a)* Northrop Grumman Corp or *(b)* a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corp acted as the prime contractor is listed in the following table.

	Number of contracts
1991 (Part year)	1
1992	3
1993	1
1994	3
1995	8
1996	5
1997	7
1998	9
1999	10
2000	9
2001	5
2002	7
2003	13
2004	12
2005 (Part year)	0

The company has confirmed that since 2000, approximately 17 subcontracts were entered into in which *(a)* Northrop Grumman Corp or *(b)* a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corp (registered within the UK) acted as subcontractor to other primes.

Puma Aircraft

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library copies of the Airworthiness Review Report into the Puma aircraft. [220171]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the right hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

QinetiQ

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment his Department has made of the potential for conflicts of interest where QinetiQ is competing for departmental contracts; and if he will make a statement. [216692]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what role QinetiQ plays in *(a)* testing and *(b)* evaluating the effectiveness of military training programmes. [216693]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Queen's Lancashire Regiment

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were issued with the aide memoire on the law of armed conflict; and on what dates. [215478]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* representations, *(b)* letters and *(c)* petitions opposing the merger of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were received by his Department; how many signatures there were in each case; whether that information was presented to the Army Board; and how many board members voted on each side in the decision on the merger. [224969]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

RAF Defensive Aid Suites

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the technology of the in-service Defensive Aid Suite. [217414]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

RAF Leeming

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* military and *(b)* civilian personnel are employed at RAF Leeming. [222512]

Mr. Ingram: There are approximately 1,570 Service and 280 civilian posts at RAF Leeming.

Recruitment

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list by nation and region of the UK selection figures for each of the services for the most recent year for which figures are available. [214414]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 2 February 2005]*: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [220192]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has not established any regional bodies, institutions, taskforces, panels, offices or organisations since 1997. This reflects the nature of the Department's work.

Religious Counsellors

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what the limits are of confidentiality offered by the Padre or religious counsellor in an Army barracks setting; what *(a)* guidelines and *(b)* advice are available to newly appointed officers regarding the limits of such confidentiality; and what provisions are made for periodic advice on the subject to be given to such appointees through the chain of command; [217674]

(2) on how many occasions in the past five years complaints have been made concerning the Padre or religious counsellor in *(a)* Catterick, *(b)* Deepcut,

(c) Bullingdon barracks and *(d)* HMS Lympstone; what disciplinary action was taken in each case; and what the outcome was of that action; [217675]

(3) if he will place in the Library the advice and directions regarding confidentiality and complaints concerning bullying that have been given through the chain of command to the Padre or religious counsellors at Catterick barracks. [217676]

Mr. Caplin: All welfare work, including that conducted by Chaplains or religious counsellors, is conducted within the Army code of confidentiality, information about which is widely available throughout the Army.

The core element of the code of confidentiality is the legal and professional obligation not to disclose "private information" about another without consent. There are however exceptional circumstances when information can be disclosed, and in some circumstances must be done so without an individual's consent. These are:

Where there is a risk of harm to the individual or others

In order to prevent a serious criminal act

If there is a serious contravention of military law

If there is, or likely to be, a serious breach of national security

If the soldier is no longer able to carry out his/her duty (and not disclosing would have a detrimental effect on operational effectiveness)

There have been no formal complaints in the last five years against Chaplains at any of the establishments listed.

Research

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many and what percentage of opportunities for research and consulting disseminated by his Department resulted in *(a)* research reports and *(b)* physical deliverables in (i) 2001–02, (ii) 2002–03 and (iii) 2003–04. [202180]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Resource Account Codes

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library his Department's resource account codes for financial years 2001–02 to 2003–04. [221979]

Mr. Ingram: Yes.

Resource Budgeting

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether additional civil servants were employed to deal with resource budgeting in the Department. [218134]

Mr. Caplin: Some 2,400, mainly finance and information technology, staff were engaged in the implementation of resource accounting and budgeting in the MOD over the period 1996 to 2001. It is not, however, possible to distinguish accurately between those posts which were additional and those which had been redeployed from legacy processes and systems.

Royal Anglian Regiment

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether it is his intention to post the *(a)* 1st and *(b)* 2nd Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment for tours of duty in Iraq in the next 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [224909]

Mr. Ingram: The 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment will be deploying to Iraq in the forthcoming weeks to undertake a six month tour. There are no current plans to send the 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment to Iraq in the next 12 months.

Royal Army Dental Corps

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the *(a)* manning levels and *(b)* activities of the Royal Army Dental Corps. [211421]

Mr. Ingram: Manning levels for the Royal Army Dental Corps (RADC) as at 1 February 2005 are shown in the following table against the establishment.

	Establishment	*Strength*
Officers	180	170
Soldiers	270	240
Total	450	410

Note:
Figures rounded to the nearest 10.

The principal activities of the RADC are: force preparation, (ensuring that the Army is dentally fit for operational task); support to deployed forces on operations, including support to the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force as appropriate; and the provision of an NHS equivalent service to forces dependants based overseas. The RADC operates in all base locations worldwide and all operational theatres.

Royal Irish Regiment

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 14 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1010W, on the Royal Irish Regiment, if he will provide the information available on the average working hours for the junior rank operational soldiers of the Royal Irish Regiment. [211473]

Mr. Ingram: Information on the average working hours specifically for junior rank operational soldiers of the Royal Irish Regiment could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

DASA carry out a continuous sample survey of working patterns which provides an estimate of the average working hours per person, per week, for each service, but the Royal Irish Regiment (Home Service) are not included and the sample is insufficient to report on average working hours at the level of detail requested.

The results of the 2003–04 survey gave an estimate of an average of 47.1 "hours worked" per week for all regular trained junior ranks in the Army.

"Hours worked" includes time spent carrying out normal work, secondary duties, compulsory fitness training, organised sports and representational activities but excludes meal and tea breaks and time spent on call.

Royal Navy

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he last assessed the needs of the Royal Navy for fleet auxiliary support; what the present *(a)* provision and *(b)* demand are assessed to be; and what forecast his Department has made of future demand. [210691]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to my right hon. Friend in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will define what is meant by *(a)* normal support and *(b)* reduced support for Royal Navy ships. [221396]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* Normal support is the best possible support to FLEET units within the Defence Logistics Organisation's current ability.

Under reduced support, health and safety demands will be met and certain operational capabilities will also be fully maintained.

Sea King Helicopters

Mr. Viggers: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the implications for Royal Naval Aircraft Yard Fleetlands of the Government's proposals for the servicing of Sea King helicopters. [225031]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Sergeant Paul Connolly

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the outcome of the investigation into the death of Sergeant Paul Connolly at Shaibah logistic base on 26 December 2004 was; on what date a Board of Inquiry was opened; where and on what date the funeral was; and whether there will be an inquest. [215700]

Mr. Ingram: The Service police investigation into the death of Sergeant Paul Connolly has not yet concluded. A Service Board Inquiry to examine the circumstances surrounding his death was convened on 28 January 2005.

The funeral arrangements are a matter for Sergeant Connolly's next of kin. The decision to hold an inquest is a matter for HM Coroner.

Space Technology

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial contribution his *(a)* Department and *(b)* non-departmental public bodies made to civil space technology in 2004–05; and what financial provision has been made for the period 2005–06 to 2009–10. [200545]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Sudan 1

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether *(a)* the Food Standards Agency, *(b)* the Health Protection Agency, *(c)* the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *(d)* the British Retail Consortium and *(e)* the Institute of Grocery Distribution Emergency Planning Liaison Group have had discussions with DSTL Porton Down in connection with contamination of the food chain by Sudan 1 dye; and if he will make a statement. [218625]

Mr. Ingram: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Surface Combatants

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 10 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1995–6W, on surface combatants, if he will list the members of the Surface Ships Support Study. [223563]

Mr. Ingram: In order to comply with our obligations to protect the identity of individuals, we will not be releasing the names of the members of the Surface Ship Support Study. This is consistent with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Sustainable Timber

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the refurbishment projects in his Department that *(a)* are in progress and *(b)* will start in the next six months; what action is being taken to ensure that these will procure timber from legal and sustainable sources; and whether guidance will be issued to contractors on each of these projects to ensure that the timber used on site during refurbishment also comes from legal and sustainable sources. [200576]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Swan Hunter

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 3 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1017W, on Swan Hunter, what the technical difficulties were; what the costs associated with each one were; whether there were technical difficulties relating to inaccuracies in measurements; and if he will make a statement. [220432]

Mr. Ingram: Swan Hunter's design for the LSD(A) vessels was based upon the modification of the Enforcer Class concept design by the Dutch Royal Schelde shipyard, which was itself based upon the proven HNLMS Rotterdam. The company's successful bid for the design and construction of the first two ships was to adapt this existing concept design to meet the Statement of Requirement specified in the MOD's Invitation To Tender. The company subsequently encountered difficulties in adapting the design to the UK specification as the concept itself and the modifications needed were shown not to be as mature as they had previously believed. This underestimation of the degree of design work needed resulted in additional work that

had not been costed in the company's bid. In September 2003 when the full scale of the additional work became clear the company announced that it would be unable to complete the contract without an adjustment to the original price. The £84 million contract amendment agreed in December 2004 reflected the additional cost to the company needed to complete the programme and was awarded only after full consideration of the options, from which the MOD assessed that the contract amendment offered the optimum value for money solution in the delivery of the LSD(A) capability. In addition to the £84 million needed to address the Swan Hunter design difficulty, £3 million has been added since the start of the contract to address design changes as a consequence of Naval and statutory safety requirements that were not fully defined at the time of the original contract placement. The MOD is unaware of any significant difficulties relating to inaccuracies in measurements.

Taskforces

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department spent on taskforces and similar bodies in each year since 1997. [204886]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 20 December 2004]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Tornado Crash

Mr. Arbuthnot: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the complete RAF Board of Inquiry into the crash of RAF Tornado F3 ZH558 on 1 September 1994. [219357]

Mr. Ingram: I believe the right hon. Member may be confusing two different accidents. Tornado F3 ZH558 crashed in Cyprus on 8 July 1994, and on 1 September 1994 a Tornado GR1A crashed in Scotland.

My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Defence replied to the right hon. Member on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1671W, about the crash which occurred on 8 July 1994, and on 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1674W, about the crash which occurred on 1 September 1994.

Training Courses

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* cost to the Department, *(b)* title and *(c)* location was of each training course organised by his Department for its staff in each financial year since 1997–98. [200387]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial penalties were paid in each financial year since 1997–98 to training providers by the Department for training courses prepared for its staff which were subsequently cancelled at the Department's request. [200407]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Trident

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence in which countries the arming, fusing and firing system components of Trident nuclear warheads are manufactured; and if he will make a statement. [214243]

Mr. Hoon: I am withholding the information requested as it relates to national security.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) in which countries the *(a)* neutron generators and *(b)* the gas reservoirs of Trident nuclear warheads are manufactured; and if he will make a statement; [214244]

(2) in which countries the gas reservoirs for Trident nuclear warheads are filled with tritium; and if he will make a statement. [214245]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 8 July 2004, *Official Report*, columns 829–30W, by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State for the Armed Forces (Mr. Ingram).

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether nuclear material related to the Trident nuclear system is transported through Glasgow; and through which Scottish *(a)* constituencies and *(b)* local authorities nuclear material related to the Trident nuclear system has passed in each of the last five years. [218337]

Mr. Hoon: It is not Ministry of Defence policy to comment upon the timings or routes used during the transportation of nuclear material related to the Trident nuclear system as this would prejudice national security. However, I can confirm that nuclear material related to the Trident system may be transported through those areas as detailed in the publicly available Local Authority and Emergency Service Information (LAESI) Document.

UK Military Lawyers

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list UK military lawyers who have been based in Iraq since the start of recent military operations; and what the role and function has been of each. [210353]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 24 January 2005]:* It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Veterans Agency

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of its personnel budget for financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 the Veterans Agency spent in Scotland (i) in monetary terms and (ii) as a percentage of the total personnel budget; and if he will make a statement. [214252]

Mr. Caplin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Veterans Lapel Badge

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons veterans of Suez and other conflicts since the Second World War are ineligible to receive the Veterans Lapel Badge inscribed with the words HM Armed Forces Veterans; and if he will take steps to include this group of former servicemen and women amongst those eligible for this badge. [222937]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* All veterans who served in the First or Second World Wars, and widow(er)s whose spouse served during those wars and died as a result of service in the armed forces and who are accordingly in receipt of a war widow(er)'s pension are currently entitled to receive a Veterans Badge. Also, with effect from 1 February 2005 servicemen and women who now leave the Service, subject to certain conditions, are also entitled.

When the demand from World War veterans has been satisfied, we plan to extend eligibility to other veterans as resources allow. It is envisaged that this will be done on a chronological basis, dealing first with veterans of the inter-war years and those who served in the 1940s after the end of the Second World War. Veterans who served in the 1950s, which includes those who served in Korea and Suez, will be included in the following tranche.

Vote Registration (Service Men)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what action his Department has taken to increase the number of servicemen that are registered to vote. [220210]

Mr. Caplin: As I assured the hon. Member for Chichester during the Adjournment debate on 8 December last year, we have worked closely with the Electoral Commission to improve awareness in the service community of the options to register to vote.

The answers to the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames) on 21 December 2004, *Official Report*, column 1575W, and the hon. Members for North Wiltshire (Mr. Gray) and Southend, West (Mr. Amess) on 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 13, and 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1169, respectively to questions during the Defence Debates, also explained that an internal information campaign began at the end of January.

A Joint Service Defence Council Instruction providing full information and practical help to service personnel on how to register and explaining the various voting options open to them was also published at the same time.

Welsh Language Scheme

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department's Welsh language scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board; and on what date the scheme was implemented. [211329]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's Welsh language scheme was approved by the Welsh Language Board on 15 June 1999 and came into being on that date. Except where otherwise agreed with the Welsh Language Board, the commitments in the scheme were implemented from the date it was approved.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

China

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Chinese Government on the rights of religious minorities; and if he will make it his policy to exert pressure on China to increase religious freedom. [213231]

Mr. Rammell: We are concerned about religious freedom in China, including the treatment of religious minorities, and monitor the situation closely. During his most recent trip to China in January 2005 my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised progress on the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which contains provisions on freedom of conscience and religion. The case of house church leader, Pastor Zhang Rongliang, was also discussed.

We raise a number of concerns about religious freedom at our biannual UK/China Human Rights Dialogue, the last round of which was held in Beijing on 22 November 2004.

Constitution for Europe

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a copy of the proposed Constitution for Europe available in every public library in the United Kingdom. [224895]

Mr. MacShane: A copy of the commentary on the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe has been sent to all central libraries and European Public Information Centres in the UK. The commentary contains the full text of the treaty itself as well as an introduction and analysis of the text, line by line. The full text of the EU constitutional treaty and commentary are available free at www.europe.gov.uk.

Correspondence

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes of 1 February 2005 about transporting a fishing boat hull mould from RAF St. Mawgan to Sri Lanka. [220885]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* I regret the delay, however the hon. Member's letter was transferred to the Department for International Development. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development replied to the hon. Member on 4 April.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply to his letter of 26 January regarding a constituent, reference GV100/97610/MD. [224771]

Mr. Mullin: A reply to my hon. Friend was sent on 6 April. I apologise for the delay in responding.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to answer the letters from the right hon. Member for Manchester Gorton, with regard to *(a)* Mr. Rashid, dated 14 February, *(b)* Mrs. Iqbal, dated 18 January, *(c)* Mrs. B. Reid, dated 23 February, *(d)* Mr. Fernando, dated 18 January and *(e)* Hira Khalid, dated 19 January. [224866]

Mr. Mullin: In regards to my right hon. Friend's correspondence concerning Mr. Rashid, Mr. Fernando and Mrs. B. Reid, I refer my right hon. Friend to the reply I gave him on 6 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 1486W.

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied to my right hon. Friend's letter of 18 January concerning Mrs. Iqbal on 6 April.

I replied to my right hon. Friend's correspondence on Hira Khalid on 1 April.

Disaster Victim Identification

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what procedures he has established for disaster victim identification following a major overseas incident. [224855]

Mr. Mullin: It has not proved possible to respond to the hon. Member in the time available before Prorogation.

Ethiopia

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the Ethiopian Government in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [224829]

Mr. Mullin: We hold regular discussions with the Ethiopian Government. I have spoken with Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles on many occasions since the beginning of 2004, most recently on 24 February 2005. These discussions have focused on a range of issues, including: the Ethiopia-Eritrea Border Dispute, human rights, poverty reduction and the forthcoming Ethiopian parliamentary elections on 15 May.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Ethiopia. [224830]

Mr. Mullin: We continue to have concerns about the human rights situation in Ethiopia. In the Memorandum of Understanding we signed with Ethiopia in January 2003, the Government of Ethiopia made a commitment to protect the full range of human rights of all Ethiopians, especially the poor. We are supporting the implementation of this commitment through our regular dialogue with the Ethiopian Government, as well as carefully monitoring their performance.

EU Constitution

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 23 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 891W, whether the Government have requested that *(a)* the European Parliament and *(b)* other institutions of the European Union do not intervene or fund activities in the referendum on the EU Constitution. [224993]

Mr. MacShane: The European Parliament (EP) and European Commission have a legitimate role in the provision of objective and factual information on the EU and its activities. This role must of course respect the constitutional and democratic processes of the member states. The Government have been in contact with the EP and the Commission about the provision of information on the EU Constitutional Treaty, including in relation to the referendum, and will continue to liaise with them on these issues.

European Funding

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list projects for which the Department has provided joint funding with the European Commission and other institutions of the European Union during the past five financial years; and what funding is planned for such projects in this financial year [221375]

Mr. MacShane: *[Pursuant to the reply on 4 April 2005, Official Report, c. 1089–90W]:* My answer of 4 April to the hon. Member was incorrect. The correct answer should read as follows:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has worked together with various European institutions on a number of projects in the last five years.

In October 2003, the FCO and European Commission jointly organised the "Europe United" football tournament as part of the plans to celebrate EU enlargement. In early 2004 the FCO produced with Commission support booklets explaining the benefits of EU enlargement that were sent to the nine English regions and the devolved administrations. On 24 April 2004, there was "Europe Day—Meet the Neighbours"—a jointly organised FCO-Commission project which celebrated EU enlargement.

The European Parliament funded jointly with the FCO a number of Wilton Park conferences: The European Union's Strategic Priorities (14–16 September 2000); Reforming the Governance of the European Union: Towards an ever closer EU? (22–24 October 2001); How Can Parliamentarians Best Re-Engage the Public? (9–12 June 2003); The Future of Europe: What kind of Institutional and Security arrangements do we want (September 2002). In addition, the European Parliament hired an Exhibition Space at the Europe Day.

The FCO and EU institutions also jointly fund a number of development projects outside the UK.

No jointly-funded projects are currently planned for this year, with the exception of FCO development projects.

Guatemala

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Guatemala since the election of President Oscar Berger; [224889]

(2) what representations have been made to the government of Guatemala regarding the 1996 Peace Accords concerning human rights and commitments made to the international community at the 2003 Consultative Group meeting. [224890]

Mr. Rammell: When I visited Guatemala in January 2004 I stressed the importance of human rights issues with the new Vice President and other members of the government. We and our EU partners continue to encourage the Guatemalan government to implement in full the 1996 Peace Accords. Our Embassy follows the human rights situation closely and enjoys close relations with human rights organisations in Guatemala. We are presently supporting projects that are seeking to bring to justice the perpetrators of human rights abuses as well as promoting reconciliation.

Although Guatemala's civil war ended in 1996, serious questions about respect for human rights in Guatemala remain. However, we have noted the positive efforts President Berger has made since his inauguration on 14 January 2004 to tackle human rights problems in Guatemala. His first public act was to declare his commitment to the 1996 Guatemalan Peace Accords and on 25 February 2004 he announced the establishment of a new national commission to oversee their implementation. These include undertakings to compensate the surviving family members of massacres that took place during the conflict. President Berger has also appointed a respected human rights campaigner, Frank la Rue, to his Cabinet as the Head of the Presidential Commission on Human Rights.

Iain Hook

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what information he has provided to the BBC about the shooting of Iain Hook by the Israeli Defence Force in Jenin. [224904]

Mr. Mullin: This was a high-profile case and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Press Office may well have handled requests for information from the BBC. The Press Office does not, however, keep records of all contact with the media and we cannot therefore confirm what information was provided to the BBC.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Israeli government about the shooting of Iain Hook in Jenin. [224905]

Mr. Mullin: Representations were made to the Israeli Government at the highest level about the shooting of Iain Hook. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary spoke to the Israeli Foreign Minister on 22 November 2002 and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister raised it with Israeli Prime Minister Sharon on 29 November 2002.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution he has made to United Nations inquiries into the shooting of Iain Hook in Jenin. [224906]

Mr. Mullin: The United Nations conducted their own independent investigation into the death of Iain Hook. We liaised with all appropriate authorities on behalf of the Hook family, including the United Nations and the Israeli Government, in trying to secure a satisfactory resolution to the case.

Illegal Drugs

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total value was of UK aid to supplier countries donated with the specific intention of eradicating the cultivation of illegal drugs in each of the last 20 years; and to which countries such aid was given. [223706]

Mr. Rammell: The total value of UK aid to Afghanistan on eradication in financial year 2004–05 was £2,695,008. Various options for eradication aid are being worked up for 2006 and a decision will be taken in June 2005.

In 1994 the UK supplied two helicopters for use by the Pakistani anti-narcotics force (ANF) to assist with opium poppy eradication and other operational counter narcotics activity in Pakistan. Figures are not immediately available for the cost of the purchase of the helicopters. Since 1994, we have supported the ANF to the sum of approximately £1.4 million to help service and maintain the aircraft for use for the same purposes.

Iran

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations the Government have made to the Iranian Government on human rights. [224915]

Mr. Rammell: Promoting human rights is an important element of UK and EU policy towards Iran. We press the Iranian authorities frequently on general issues and on individual cases of particular concern. In recent months, my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary, my right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and I have all discussed human rights with the Iranian ambassador in London. I did so on 7 February. With our support, EU representatives called on the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 24 November and 21 December 2004 to discuss specific cases. Recent representations have focused on the sentencing of juvenile offenders, the rights of religious minorities and freedom of expression.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what occasions and for what purpose he has visited Iran in the last two years; whom he met on each occasion; and what matters were discussed. [224920]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has visited Iran twice in the last two years. In June 2003, he met President Khatami; the Foreign Minister, Dr Kharrazi; and the Secretary General of the Supreme National Security Council, Dr Rouhani. The subjects discussed included UK/Iran bilateral issues, Iran's nuclear programme, terrorism and Iraq. In October 2003, my right hon. Friend visited Iran with his French and German colleagues to discuss Iran's nuclear programme. He again met President Khatami, Dr Kharrazi and Dr Rouhani.

Iraq (Legal Advice)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requests he has received from the parliamentary ombudsman to release details of when Ministers first sought advice on the legality of military action to invade Iraq; what response was made; and if he will make a statement. [224001]

Mr. Rammell: We have received a report from the ombudsman dated 11 February 2005, recommending that we release the date on which the Government first sought legal advice about the legality of military action against Iraq to the noble Lord, Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC. However, we have declined to comply with this recommendation on the grounds that the release of this information would harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion.

Israel

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 459W, on Israel, whether Minister Paz-Pines gave an indication of what the level of a certain age is above which he expects Palestinians to be allowed to be reunited with their families when the citizenship and entrance to Israel law is reviewed on 31 May. [224711]

Mr. Rammell: Minister Paz-Pines did not give an indication of the age above which he expects Palestinians to be allowed to be reunited with their families when the citizenship and entrance to Israel law is reviewed on 31 May.

Kenya

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what measures he is taking to restitute to the Kenyan Government funds invested in the UK by the Khmer Moi regime. [224052]

Mr. Mullin: We do not comment on individual requests for mutual legal assistance, but I understand that we are currently considering four cases regarding Kenya. We take seriously all allegations of corruption and misuse of public funds and will be very happy to assist with any further requests we receive from the Kenyan Government.

Legal Assistance

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what provision his Department makes for assistance to UK citizens encountering long delays in legal actions in other EU countries. [224853]

Mr. Mullin: Under international law we cannot interfere in on-going legal proceedings in another country. Our own proceedings are similarly protected.

However, where there are unreasonable delays in criminal proceedings overseas in a case involving a UK national, we may consider, on a case by case basis, whether it would be appropriate to raise the issue with the state concerned. We would take into account any relevant information from the individual's lawyer before doing so.

Maajid Nawaz

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations the Government have made to the Egyptian authorities concerning the detention of Maajid Nawaz and others in prison in Cairo. [224919]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. and noble Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, last raised the cases of Majid Nawaz, Ian Nisbet, and Reza Pankhurst with the Egyptian Foreign Minister on 9 March. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office remains in touch with all the men's families and will inform them immediately of any developments.

Mrs. Inna Isaacs

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects an independent adjudicator to hear the appeal of Mrs. Inna Isaacs from Brixham, Devon; and if he will make a statement on the time taken to set a date for the hearing. [224705]

Mr. Mullin: I regret that I cannot provide this information, as it is not our practice to disclose details of individual entry clearance cases in a public forum. I have, however, written to the hon. Member.

Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he will attend the forthcoming Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. [221359]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary will not be present at the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May, but he has asked John Freeman (the UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament) to head the UK delegation.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of whether there is a need to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation treaty to ensure that signatory states are not able to exploit the treaty by obtaining nuclear technology under the guise of a peaceful civilian nuclear energy programme. [223321]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom supports the efforts being made by a number of bodies to consider how to ensure that nuclear technology acquired under Article IV of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) cannot be diverted to weapons programmes, either while a state is still party to the treaty, or following withdrawal from it. We hope to continue this discussion at the upcoming NPT review conference in May, and are working towards an outcome which strengthens the non-proliferation regime to deal better with these challenges.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what response he *(a)* has made and *(b)* plans to make to the request by his Indian counterpart on 28 March that the nuclear weapons

states party to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty agree to irreversible and verifiable cuts in their nuclear arsenals as a condition of India signing the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. [224694]

Mr. MacShane: The Government, including Ministers, have frequent contact with their Indian counterparts and are familiar with India's views on nuclear proliferation matters, including Natwar Singh's speech at the Conference on "Emerging Nuclear Proliferation Challenges" held in Delhi on 28 March. The Government were not represented at this conference and is not intending to make a response to Mr. Singh's speech. Mr. Singh's speech gives no indication that India is willing to become a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which, by the terms of the treaty, they can only do as a non-nuclear weapon state.

Services Directive

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the proposed EU Directive on Services. [224992]

Mr. MacShane: The European Council of 22–23 March 2005 underlined that a fully operational internal market in services is vital to promoting growth and employment, and to strengthening competitiveness.

The services sector in Europe contains vast untapped potential—services account for over two-thirds of EU GDP, but for only 20 per cent. of intra-EU trade. Independent analysis from Copenhagen Economics predicts that the draft Services Directive could create 600,000 jobs.

As my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear in his Statement to the House on the European Council on 24 March 2005, *Official Report*, columns 1013–1015, the services directive will be at the heart of the next phase of the Lisbon programme. Negotiations are still at an early stage—we will work closely with the EU institutions and with our European partners to address genuine concerns and to build a broad consensus as anticipated in the council conclusions.

Sudan

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the post of UK Special Envoy to Sudan. [224326]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary announced on 12 February 2002 the creation of the position of UK special representative for Sudan, to support the peace process in Sudan, and in particular the negotiations on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The CPA was signed on 9 January this year, following intense work by the special representative with both sides to that conflict.

The present special representative will leave his post at the end of April. The UK remains committed to peace throughout Sudan, and we will ensure the strong continuation of our engagement in implementation of the CPA, and maintain and strengthen our engagement in the resolution of the conflict in Darfur. We are currently reviewing the position of UK special representative.

Tariq Aziz

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what access Tariq Aziz has had to his lawyers Emile Ludot and Mathieu Faupin in the last 12 months. [224981]

Mr. Rammell: Tariq Aziz has a named counsel of record registered with the Iraq Special Tribunal (IST). This counsel of record is an Iraqi national and qualified member of the Iraqi bar. He is free to see his client providing one of them makes an official request for access. M. Emile Ludot and M. Mathieu Faupin are not registered as co-counsel with the IST. Nor have requests to visit Mr. Aziz, who they claim is their client, been received from them by the IST. It has not proved possible to obtain official confirmation of the number of occasions Mr. Aziz has seen his registered lawyer since he was detained in the time available before Prorogation. However, it is believed that two visits have taken place, one meeting being in private and one meeting at the initial hearing before the investigative judge.

Terrorism

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the sources of information on terrorist violence that were used for each organisation proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000. [224297]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have been asked to reply.

It is not the policy of the UK Government to discuss intelligence matters.

However, all information supplied on proscribed organisations will be evaluated very carefully, and decisions to proscribe or deproscribe are taken after careful consideration of all relevant aspects.

Uganda

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department has made representations to the Ugandan authorities regarding the statement by the Defence Minister Amama Mbabazi in Pyongyang that North Korea deserves to defend itself by any means, including nuclear weapons. [218268]

Mr. Mullin: We have made no representations to the Ugandan authorities on this matter.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the ability of the forum for democratic change to operate freely in Uganda. [218270]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr. Simmonds) on 8 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 1796W.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made representations to the Ugandan authorities regarding the visit by the Ugandan Defence Minister

Amama Mbabazi to Pyongyang and his statement that North Korea deserves to defend itself by any means, including nuclear weapons. [218289]

Mr. Mullin: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) today (UIN 218268).

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action his Department has taken to counter the Lord's Resistance Army campaign in Northern Uganda. [224950]

Mr. Mullin: We have received a large number of representations from non-governmental organisations and concerned individuals regarding efforts to combat the Lord's Resistance Army campaign and end the conflict in Northern Uganda. We are working closely with other members of the international community to this end.

The British Government believe that the northern Uganda problem cannot be resolved solely through military action. Since late 2004, the UK, along with a number of other countries and international organisations, has been backing a local initiative to end the conflict through mediation. This is led by a former Government Minister for Northern Uganda, Betty Bigombe. The process is continuing.

HOME DEPARTMENT

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether responsibility for the Probation Service remains with probation boards; whether arrangements were changed under the arrangements set out in the written ministerial statement of 20 July 2004; and whether those arrangements will change under the latest blueprint for the National Offender Management Service. [209867]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who the members of the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs are; and what the professional qualifications of each are. [224166]

Caroline Flint: A full list of members of the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, and their professions, is set out in the following table. However, it is very important to note that the members are appointed on an individual basis, and not as representatives of the organisations for which they work. The professional information supplied is for information only. All members are unpaid, although expenses are reimbursed.

Member	*Profession*
Professor Sir Michael Rawlins	Professor of Pharmacology, University of Newcastle
Dr. Dima Abdulrahim	Briefing's Manager, National Treatment Agency
Lord Victor Adebowale	Chief Executive, Turning Point
Mr. Martin Barnes[1]	Chief Executive, Drugscope
Dr. Margaret Birtwistle	Specialist GP, Senior Tutor—Education and Training Unit, St. George's Hospital and Forensic Medical Examiner
Reverend Martin Blakebrough	Director, Kaleidoscope Drugs Project, Kingston upon Thames
Dr. Cecilia Bottomley	Doctor—Specialist Registrar in Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Ms Carmel Clancy	Principal Lecturer (Mental Health and Addictions), Middlesex University
Professor Liana Crome	Professor of Addiction Psychiatry, Keele University Medical Schools, Harplands Hospital
Ms Robyn Doran	Registered Mental Health Nurse and Service Director Substance Misuse CNWL Mental Health Trust
Ms Dianne Draper[1]	Public Health Policy Support Officer, Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside
Mr. Robert Eschle	School Teacher and Magistrate
Professor Hugh Edmondson	Consultant Maxillo Facial Surgeon, Emeritus Professor
Ms Vivienne Evans	Chief Executive, ADFAM
Professor C Robin Ganellin FRS	Emeritus Professor of Medicinal Chemistry
Dr. Clare Gerada[1]	GP, London Practice and Primary Care lead for Drug Misuse and Chair at the Royal College of GPs.
Dr. Laurence Gruer[2]	Public Health Services for NHS Scotland
Mr. Paul Hayes	Chief Executive, National Treatment Agency
Mr. Andrew Hayman	ACPO
Mr. Russell Hayton	Clinical Nurse Specialist and Clinical and Services Governance Manager, Plymouth Drug and Alcohol Action Team
Ms Caroline Healy[1]	Health Adviser to Sure Start, London
Dr. Matthew Hickman[1]	Deputy Director, Centre for Research on Drugs and Health Behaviour, Senior Lecturer in Public Health
Mr. Alan Hunter	Director—Law Regulatory and Intellectual Property and Secretary to the Association of British Pharmaceutical
Professor Leslie Iversen[1]	Professor of Pharmacology, University of Oxford
His Honour Judge Thomas Joseph	Resident Judge, Croyden Crown Council
Dr. John Marsden	Research Psychologist, Institute of Psychiatry
Mr. Peter Martin	Chief Executive, Addaction
Professor David Nutt	Director of Psychopharmacology Unit, University of Bristol
Dr. Richard Pates	Consultant Clinical Psychologist and Clinical Director Community Addiction Unit, Cardiff.
Mr. Trevor Pearce	Acting Director General, National Crime Squad
Mrs. Kay Roberts	Coordinator Greater Glasgow Pharmacy Needle Exchange Scheme, Lead Pharmacist -Royal College of General Practitioners, National Drug Misuse Training Programme
Dr. Roy Robertson[2]	General Medical Practitioner, Edinburgh

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

Member	Profession
Dr. Mary Rowlands	Consultant Psychiatrist in Substance Misuse
Dr. Polly Taylor	Veterinary Surgeon
Ms Monique Tomlinson	Freelance Consultant
Mr. Arthur Wing[1]	Assistant Chief Officer, Sussex Probation Area

[1] New member
[2] Member whose appointment runs only to 31 December 2005

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how members of the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs are appointed. [224167]

Caroline Flint: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) is a statutory and non-executive non-departmental public body, established by the Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) 1971.

Members of the ACMD, of whom there should be not less than 20, are appointed by the Secretary of State for a term of three years and in accordance with the guidance issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Nominations come from a wide range of sources including relevant professional bodies, Public Appointments Unit of the Cabinet Office and self-nomination. Under the terms of the MDA 1971 the ACMD is required to include representatives of the practices of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and pharmacy, the pharmaceutical industry, and chemistry (other than pharmaceutical chemistry); and members who have a wide and relevant experience of social problems connected with the misuse of drugs.

Professor Sir Michael Rawlins was first appointed to the chair of the ACMD in October 1998 for a period of four years. His tenure was extended to a second term, which is due to expire in December 2005. Sir Michael is an effective and respected chairman. He is a Professor of Clinical Pharmacology at the University of Newcastle and chair of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE).

Membership currently stands at 36, including the Chair. The ACMD has recently undergone a membership appointments process and the current term of office for members began on 1 January 2005. It will expire on 31 December 2007.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will increase the number of scientific specialists on the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs. [224168]

Caroline Flint: The Home Secretary may only appoint additional members to the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD—as a Non-Departmental Public Body) subject to the normal membership recruitment process, approved and monitored by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

I am content that the range of professions, and levels of expertise on the ACMD is suitable.

Where the ACMD requires additional information, or would value further opinions, it has the authority to, and frequently does, invite expert witnesses to present to its meetings, and contribute to its understanding of an issue. If it feels that such input would be valuable in the longer term, it may co-opt additional members to its sub-committees or working groups.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make provision for independent testing of the validity of the review process used by the Advisory Committee on the Misuse of Drugs. [224169]

Caroline Flint: The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) is an independent body whose members are experts or leading practitioners in their field.

We have no intention to make provision for independent testing of the validity of the review process of the ACMD because we believe in the integrity of the council and its individual members, and are confident that the advice we receive from them is of the highest quality.

Airsoft BB Guns

Tony Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ban the use of airsoft BB guns. [225024]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Alcohol-related Crime

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 10 January 2005, *Official Report*, column 266W, on alcohol-related crime, if he will break down the number of defendants by region; what assessment he has made of the reasons for the increase in the number of defendants selling intoxicating liquor to persons under 18 between 2002 and 2003; and if he will make a statement. [210739]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures his Department is introducing to divert youngsters from antisocial behaviour. [212322]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Anti-Semitism

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department has taken since publication of the Community Security Trust Anti-Semitic Incidents Report 2004 to combat anti-Semitism. [223022]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of levels of anti-Semitism. [223998]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on *(a)* the effectiveness of his Department's policies to combat antisocial behaviour in Lancashire and *(b)* the Report telephone helpline. [216058]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to respond to the petition that was presented to him on his recent visit to Thirsk regarding local concerns over antisocial behaviour. [222697]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the anti-social behaviour orders that have been breached were given to people under 18 years of age. [223055]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Anti-terrorism Legislation

Dr. Starkey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were detained under anti-terrorism legislation in each year since 1975; how many were *(a)* UK and *(a)* non-UK citizens; how many of those detained were subsequently charged with (i) terrorist and (ii) other criminal offences; and how many were deported. [224857]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how frequently the Secretary of State or responsible Ministers have personally reviewed the certification of individuals detained under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001; and on what date the case of "C" was last considered by the Secretary of State. [215036]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The individual cases of those certified under the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001, Part 4 powers were kept under regular review and I was kept fully informed of any developments in the individual cases.

My last consideration of "C's" case was on 31 January, when following a meeting with the Security Service, I decided that his certificate should be revoked.

In the case of "C" I revoked the certificate because there was a change in circumstance that related to his specific case. At the time of his certification under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 (ATCSA) in December 2001, he was a leading UK member of the proscribed Egyptian terrorist group, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ). Prior to his detention, "C" was active on behalf of the EIJ in Egypt, Ireland and the UK. "C" had an extensive network of associates among international terrorists in the UK and overseas. His contacts included prominent international terrorists from a range of organisations. However, although a number of "C's" associates remain at liberty, many have now been detained and/or their extremist activities have been disrupted. This has lessened the potential for "C" to re-engage in his previous activities to a degree that I believed it was no longer appropriate to maintain the certificate.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date he, or officials in his Department, started to review the case of prisoner "C", then being held in Woodhill Prison; what new information led him to decide to release prisoner "C"; and on what dates reviews of the cases of other prisoners being detained under anti-terrorist legislation in Belmarsh Prison, began. [215037]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The individual cases of those certified under the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001, Part 4 powers were kept under regular review and I was kept fully informed of any developments in the individual cases.

My last consideration of "C's" case was on 31 January, when following a meeting with the Security Service, I decided that his certificate should be revoked.

In the case of "C" I revoked the certificate because there was a change in circumstances that related to his specific case.

Assaults on Police Officers

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers in each police force in England and Wales were assaulted in each of the last five years. [208272]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Asylum and Immigration

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers whose applications for asylum in the UK had failed were convicted of a criminal offence in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* offence and *(b)* country of origin. [223716]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals residing illegally in the UK have been charged with criminal offences in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* category of offence and *(b)* country of origin. [223717]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* This information is not recorded centrally.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the finding by the Prisons Ombudsman that an official in the Immigration and Nationality Directorate considered that reasoned debate on the target of 30,000 removals of failed asylum seekers in 2001–02 was forbidden. [206168]

Mr. Browne: In 1996, the Government of the day introduced a new civil service code which set out the framework in which civil servants work.

Staff may raise matters of concern if they feel they are being asked to act or abstain from acting which raises a fundamental issue of conscience. This should be raised with a senior officer. There is also provision for staff to raise matters of conscience within the Home Office with a nominated officer who is outside their usual management line.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been refused benefit payments and housing support from the National Asylum Support Service in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* Leicester, South in each year since 2002. [224828]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Badgers

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* maximum, *(b)* minimum and *(c)* average sentences given to individuals convicted of offences involving the baiting and mistreatment of badgers was in each of the last five years. [211880]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mark Tami: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were convicted of offences involving the baiting or mistreatment of badgers in each of the last five years. [211881]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Births (Public Funds)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of babies born to mothers without recourse to public funds in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [224535]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Border Guard Dogs

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many dogs are used for the purposes of securing the UK's borders. [221862]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

BREAM

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREAM) certificate will be awarded to the new Home Office buildings in 2 Marsham Street; and what the assessment of the new building was against each indicator of the BREAM ranking. [205340]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Burial and Cemeteries Working Group

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to *(a)* publish the responses and *(b)* respond to the consultation on the burial and cemeteries working group; and if he will make a statement. [214484]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Cannabis

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact reclassification of cannabis has had on *(a)* England and Wales and *(b)* the Ribble Valley. [221982]

Caroline Flint: Government figures on prevalence of cannabis use available for any period since reclassification come primarily from the British Crime Survey (BCS). The BCS for 2003–04 shows cannabis use for 16 to 59-year-olds who have taken the drug in the last 12 months to be at 10.8 per cent. The figure for 2002–03 was 10.9 per cent. In addition, the BCS figures show cannabis use declining steadily among 16 to 24-year-olds between 1998–2004 from 28.2 per cent. to 24.8 per cent.

Cannabis was reclassified on 29 January 2004 to a Class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2004 contains the preliminary key findings of a survey of secondary schoolchildren aged 11 to 15. The figures show a decline in cannabis use in the last year from 13 per cent. in 2001 to 2003 to 11 per cent. for 2004.

There are no centrally held figures on the impact of cannabis reclassification in the Ribble Valley.

Caravans

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what directions he has given to police forces regarding the checking of *(a)* transponders on suspected stolen caravans and *(b)* the Caravan Registration and Identification Scheme Vehicle Identification Number. [223225]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many caravans were stolen in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2002; and how many were subsequently recovered. [223228]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Change up Programme

Mrs. Lait: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for projects the Department has received under the ChangeUp Programme; what the total value is of the projects so submitted; how many projects have been approved; how much and what percentage of the budget for the programme has been committed; and how much money has been disbursed. [219022]

Fiona Mactaggart: ChangeUp is a capacity building framework for the voluntary and community sector, launched in June 2004 after extensive consultation with the sector. It is underpinned by an £80 million initial investment programme by Government available until March 2006.

The £80 million initial investment by Government have now been enhanced by an additional £70 million for the financial years 2006–07 and 2007–08.

Initial activity has been slow due to the need to put in place sustainable sector led decision making mechanisms. Good progress is now being made on the delivery of the ChangeUp investment plan.

Local and Regional Spend

£52.4million (65 per cent. of the total investment) has been allocated to local and regional activity to support voluntary and community sector infrastructure and capacity building. This money has been committed to the Government Offices for distribution.

National Spend

£1.25million of national spend was committed through an early spend programme. This was heavily oversubscribed with 506 applications submitted in open bidding. Twenty two projects were successful with an additional five projects also commissioned. £1 million has been disbursed.

£24million of the main spend programme was allocated to national activity. £4.9 million of this money has been committed for/seven projects and £0.8 million has been disbursed.

Overall Programme

£57.4 million (72 per cent. of the £80 million investment has been committed. The 2003–04 spend was £2.2 million and the 2004–05 spend to date is £6.9 million making a total spend of £9.1 million at the end of January 2005.

Community Support Officers

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether grant funding of community support officers will continue; and whether the costs of community support officers will be met from the police precept; [221142]

(2) what assessment he has made of the role targeted grant funding through the neighbourhood policy fund plays in recruiting and retaining police community support officers in North Yorkshire. [221143]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the 20,000 community support officers the Government proposes to recruit by 2008 are to be posted in Leicester; and if he will make a statement. [224663]

Ms Blears It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Community-based Sentences

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community-based sentences have been breached in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* type of sentence and *(b)* offence committed. [217730]

Paul Goggins: I have arranged for the available information, for the years 1997 to 2003, to be placed in the House Library.

Statistics for 2004 will be published in the latter part of this year.

Consultants

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much expenditure his Department has incurred in each year since 2002 on employing external consultants to deal with the press and public relations of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [199905]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total expenditure by his Department on external consultants was in *(a)* 1996–97 and *(b)* 2003–04, and what the estimated cost of external consultants will be in (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06, (iii) 2006–07 and (iv) 2007–08. [211560]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Control Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether individuals subject to control orders will be entitled to receive compensation for loss of livelihood. [216835]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether accommodation will be provided for homeless individuals issued with a control order. [216837]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the security agencies which advised the Government that control orders were necessary to control international terrorism, broken down by date on which the advice was given. [223345]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 22 March 2005]:* I have had regular discussions with the Security Authorities and the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police on a range of security issues, including proposals for the revision of counter terrorism legislation in the light of the House of Lords judgment on 16 December.

Convention on Regional and National Minorities

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to prepare a report for the Council of Europe concerning *(a)* all aspects of the items raised and *(b)* the collective view of all other relevant Government Departments in respect of its framework convention on regional and national minorities. [213124]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 1 February 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Coroners

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time between death and inquest in the jurisdiction of the Coroner for Cleveland was in 2004; and what the average time between death and inquest was in other coroners' jurisdictions in *(a)* the north east and *(b)* England and Wales in that year. [207491]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 10 January 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Coroners' Courts

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to hold a review of the *(a)* operation and *(b)* scope of coroners' courts; and if he will make a statement. [223926]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Correspondence

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 18 November 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Carl Walker. [208708]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 14 December 2004 with regard to (i) Mr. S. Mohamed, (ii) Mr. S. U. Omar, (iii) Mrs. Faiza Saleh, (iv) Ms A. Khushi and (v) Dr. Roy; [209852]

(2) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mr. S. Mohamed; [215104]

(3) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Faiza Saleh; [212295]

(4) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms A.A. Khushi; [212286]

(5) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms. A Khushi; [215122]

(6) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms. A. Khushi; [217048]

(7) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms. Anney Guha Roy; [217046]

(8) when he will reply to the letter dated 14 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Sakariya Mohamed. [212277]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he will reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated *(a)* 10 November 2004 with regard to Ms Nabila Jahangir, *(b)* 9 December 2004 with regard to Mrs. Guy-Blackburn and *(c)* 6 December 2004 with regard to (i) Mr. Amos Bamba, (ii) Miss S. Rabbani and (iii) Alis Nicolae Bubric; [209859]

(2) when he will reply to the letter dated 19 October 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms Nabila Jahanbir; [212289]

(3) when he will reply to the letter dated 19 October 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Ms Nabila Jahangir; [215107]

(4) when he will reply to the letter dated 9 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Mrs. Guy-Blackburn; [215103]

(5) when he will reply to the letter dated 9 December 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Guy-Blackburn; [217050]

(6) when he will reply to the letter dated 6 December from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Alis Nicolae Bubric. [212280]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 21 November 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Ms Yulima Vincente Vidal. [212275]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 21 November 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Dr. A. R. Esta Bragh. [212278]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 17 October 2004 from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, with regard to Ms Pauline Clear. [215105]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Clare Short: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to respond to the letter from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, Ladywood dated 14 December 2004 regarding the resourcing of the Connexions Service. [220917]

Mr. Charles Clarke: On 14 March my hon. Friend's letter was transferred to my right. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (Ruth Kelly), who will be replying shortly.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 20 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mrs. Saira Ahmed. [221907]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 19 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Juliet Kufvor. [221908]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 20 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. K H Osman. [221915]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 31 January from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr Abubeker M Zukrya. [221916]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 10 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Malik Lalendra Fernando. [221918]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter dated 7 February from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to Mr. Musonza. [221919]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes dated 2 December 2004 about his constituent, Mrs. Janet Wilce of Broadhempston, Totnes, which his Department acknowledged on 17 December 2004, ref: M19951/4. [223317]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes dated 15 December 2004 concerning his constituent, Mrs. Dee Baillie of Kingsbridge. [223318]

Mr. Browne: I replied to the hon. Member on 5 April 2005.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Totnes dated 2 December 2004 about his constituent, Mrs. Janet Wilce of Broadhempston, ref: M19951/4. [223670]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letters from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton with regard to *(a)* Mr. M. Osman Mohammed, dated 14 February, *(b)* Mr. Robinc Banalas Moreno, dated 15 February, *(c)* Mrs. J Kavr, dated 16 February and *(d)* Mr. Malik Calendra Fernando, dated 10 February. [224363]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letters from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated *(a)* 7 February with regard to Mr. Jamal Mohammed Bin Omar Al Ridai, *(b)* 20 January with regard to Mr. K H Osman, *(c)* 19 January with regard to Ms Juliet Kufuon, *(d)* 2 February with regard to Mrs. Waheeda Ahmed and *(e)* 31 January with regard to Mr. Abubeker M Zukrya. [224364]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter of 17 February from the hon. Member for West Chelmsford, ref: P1114105, concerning Mr. C. D. Patel. [224476]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* I wrote to the hon. Member on 7 April 2005.

Mr. Ailen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to reply to the e-mail of 15 March from the hon. Member for Nottingham, North requesting an investigation into allegations made by the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire. [224542]

Ms Blears [holding answer 4 April 2005]: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall North of *(a)* 24 February concerning a constituent, ref /M5547/5 and *(b)* 9 November 2004 concerning a constituent, ref P393908, which received a holding reply on 16 February. [224785]

Mr. Browne: I replied to my hon. Friend on 7 April.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to answer the letters from the right hon. Member for Manchester Gorton, with regard to *(a)* Mrs. J. Kaur, dated 16 February, *(b)* Mr. Malik Fernando, dated 10 February, *(c)* Mrs. Guy Blackburn, dated 9 December 2004 and *(d)* Mr. I. Alkenani, dated 27 January. [224865]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to answer the letters from the right hon. Member for Manchester Gorton, with regard to *(a)* Mr. M. Osman Mohammood, dated 14 February, *(b)* Mrs. Waheeda Ahmed, dated 2 February, *(c)* Mr. Al Ridaj, dated 2 February, *(d)* Ms Juliet Kvenor, dated 19 January, *(e)* Mr. K. H. Osman, dated 20 January, *(f)* Mr. Zukrya, dated 31 January and *(g)* Mr. Robinc Banagas Moreno, dated 15 February. [224867]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sir Gerald Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to answer the letter dated 1 March 2005 from the right hon. Member for Manchester Gorton with regard to Mr. P Nyonga. [224966]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Credit/Debit Cards

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the impact of the changeover from signature to chip and PIN credit and debit cards and its effect on consumers; what discussions his Department has had with the banking and credit card industries on this matter; and if he will make a statement; [223873]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effects on the *(a)* banking and *(b)* retail industries of the changeover from signature to chip and pin debit and credit cards. [223874]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Chip and PIN is a major finance and retail industry anti fraud initiative. The introduction of chip and PIN has been managed by the chip and PIN Programme Management Organisation, and actively supported by Government.

Following a successful public trial, national roll out of the scheme began in October 2003 with the aim that by 2005 a majority of plastic card transactions should be chip and PIN. The chip and PIN programme announced earlier this year that it reached all its 2004 targets for the roll out with customer research demonstrating that 71 per cent. of cardholders expect their next transaction to be chip and PIN and 45 per cent. now using it for all or most of their card payments.[1]

I last met with representatives from the programme in November 2003 and Home Office officials maintain regular contact with the finance and retail industry.

It is currently too early to assess the effects of chip and PIN in preventing credit card fraud. The impact of chip and PIN on card fraud is expected to be seen early in 2005 and hence will first be reflected in the APACS mid-year card fraud figures to June 2005, which will be available in the summer.

[1] *Source:* chip and PIN programme

Crime

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of reported crimes in Leicester, South were classified as *(a)* violent crimes and *(b)* distraction burglaries in each year since 1997. [220781]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the levels of *(a)* domestic violence, *(b)* violent crime, *(c)* vehicle thefts, *(d)* burglary and *(e)* overall crime in (i) the Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK were in each year since 1997. [222180]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Roger Casale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Wimbledon has been since 1997. [224242]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time
available before Prorogation.

Criminal Justice

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for which offences in the judicial system guilt is determined on the basis of reasonable grounds for suspicion. [220227]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Custody Sergeants

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of the Serious and Organised Crime and Police Bill on the role of the custody sergeant. [208718]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Deaths Overseas

Mr. Lyons: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action is taken following a verdict by a coroner in England and Wales of unlawful killing in respect of a death of a UK national overseas. [220357]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Departmental Budget

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the planned *(a)* capital and *(b)* resource budget for his Department is for 2011–12. [223431]

Fiona Mactaggart: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 4 April 2005, *Official Report*, column 117W by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Departmental Costs

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost has been of criminal damage to his Department's buildings in each of the last two years. [200758]

Fiona Mactaggart: Central records are not generally held. The estimated damage caused by the disturbance earlier this year at Harmondsworth removal centre is approximately £2.5 million. This is expected to be covered by the operator's insurance.

Following indiscipline incidents causing damage the opportunity was taken to carry out upgrades to parts of Lincoln prison (£2.6 million in 2002–03) and Wetherby prison (£2.3 million mostly in 2004–05).

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the equipment leasing arrangements entered into by his Department in each of the last two years; and what the cost is to public funds in each case. [200770]

Fiona Mactaggart: Information held by the Home Office on equipment leasing arrangements entered into by the Department in each of the last two years is as follows:

Home Office

Commercial Directorate

Hire of IT hardware

Total expenditure paid in 2003–04—£6,394

Agencies

Her Majesty's Prison Service

Items rented/leased by Prison Service HQs and establishments:

Photocopiers, printers/duplicators, CCTV cameras, mailing systems, vehicles, vending machines, gym equipment, floor cleaning equipment, washing machines, water dispensers/coolers, hygiene products and disposals, waste compactors and industrial equipment for workshops.

Total expenditure on the above paid in 2002–03—£1,203,544

Total expenditure on the above paid in 2003–04—£1,396,920

NDPBs

Police Scientific Development Branch (PSDB)

12 month lease of the Ancore, VEDS, large vehicle x-ray machine. Paid in four quarterly instalments, the last of which was in February 2003.

Total expenditure on the above paid in 2002–03—£150,000

CENTREX

Lease of photocopiers.

Total expenditure—£10,000 per annum

Security Industry Authority (SIA)

Lease of a franking machine

Total expenditure—£1,486 per annum

Lease of a tea and coffee machine

Total expenditure—£1,323 per annum

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was paid to consultants carrying out staff surveys in the Department in each year since 1997. [213656]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information required is not held in a central record or in the format requested.

The information held by the Home Office on the amount paid to consultants carrying out staff surveys in each year since 1997 is as follows:

Unit	*Period (calendar/financial year)*	*Amount paid to consultants carrying out staff surveys (£)*
Home Office		
Research, Development and Statistics (RDS)	1999–2001	120,475
	[1]2003–05	70,251
Executive Agencies		
Forensic Science Service (FSS)	2000	12,619
	2001	10,175
	2003	16,050
	2004	8,490
UK Passport Service (UKPS)	1999	22,150
	2001	22,250
	2003	40,179
NDPBs		
National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS)	[2]2004–05	1,195

[1] February

[2] YTD

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Department spent on *(a)* stationery and *(b)* office supplies in each year since 1997. [213845]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information held by the Home Office on it's expenditure on stationery and office supplies in each year since 1997 is as follows:

£

Year	Stationery	Office supplies
1997	n/a	n/a
1998	n/a	n/a
1999	415,000	n/a
2000	495,000	5,763,344
2001	406,000	6,604,000
2002	532,000	8,114,969
2003	461,000	9,377,737
2004	375,000	9,860,845

n/a denotes not available

Stationery figures include bulk paper purchased to print HMPS headed paper stationery, compliments slips, information booklets and leaflets used within HMPS internal industries, purchased from James McNaughton Ltd.

Office Supplies includes all printer and copier paper and office supplies purchased by all Home Office departments using the Guilbert/Office Depot contract. From 2002, the figures include spend on computer consumables.

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the Department spent on lawyers in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* number of actions, *(b)* number of settlements, *(c)* number of court cases and *(d)* the costs of each settlement. [206451]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Deportation

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people were subject to deportation orders in each year since 1997, broken down by country of origin. [223718]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Information on the total number of deportation orders made between 1997 and 2000 is shown in table 1. From 2001 this information is not available. Deportations are a specific subset of removals alongside persons subject to administrative removal or removal due to illegal entry action.

Table 1: Deportation orders made

	Deportation orders made[1]
1997	1,220
1998	1,020
1999	660
2000	760

[1] Data rounded to the nearest 5.

A breakdown of those subject to deportation orders by country of origin is also not available; however table 2 shows a broad-nationality breakdown of persons removed as a result of deportation action from 1997 to 1999. Data from 2000 onwards are unavailable due to data quality issues.

Table 2: Persons removed from the United Kingdom as a result of deportation action[1,2] by nationality, 1997–99

United Kingdom

	1997	1998[3]	1999[3]
Europe (including EEA)	350	355	355
Americas	290	295	335
Africa	510	420	290
Indian Sub-continent	240	185	130
Other Asia	130	90	80
Oceania	20	10	10
Other nationalities	*	5	5
All nationalities	1,550	1,360	1,210

[1] Figures for years prior to 1999 exclude persons known to have departed "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them.
[2] Figures rounded to the nearest 5, where * = 5 or fewer.
[3] Nationality breakdowns are estimates.

Information on the number of people deported from the UK in 2004 will be available from August on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of people subject to deportation orders in each year since 1997 were successfully deported by the authorities. [223719]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* Information on the proportion of people subject to deportation orders who were successfully deported is not available, as persons who received deportation orders in a period are not necessarily deported in the same period. Data on the number of persons removed from the United Kingdom as a result of deportation action are shown in table 1.

Deportations are a specific subset of removals alongside persons subject to administrative removal or removal due to illegal entry action.

Table 1: Persons removed from the United Kingdom as a result of deportation action, 1997 to 2003

United Kingdom

	1997	1998	1999[1]	2000[1]	2001[2]	2002[2]	2003[3]
Persons removed[4,5]	2,070	1,730	1,210	1,280	450	415	—
Of whom:							
Principal asylum applicants[6]	460	350	140	145	85	100	—
Of whom:							
Non-asylum cases	1,620	1,380	1,075	1,140	365	315	—

[1] Deportation figures may be under-recorded in 1999 and 2000.
[2] Figures for 2001 and 2002 have been estimated.

[3] Data were not of sufficient quality for publication in 2003, however it is estimated that 480 persons were removed as a result of deportation action in this year. Due to poor data quality this is not an official statistic.
[4] Figures rounded to the nearest 5.
[5] Including persons known to have departed "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them.
[6] Persons who had sought asylum at some stage. Excludes dependents of asylum seekers.

Information on the number of people deported from the UK in 2004 will be available from August on the Home Office's Research Development and Statistics web site at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Dip Sampling Process

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what further safeguards have been built into the dip sampling process since 2003; [207330]

(2) how compliance with the "The Investigation of Historic/Institutional Child Abuse: The SIO handbook" is assessed; [207510]

(3) what role the Inter-agency Strategic Management Group has in historic sex abuse operations; [207454]

(4) if he will make a statement on the use of the Gudjonsson Suggestibility Scales in historic sex abuse investigations; [207509]

(5) what discussions his Department has had with the Association of Chief Police Officers regarding the documentation and written recording of police interviews with complainants and other significant witnesses in historical sex abuse cases; and what the outcome was of those discussions; [207518]

(6) what research he has conducted into *(a)* SCAN and *(b)* other techniques for assessing the validity of statements for use in historical sex abuse cases; [207519]

(7) if he will make a statement on the advice provided by the Association of Chief Police Officers Investigative Interviewing Group to police forces on statement validity analysis techniques for use in historical sex abuse investigations; [207520]

(8) what changes have been made to the guidelines for investigations into historical sex abuse, to take account of the establishment of the National Centre for Policing Excellence. [210001]

Ms Blears: The Government's Response to the Home Affairs Committee's Report published in April 2003 indicated that the Senior Investigations Handbook already included guidance that the Senior Investigating Officer in any individual case should always record, as a matter of routine, justification for using the dip sampling or investigation method for making initial approaches to former residents of care homes. This serves as a guide and is not mandatory therefore neither the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) nor Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) would make a routine assessment as to compliance therein.

The Association of Chief Police Officers has established a multi-agency working group to review the SIO Handbook which was produced in 2002, the group includes officials form the Home Office. That review group has cognisance of all recommendations made by the Committee and in particular on-going concerns raised by my hon. Friend and will ensure amendments in line with police investigative policy. This will include adding further safeguards to the initial approach for evidence as considered by the group similarly for recordkeeping. I understand that the Chair of that group has now invited my hon. Friend to present her concerns to the group in person.

It is not clear to which Inter-agency strategic management group my hon. Friend refers.

The Home Department is not aware of the Gudjohnsson, SCAN or any other statement validity assessment tools for use in cases involving historical child abuse. The work of the ACPO SIO Manual review group is still in progress: it has not issued any guidance on the use of such tools in investigating complex cases of historical child abuse.

Detention Centres

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places there were in each detention centre in each year since 1997; and what occupation rates were in each centre. [218808]

Mr. Browne: The number of spaces and occupancy rates, where applicable, on 31 December each year since 1997 for each removal centre are as follows:

Removal centre	*Spaces*	*Detained*
Campsfield House		
1998	[1]—	[1]—
1999	184	182
2000	184	176
2001	184	166
2002	184	158
2003	184	120
2004	184	130
Colnbrook		
2004	296	220
Dover		
2002	216	194
2003	316	307
2004	316	197
Dungavel		
2001	148	30
2002	148	65
2003	148	84
2004	192	82
Harmondsworth		
2001	550	201
2002	550	206
2003	335	306
2004	501	408
Haslar		
1997	160	123
1998	160	111
1999	160	159
2000	160	120
2001	160	141
2002	160	122

Removal centre	Spaces	Detained
2003	160	133
2004	160	122
Lindholme		
2000	112	111
2001	112	99
2002	112	95
2003	112	95
2004	112	88
Oakington		
2000	360	270
2001	360	256
2002	360	49
2003	360	165
2004	360	192
Tinsley House		
1996–2000	[2]	[2]
2001	146	143
2002	146	87
2003	146	110
2004	146	113
Yarl's Wood		
2001	[3]	[3]
2002	[4]	[4]
2003	60	57
2004	120	112

[1] No longer held.
[2] Currently unavailable.
[3] Not available due to fire in February 2002.
[4] Not available—centre closed.

Disability and Race Discrimination

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what representations he has received concerning non-compliance with the disability and race discrimination legislation; [214266]

(2) what incentives there are for local authorities to enforce the disability and race discrimination legislation. [214267]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Disaster Victim Identification

Sir Robert Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures he has established for disaster victim identification in the event of a major incident in the UK. [224856]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Domestic Violence

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will ask the joint Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary team which produced the report Violence in the Home to re-inspect the police and CPS teams which were criticised to ensure that they have implemented the recommendations. [207497]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many incidents of domestic violence have been reported to the Metropolitan police in each of the last three years. [209254]

Ms Blears: The number of domestic violence incidents reported to the Metropolitan Police Service in each of the last three years are set out in the table:

	Number of reported domestic violence incidents
2001–02	90,974
2002–03	104,000
2003–04	106,879

The rise in figures from 2001–02 to 2002–03 is attributable to the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard in April 2002. This system changed the way in which police record crime with the aim of promoting greater consistency between force recording. This had the effect of increasing the amount of crime recorded.

Drink Driving

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of occasions on which drivers drove while above the legal alcohol limit in *(a)* 1979, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* the most recent year for which figures are available. [225023]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Drinking Banning Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the proposed drinking banning orders will be used and enforced. [216756]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Driving Offences

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date *(a)* he and *(b)* each Minister in his Department first saw a copy of the published version of the Review of Road Traffic Offences involving Bad Driving. [215180]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 8 February 2005]:* Copies of the final version of the consultation paper were delivered to the Department at 8 am on Thursday 3 February and distributed to Ministers thereafter.

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date copy for the document on Road Traffic Offences involving Bad Driving was delivered to the printers; and on what date finished copies of the document were received from the printers. [215185]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 8 February 2005]:* The final version of the consultation report on the Review of Road Traffic Offences involving Bad Driving was sent to the printers on Tuesday 1 February. Finished copies of the paper were received by the Department at 8 am on Thursday 3 February.

Drugs

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have been charged with drug offences in magistrates courts within the Greater London area in each of the last three years. [209927]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the levels of drug-related crime in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK were in each year since 1997. [222558]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to reduce the number of reported drug overdose deaths. [206977]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment his Department has made of the consequences of prolonged cannabis use. [220683]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research has been conducted on the dangers of crystal meth. [220684]

Caroline Flint: I refer my hon. Friend to my reply of 14 March 2005, *Official Report*, column 42W.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of inmates in prisons in England and Wales were serving sentences for drug-related convictions in each year since 1975; and what the cost was of accommodating the inmates. [223702]

Paul Goggins: The population in prison establishments in England and Wales under an immediate custodial sentence for drug offences as a percentage of the total population under an immediate custodial sentence, in each year since 1976, is provided in the table. Information is not available for 1975.

The Prison Service does not collect data relating to the costs of keeping prisoners in custody by offence type, nor does it retain information readily to hand on costs as far back as 1975. However the overall cost per prisoner for 2003–04 was £25,718 in public sector prisons and £25,377 in contracted out prisons.

These figures exclude headquarters overheads, including the cost of capital on all Prison Service land and buildings plus the cost of depreciation on buildings.

Information for Scotland and Northern Ireland would be a matter for my colleagues at the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland Office.

Population in prison establishments under an immediate custodial sentence England and Wales, 30 June

	Population under immediate custodial sentence	*Population under immediate custodial sentence for drug offences*	*Percentage of population under immediate custodial sentence who are drug offenders*
1976[1]	36,275	846	2.3
1977[1]	35,815	863	2.4
1978[1]	35,688	827	2.3
1979	34,937	768	2.2
1980	35,844	813	2.3
1981	35,751	854	2.4
1982	35,091	995	2.8
1983	34,538	1,181	3.4
1984	34,704	1,631	4.7
1985	36,781	2,343	6.4
1986	35,939	2,825	7.9
1987	38,677	3,456	8.9
1988	37,972	3,207	8.4
1989	37,529	3,213	8.6
1990	34,754	3,147	9.1
1991	34,705	2,856	8.2
1992	35,182	3,158	9.0
1993	32,500	3,208	9.9
1994	35,226	3,512	10.0
1995	38,863	4,256	11.0
1996	42,914	5,755	13.4
1997	48,674	7,174	14.7
1998	52,159	7,893	15.1
1999	51,293	8,169	15.9
2000	53,093	8,473	16.0
2001	54,169	9,148	16.9
2002	57,272	10,067	17.6
2003	59,393	10,330	17.4
2004	60,924	10,486	17.2

[1] Figures for 1976–1978 include fine defaulters

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate has been made of the cost of provision of x-ray scanning and ultrasound equipment to be used on persons arrested under suspicion of possessing Class A substances, as set out in the Drugs Bill. [211233]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the most recent estimate his Department has made of the cost of the illegal drugs trade to the UK economy in a year. [223700]

Caroline Flint: Estimates of the costs of the illegal drugs trade are not available. However, a recent study published by the Home Office provides estimates of the total economic and social costs of Class A drug use in England and Wales and puts these in the range of £10.1 to £17.4 billion for the year 2000. Total economic costs, or reactive expenditure, is estimated to fall within a range of £2.9 billion to £5.3 billion in 2000.

Note:

The full report "The Economic and Social Costs of Class A Drug Use in England and Wales, 2000" is available in the Library or from the RDS website at the following address: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/hors249.pdf

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug-related offences occurred in England and Wales in each of the past 10 years; and how many of these crimes were classified as *(a)* trafficking or dealing and *(b)* possession. [223701]

Ms Blears: There are no figures available specifically on drug-related crime. The available information relates to recorded offences of trafficking and possession in England

BEST COPY AVAILBLE

and Wales and is published in Table 2.04 of "Crime in England and Wales 2003/04", Home Office Statistical Bulletin 10/04. A copy of this publication is available in the Library and it is also on the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/crimeew0304.html.

Information for Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for the respective Secretaries of State.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate his Department has made of the number of people regularly using *(a)* heroin, *(b)* cocaine, *(c)* cannabis and *(d)* alcohol in England and Wales in each of the last 10 years; and how many of the regular users of each of these are regarded as addicts. [223704]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how levels of cannabis use have changed since the declassification of the drug to class C; and if he will make a statement. [220923]

Caroline Flint: Government figures on prevalence of cannabis use available for any period since reclassification come primarily from the British Crime Survey (BCS). The BCS for 2003–04 shows cannabis use for 16 to 59-year-olds who have taken the drug in the last 12 months to be at 10.8 per cent. The figure for 2002–03 was 10.9 per cent. In addition, the BCS figures show cannabis use declining steadily amongst 16 to 24-year-olds between 1998–2004 from 28.2 per cent. to 24.8 per cent.

Cannabis was reclassified on 29 January 2004 to a class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. Smoking, drinking and drug use among young people in England in 2004 contains the preliminary key findings of a survey of secondary schoolchildren aged 11 to 15. The figures show a decline in cannabis use in the last year from 13 per cent. in 2001 to 2003 to 11 per cent. for 2004.

eBay

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website, in each year since 2000–01. [220955]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 9 March 2005]:* The Home Office has not sold any surplus stock on the eBay auction website since 2000–01.

All disposals of surplus stock in the Department should be undertaken by procurement staff and subject to procedures consistent with obtaining best value for money. Surplus stock should be sold as soon as possible and obtain the best possible prices where appropriate by public auction or tender.

Electronic Tagging

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many probationers were electronically tagged in *(a)* Southend, *(b)* Essex and *(c)* England and Wales in each year since tagging commenced; and if he will make a statement. [221466]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Emergency Works (Scotland) Act

Richard Younger-Ross: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will discuss with Ministers in the Scottish Executive the effectiveness of the Emergency Works (Scotland) Act 2005 with a view to assessing the merits of introducing similar legislation in England and Wales. [224111]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Engagements

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list his official engagements over the last six months; who was present at each meeting; what the *(a)* date and *(b)* location was of each meeting; what issues were discussed; and what plans he has to establish a public register of such information. [202395]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list his official engagements between 1.40 pm and 8 pm on Wednesday 23 February. [218678]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

EU Committees

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times during the *(a)* Italian, *(b)* Irish and *(c)* Dutch presidency of the EU the Committee for the implementation of the community action programme on preventive measures to fight violence against children, young persons and women (Daphne) met; when and where these meetings took place; what UK Government expert was present; and if he will make a statement. [214777]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

European Arrest Warrant

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many arrests have been made in the UK under the European arrest warrant. [224145]

Caroline Flint: The framework decision on European arrest warrant came into force in the UK on 1 January 2004. From its coming into force until the 31 March 2005, there have been 67 arrests in the UK under the European arrest warrant.

European Communities Projects

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the projects that have operated in the UK since 1997 under

the communities funding line judicial co-operation between national judges, as re-advertised in *Official Journal* C13 volume 48 of 19 January. [222419]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

European Public Bodies

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the activity of Eurojust in the UK in the last 12 months; and if he will list its publications and newsletters published over that period. [215215]

Caroline Flint: Eurojust is the EU judicial cooperation unit located in the Hague, which facilitates coordination of investigations and prosecutions of serious cross border crime cases in the EU. The Government welcome both the success that Eurojust has had in meeting these core objectives and its significant role in the fight against organised crime.

Eurojust comprises a college of 25 national members, (one from each member state). The national members elected their president who is the UK national member. In 2004 there was a significant increase in the involvement of the UK authorities with Eurojust. The UK team at Eurojust received 42 cases from UK authorities requesting assistance. The UK team received 68 files from other member states requesting assistance from UK authorities. Cases involved a range of offences including drug trafficking, illegal immigrant smuggling, money laundering and murder.

The UK team has regular meetings in the United Kingdom with colleagues from Government Departments, investigating and prosecuting authorities. Casework co-ordination and co-operation meetings take place regularly at Eurojust's premises. Eurojust also provided oral evidence for the 2004 House of Lords inquiry into the work of Eurojust. A number of publications related to Eurojust are deposited in the United Kingdom Parliament including the 2003 Annual Report and the European Court of Auditors report on the Eurojust accounts for 2003. Eurojust publications, information and materials are available on the Eurojust website www.eurojust.eu.int .

Faith Communities

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what grants the Department has made to organisations linked to faith communities in each of the last three years; and for what purposes. [224187]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Firearm Offences

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many recorded firearm offences there were *(a)* in Leicester and *(b)* in England and Wales in each year since 1997. [222787]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* Information for Leicester is not collected centrally. The available statistics for England and Wales are published in Table 2.03 of "Crime in England and Wales 2003–04: Supplementary Volume 1: Homicide and Gun Crime", Home Office Statistical Bulletin 02/05. A copy of this publication is available in the Library and also on the Home Office website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many injuries have been caused by *(a)* air rifles and *(b)* handguns in (i) Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (ii) the North East and (iv) England and Wales in each year since 1997. [223366]

Caroline Flint: The available information is given in the tables.

Data collected centrally for recorded crime involving firearms in England and Wales is only available at police force level. Information for the Jarrow constituency and South Tyneside is therefore included in data for Northumbria police.

Data for offences involving air rifles are incorporated within the figures for offences invoiving air weapons.

Table 1: Number of injuries (excluding fatal) caused by air weapons, 1997–2003–04

Number

	Northumbria	*North east region*	*England and Wales*
1997	34	59	1194
1998–99	64	90	1514
1999–2000	66	94	1977
2000–01	69	101	1821
2001–02	68	107	1915
2002–03	53	84	2377
2003–04	44	90	2395

Table 2: Number of injuries (excluding fatal) caused by handguns, 1997–2003–04

	Northumbria	*North east region*	*England and Wales*
1997	0	4	314
1998–99	4	6	236
1999–2000	3	4	352
2000–01	3	6	400
2001–02	2	4	648
2002–03	1	1	640
2003–04	3	3	590

Notes:
Firearms offences were published on a calendar year basis up to 1997, and on a financial year basis thereafter.
There was a change in the counting rules for recorded crime on 1 April 1998 and the National Crime Recording Standard was introduced nationally on 1 April 2002. Figures for some crime categories may have been inflated by these changes.

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been killed by a handgun in *(a)* Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* England and Wales in each year since 1997. [223367]

Caroline Flint: The available information is given in the table.

Data collected centrally for recorded crime involving firearms in England and Wales is only available at police force level. Information for the Jarrow constituency and South Tyneside is therefore included in data for Northumbria police.

Recorded offences of homicide where the weapon was a handgun

Number

	Northumbria	*North east region*	*England and Wales*
1997	0	0	43
1998–99	1	2	28
1999–2000	0	0	42
2000–01	1	1	48
2001–02	0	0	59
2002–03	0	0	40
2003–04	0	0	35

Notes:

Firearms offences were published on a calendar year basis up to 1997, and on a financial year basis thereafter.

There was a change in the counting rules for recorded crime on 1 April 1998 and the National Crime Recording Standard was introduced nationally on 1 April 2002. Figures for some crime categories may have been inflated by these changes.

Graffiti

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to ensure that perpetrators of graffiti receive appropriate punishments; and how many people in Southend were prosecuted for graffiti in each of the last five years. [224682]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Guantanamo Bay Detainees

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what basis the Royal Prerogative was used in the decision to refuse Martin Mubanga and Feroz Abbasi British passports. [217978]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Gun Control

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to restrict the availability of ammunition for guns to ensure that it is only used for permitted uses. [224136]

Caroline Flint: It is an offence for a person to possess, purchase or acquire any ammunition to which section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968 applies without holding a firearm certificate in force at the time, or otherwise than as authorised by such a certificate or in quantities in excess of those so authorised. It is also an offence for a person to fail to comply with the conditions subject to which the certificate is held.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Government's policy is on gun control; and if he will make a statement. [224143]

Caroline Flint: We are determined to have a regulatory framework controlling the possession of firearms which is robust, preventing guns getting into the wrong hands and allowing legitimate shooters to pursue their sport without danger to public safety. We already have some of the toughest gun controls in the world and we are currently considering the large number of responses we received to the consultation paper we issued last year to ensure that the framework remains appropriate for modern circumstances.

Gun Crime

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* gun crimes and *(b)* arrests relating to gun crime there were in (i) England and (ii) each police force area in each year since 1997. [223729]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* The number of gun crimes recorded by police in England and Wales is shown in the table. The introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard nationally in April 2002 means that data for years before and after this date are not directly comparable. Information for Scotland and Northern Ireland are matters for the respective Secretaries of State.

Statistics on the number of arrests relating to gun crime in England and Wales are not collected centrally.

Firearms offences (excluding air weapons) by police force area, 1997 to 2003–04

Police force area	*1997*[1]	*1997–98*	*1998–99*[2]	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*[3]	*2002–03*[4]	*2003–04*
North East Region								
Cleveland	18	24	20	26	16	24	18	45
Durham	17	22	13	40	18	19	16	15
Northumbria	78	79	76	107	99	86	103	169
North West Region								
Cheshire	22	21	32	22	44	50	31	44
Cumbria	8	6	11	5	13	9	13	11
Greater Manchester	620	591	647	875	935	1,361	1,240	1,275
Lancashire	71	67	50	78	59	103	66	58
Merseyside	127	142	286	240	278	299	318	483
Yorkshire and the Humber Region								
Humberside	83	85	76	61	69	63	68	68
North Yorkshire	28	22	11	8	9	28	18	23
South Yorkshire	80	75	75	114	129	170	153	127
West Yorkshire	162	156	193	191	335	332	333	269
East Midlands Region								
Derbyshire	69	62	52	65	72	58	73	75

Firearms offences (excluding air weapons) by police force area, 1997 to 2003–04

Police force area	*1997*[1]	*1997–98*	*1998–99*[2]	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*[3]	*2002–03*[4]	*2003–04*
Leicestershire	48	51	98	71	58	74	174	141
Lincolnshire	5	5	16	19	24	22	37	26
Northamptonshire	40	46	54	48	40	55	107	123
Nottinghamshire	120	132	112	173	157	204	264	233
West Midlands Region								
Staffordshire	36	26	23	53	108	116	131	108
Warwickshire	20	22	20	14	39	53	62	102
West Mercia	36	30	38	36	41	54	48	62
West Midlands	428	432	407	664	816	1,289	1,101	1,138
East of England Region								
Bedfordshire	43	40	46	56	48	82	86	89
Cambridgeshire	34	37	35	43	31	49	57	34
Essex[5]	58	63	47	61	77	98	148	145
Hertfordshire[5]	45	49	30	36	36	69	139	138
Norfolk	20	22	34	24	20	26	36	33
Suffolk	5	12	15	18	22	15	28	45
London Region								
City of London	2	1	1	4	5	5	3	3
Metropolitan[5]	1,958	1,950	2,033	2,941	3,031	4,192	4,199	3,888
South East Region								
Hampshire	29	33	38	52	49	58	97	130
Kent	100	113	76	109	108	60	64	65
Surrey[5]	31	31	35	42	52	40	34	88
Sussex	107	94	115	119	110	155	136	82
Thames Valley	109	95	96	107	198	267	362	421
South West Region								
Avon and Somerset	55	65	71	103	100	131	119	123
Devon and Cornwall	40	41	75	81	64	52	36	84
Dorset	25	25	11	12	14	34	17	45
Gloucestershire	23	24	22	21	23	89	92	108
Wiltshire	19	17	19	10	13	26	60	53
Wales								
Dyfed Powys	13	13	16	13	26	26	17	37
Gwent	19	19	26	19	11	18	52	74
North Wales	19	25	27	10	6	6	18	11
South Wales	34	38	31	52	67	56	74	47
England	4,819	4,808	5,109	6,749	7,360	9,917	10,087	10,169
Wales	85	95	100	94	110	106	161	169

[1] Information published for calendar years up to and including 1997 and financial years thereafter.
[2] There was a change in the counting rules for recorded crime on 1 April 1998.
[3] Numbers of some recorded crimes may have been inflated by some police forces implementing the principles of the National Crime Recording Standard before 1 April 2002.
[4] The National Crime Recording Standard was introduced nationally on 1 April 2002. Figures for some crime categories may have been inflated by this.
[5] Forces affected by boundary changes in April 2000.

High Risk Offenders

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase the percentage of very high and high risk offenders resident in *(a)* probation hostels and *(b)* voluntary sector hostels in England and Wales. [199977]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

HMP Belmarsh

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are detained under his instructions at HMP Belmarsh; for how long each has been detained; and when he expects each to be released. [221450]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

HMP/YOI Parc

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on his response to the findings and concerns expressed in the Annual Report for March 2003 to February 2004 of the Independent Monitoring Group for HMP and YOI Parc published in August 2004. [224200]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many referrals of

(a) immigration, *(b)* asylum and *(c)* naturalisation cases to the immigration and nationality directorate by hon. Members there have been in each year since 2001, broken down by constituency. [205113]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he next plans to visit the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in Croydon. [220280]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Initiatives (Funding)

Mr. Andrew Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what budget has been allocated to the Home Office Marketing and Strategic Communications Unit in each of the last two years; and how many staff have been employed by the Unit in each year. [201894]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Internet Controls

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers his Department has to limit the availability of anti-Semitic information on the internet. [220086]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 7 March 2005]:* There are a number of incitement offences in law which provide protection against anti-Semitic material. In particular, this includes the incitement to racial hatred offence in the Public Order Act 1986 which makes it an offence to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intention or likelihood that hatred would be stirred up on the grounds of colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins.

The legal position is that what is illegal off-line is illegal on-line, so provided that the elements of the offence are made out a prosecution for incitement to racial hatred could be taken for words or behaviour published on the internet.

Interpretation Services

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in which languages interpretation services are offered by *(a)* qualified interpreters and *(b)* non-qualified interpreters on behalf of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate at East Midlands Airport. [224998]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget is for the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre in 2004–05; and whether he plans to increase the budget in future years. [224305]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Judicial System

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to reduce *(a)* costs and *(b)* waste in the justice system. [209489]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Justice and Home Affairs Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 24 February 2004; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [219451]

Caroline Flint: I represented the United Kingdom at the Justice and Home Affairs Council in Brussels on 24 February 2005. Caroline Flint attended with me, along with Cathy Jamieson (Justice Minister) of the Scottish Executive.

A list of "A" points adopted at the Council has been placed in the Library (Document 6588/05).

The proposal for a council framework decision on combating racism and xenophobia was discussed. I intervened to say that there was no need for the decision specifically to include reference to racist symbols, as their use to incite racially motivated hatred and violence was already covered in the draft Framework Decision. The matter has been referred back to the Working Group, to be discussed again at the April JHA Council.

On the proposal for a Council framework decision on the European Evidence Warrant for obtaining objects, documents and data for use in proceedings in criminal matters, the presidency sought agreement to the broad principles to be followed under the EEW in relation to dual criminality. In particular it was proposed that they should be similar to those pertaining to previous mutual recognition measures. This would include using a list of offences to which dual criminality would not apply based on the list in the European Evidence Warrant; excluding the idea of a "sunset clause", which would eventually have abolished dual criminality for all requests; and included a seriousness threshold of three years for offences. Cathy Jamieson noted the UK's support for the presidency approach and its opposition to an additional proposal to define more clearly some of the offences on the list, stating that this was inconsistent with the principle of mutual recognition and that it would create obstacles to co-operation.

Over lunch I discussed with other Ministers of the Interior the appointment of a Director for Europol. I intervened to say that the UK's position had always been that the best candidate should be selected through a fair and transparent selection process. We therefore supported the recommendation of the Europol Management Board that the German candidate, Herr Ratzel was the best candidate. The Council agreed to his selection and I noted that, for this and similar posts, it was essential that the best candidate was selected on merit, rather than nationality and that selection of individuals and sites of agencies should be considered

separately. I said that, during the UK presidency, I would initiate discussion in the Council to agree an approach these issues in future.

There was a policy debate on the follow up to the Commission reports on the member states' transposition of instruments adopted on the basis of title VI of the TEU. Caroline Flint stressed that it was not enough simply to look at how measures had been transposed at a national level but to look at whether they were making a positive impact for citizens in practice.

The presidency also agreed to take forward consideration of the reports on the European Arrest Warrant and Joint Investigation Teams by the end of June in light of the discussion.

The Presidency asked member states to agree that CEPOL be given community financing and should apply ED staff regulations. The UK was able to support this approach as the firststage in establishing CEPOL and the presidency confirmed that the Working Group take work forward on that basis.

On the Commission Green Paper on Economic Migration a first exchange of views took place. Member states responded positively and the issue will be on the agenda again at the April JHA Council.

The Mixed Committee took place in the afternoon and Caroline Flint represented the UK. The Council agreed the proposal (as in document 6483/05 VISA 43) as regards the reciprocity mechanism. Council conclusions were agreed in principle on the inclusion of biometric data in visas and residence permits. Experts will be asked to continue to examine the technical issues and return to the Council in April.

The proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Visa Information System (VIS) and the exchange of data between member states on short stay visas was tabled and draft Council Conclusions were circulated which received broad agreement. These will be passed to COREPER to be finalised.

Under AOB the Commission presented its proposal for a regulation on local border traffic.

Also tabled was a memorial report of the anniversary of the Madrid bombings presented by the Commission and dedicated to the victims of terrorism. The draft conclusions were adopted.

Kamal Bousbaci

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will make a decision in the case of Mr. Kamal Bousbaci, a constituent of the hon. Member for Edinburgh, North and Leith. [224019]

Mr. Browne: Mr. Bousbaci's case is being considered. Once the Immigration and Nationality Directorate has made a decision on his case, he will be notified in writing.

Kimberley Quinn

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he used his official phone line to contact Kimberley Quinn. [203228]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has ever discussed Kimberley Quinn with the Foreign Secretary. [203232]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Knives

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Government's plans to implement more severe sentences for knife crimes. [205563]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Lance Corporal Atkinson

Mrs. Anne Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether details of the late Lance Corporal Atkinson who was court-martialled for false imprisonment appear on the police database. [209127]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Licensed Premises (Violent Offences)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many violent offences committed in connection with licensed premises there were in each police area in each year from 1997; and if he will make a statement. [222544]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Licensing Act

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 724W, on the Licensing Act, how many people in each *(a)* petty sessional division area and *(b)* police authority area have been (i) prosecuted and (ii) convicted under (A) section 172, (B) section 172A and (C) section 173 of the Licensing Act 1964 in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [220450]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Litherland House

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 727W, to the hon. Member for Liverpool, Walton, (Mr. Kilfoyle) on Litherland House, how much has been spent on refurbishment costs for the first floor of Litherland House since his Department commenced its occupation. [220207]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Media Reporting

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment his Department has made of links between media reporting and fear of crime. [219543]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation

Metropolitan Police

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the rate of Metropolitan police officer abstractions was from each London borough for *(a)* counter-terrorism, *(b)* special operations and *(c)* public order event policing work in each of the last 12 months; what the average was for each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [212375]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how long candidates for the Metropolitan police waited before the commencement of training after selection in the last period for which figures are available. [215717]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Ministerial Engagements

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the ministerial engagements *(a)* out of London and *(b)* in London that he has cancelled since his appointment. [209230]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Ministerial Stationery

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on official ministerial *(a)* business cards, *(b)* headed paper and *(c)* compliment slips in each year since 1997. [214940]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Ministerial Travel

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* functions of non-Government employees who have accompanied him on (i) rail journeys, (ii) plane journeys and (iii) journeys in his ministerial car since 1997. [203236]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Minority Ethnic Prisoners

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government are taking to *(a)* address the disproportionate numbers of black and other minority ethnic people in prisons and *(b)* combat violence against black and other minority ethnic prisoners. [223903]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mobile Phones

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost of staff mobile phone bills was in each year since 1997. [214887]

Fiona Mactaggart: The total cost of mobile phones for the Home Department since 1997 are given in the table:

Mobile phone costs

£

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Mobile rental	273,901	261,085	376,336	456,282	552,292	568,494	624,916
Mobile call charges	262,911	92,400	140246	295,034	367,598	815,456	920,699
Total	538,809	355,483	518,581	753,316	921,891	1,385,952	1,547,618
Percentage total expenditure	0.008	0.005	0.007	0.009	0.009	0.012	0.013

Mobile Phones (Tracking)

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he monitors the use by private individuals and companies of mobile phones to track the whereabouts of individuals. [207592]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Regional Offender Manager job descriptions will be published. [201402]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by what methods he intends that the National Offender Management Service should contribute to a reduction in re-offending. [217299]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what options other than the creation of the National Offender Management Service were assessed for the possible future structure of prison and probation services. [223523]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria will be used to assess whether the National Offender Management Service will provide value for money. [223524]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Northamptonshire Police

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of the change in the performance of Northamptonshire police in detection of burglaries between March and October 2004; [219788]

(2) whether the detection rate of Northamptonshire police for burglaries in October 2004 was about 60 per cent. below the average for its group of police forces; [219789]

(3) whether the detection rate of Northamptonshire police for criminal damage in October 2004 was below the average for its group of police forces. [219790]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Northern Ireland Memorial Fund

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are applied by the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund when assessing applications from victims of the Troubles; how many applications the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund has received from these victims; and how many of these have failed to meet those criteria. [212367].

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Opinion Polls

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what issues his Department has conducted opinion polling in the last three years. [201710]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office undertakes a wide range of research activities that support the development of information led policy, including surveys of public perception and focus groups of the public that consider Home Office issues and its related areas of responsibility.

The Department conducts or commissions such work only when it is justified by the specific needs of a particular policy or programme and when this is the most economical, efficient and effective way to achieve the purpose. Consulting and involving the public helps inform both policy formulation and the delivery of better quality public services.

Areas where opinion polls (as opposed to other forms of market and opinion research) have been conducted in the last three years are:

Antisocial behaviour
CCTV
Community engagement
Community penalties
Forensic science services
Identity/entitlement cards
Impact of graffiti
Passports
Race equality
Sentencing
Victims
Voluntary organisations
Youth justice

Parliamentary Questions

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons are for the delay in replying to the questions tabled by the hon. Member for Thurrock *(a)* references 203582 and 203583, tabled on 6 December, *(b)* reference 204996, tabled on 14 December and *(c)* reference 204071 and 204164, tabled on 7 December; and if he will make a statement. [207586]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 10 January 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Worcester (Mr. Foster) of 23 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 747W, if he will estimate *(a)* the number of staff hours required to answer the question and *(b)* the total cost of answering it. [220338]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 4 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to question reference 213124 from the hon. Member for St. Ives. [222118]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to question reference *(a)* 213518 and *(b)* 213519 tabled on 31 January. [222406]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Passports

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many fraudulent applications there have been for passports in each year since 1997. [223193]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Figures for the number of fraudulent passport applications detected by the UK Passport Service in each year since 1997 are shown in the table.

	Number
1997	1,880
1998	1,368
1999	1,596
2000	1,484

	Number
2001	2,419
2002	1,973
2003	1,571
2004	1,880

Pay Television Subscriptions

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many pay television subscriptions the Department had in each year since 1997; and what the cost was in each year. [207662]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows:

	Number of subscriptions	Costs ex-VAT (£)
2004–05	53	20,610
2003–04	38	18,273
2002–03	37	13,858
2001–02	[1]—	14,606
2000–01	[1]—	[1]—
1999–2000	[1]—	12,798
1998–99	[1]—	7,295
1997–98	[1]—	[1]—

[1] No record.

These exclude the parliamentary channel and palace annunciator. These figures are for the old Home Office in 50 Queen Anne's Gate. Arrangements for 2 Marsham Street are still to be finalised.

Police

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent on the *(a)* distribution to and *(b)* printing and compiling of documents for police officers in each year since 1997, broken down by document. [203519]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received, and from whom, for additions to the ring-fenced grants in the Bedfordshire Police Authority's budget for the years *(a)* 2002–03, *(b)* 2003–04 and *(c)* 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [213518]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 3 February 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Government ring-fenced grants were included in the budget of the Bedfordshire Police Authority in each year between 1996–97 and 2004–05. [213519]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 3 February 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what definition of a police officer the Government uses. [214293]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many serving police officers have been *(a)* arrested and *(b)* convicted of crimes in each year since 1997 in (i) England, (ii) Essex and (iii) Southend. [224916]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have taken early retirement in *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Southend in each of the last five years. [224917]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the extent of racist attitudes within the police service. [218613]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made towards reaching the target of 7 per cent. ethnic minority police officers by 2009; and what measures are *(a)* in place and *(b)* planned to reach the target. [218614]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers in the Metropolitan police force hold *(a)* advanced police driving licences and *(b)* patrol car licences. [223810]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers in the *(a)* Kent police force and *(b)* England hold (i) advanced police driving licences and (ii) patrol car licences. [223811]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 23 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many job vacancies there are in Essex police division; when he expects them to be filled; and if he will make a statement. [222297]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the average age of police officers was in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex in each year since 1997; [222470]

(2) what the average length of service of police officers was in each year since 1997 in *(a)* Southend and *(b)* Essex. [222475]

Ms Blears: Information on the average age of police officers or the average length of service of police officers in Southend and Essex since 1997 has not been collected by the Home Office.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police working days were lost due to *(a)* sickness, *(b)* bereavement and *(c)* attending court hearings in Essex in each year since 1997. [220583]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been employed in Hampshire in each of the past 10 years. [224728]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason his Department is closing the Crime Reduction Unit at Hawkshill, Easingwold in the Vale of York; and what the reason is for the timing of the closure. [221145]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will introduce random drug tests for police officers. [218276]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* police officers, *(b)* community support officers and *(c)* police support staff were employed in North Yorkshire on the latest date for which figures are available. [222291]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Byrne: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* the average cost in England and Wales of recruiting a police officer and *(b)* the average establishment cost of a police officer in post, including salary, benefits and overheads were in 2003–04. [223057]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 21 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. David Marshall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours constitute a normal working week for police officers, broken down by rank. [224258]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers have been available for duty in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* each police division in Lancashire and *(c)* each Lancashire constituency in each year for which records are available. [215464]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police Accidents

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accidents involving Kent police *(a)* pursuit and *(b)* patrol vehicles and drivers and members of the public resulting in serious injuries or death there were in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [223807]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 24 march 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accidents involving Metropolitan police *(a)* pursuit and *(b)* patrol vehicles and drivers and members of the public resulting in serious injuries or death there were in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [223808]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 25 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many accidents involving police *(a)* pursuit and *(b)* patrol cars and drivers and members of the public resulting in serious injuries or death there were in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [223809]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 24 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police and Crime Statistics (Nottinghamshire)

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the trends in crime in *(a)* Nottinghamshire and *(b)* the City Division of Nottinghamshire police area since 2000; and if he will make a statement. [223206]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police Funding

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list *(a)* the ring-fenced sources of funding his Department currently makes available to police forces in England and Wales and *(b)* the ring-fenced sources of funding his Department has made available to police forces in England and Wales since 1997. [223182]

Ms Blears: Most grant to police authorities in England and Wales was made available to be spent at the discretion of individual authorities and chief officers.

A range of specific grants have also been made available that have enabled us to target funds where they are particularly needed. The Crime Fighting Fund, for example, has enabled us to reach and maintain record police officer numbers of over 140,000 at the end of September 2004. Other major ring-fenced funds include:

Neighbourhood Policing Fund

Community Support Officer funding

Special Priority Payments

Airwave

Street Crime Initiative
Basic Command Unit Fund
Premises Improvement Fund
DNA Expansion Programme

In addition to these, some forces will have received non-ring fenced grants such as the Rural Policing Fund and smaller grants to help with exceptionally incurred costs or to pilot new initiatives.

A definitive list of all grants paid to police authorities in England and Wales since 1996–97 is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Police Staff Council Handbook

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what representations he has received from the Association of Chief Police Officers regarding mandatory adoption of the Police Staff Council handbook; [223875]

(2) whether he plans to require police forces to adopt as standard the Police Staff Council handbook; [223876]

(3) how many police forces in England and Wales have adopted in full the pay and conditions set out in the Police Staff Council handbook. [223877]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police Stop Forms

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has commissioned into the administration of stop forms by police forces. [223470]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police Superintendents

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of police officers of superintendent rank in England and Wales with one or more staff officers attached to them in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [218878]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Police Training

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what training new police officers receive in *(a)* typing and *(b)* IT skills. [208276]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Pre-trial Procedures

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the aim is of the direct communication with victims initiative; and what effect he expects it will have on pre-trial procedures between prosecutors and witnesses. [218868]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Prevention of Terrorism (Control Orders)

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals are subject to control orders. [224132]

Ms Blears: 10 people are currently the subject of non-derogating control orders under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff are employed to run the helpline for individuals subject to control orders; what its hours of operation are; how many calls have been received; and what budget has been allocated to the running of the helpline. [224133]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The control order contact number is manned by a dedicated team of three staff who administer the Control Orders. It is manned during office hours Monday-Friday. Running costs are being met from existing budgets. Separate arrangements exist for emergency out of hours contact. In relation to the number of telephone calls received, it is not departmental policy to comment on the detailed operation of Control Orders.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what mechanisms are in place to ensure that individuals subject to control orders comply with the conditions of the order. [224147]

Mr. Charles Clarke: There are a range of measures in place to monitor compliance with the obligation imposed. Any suspected breach of the obligations will be investigated by the police.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are in place to inform local social services when a control order is imposed on an individual. [224148]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he plans to provide financial assistance to cover household costs for individuals subject to control orders which prevent them from working; and if he will make a statement. [224227]

Ms Blears: The Government stated within the House of Lords Committee stages of this Act that nothing within this legislation will alter the entitlement for a person in this country to receive benefits.

Control Orders are designed to address the threat posed by an individual's terrorist related activity, not to prevent individuals from gaining access to everyday living expenses.

If a control order imposed restrictions on an individual's ability to work then appropriate arrangements would be made for that individual to receive the state benefits to which s/he is legally entitled.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what arrangements are in place to provide assistance to individuals subject to control orders preventing them from visiting shops; and if he will make a statement. [224228]

Ms Blears: As was made clear within parliamentary debates surrounding this Act arrangements are and will continue to be put in place to meet the specific requirements of individual control order cases.

When deciding on the obligations to be placed on the individual proper consideration is given to ensuring that the individual has access to essential services and facilities, while restricting that individuals ability to engage in terrorism related activity.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which contractors are providing electronic tagging services for the purposes of control orders. [224229]

Ms Blears: There are two contractors, Premier Monitoring and Group4Securicor, that have five year contracts to provide electronic tagging services. The tagging services for the existing control orders are provided by Premier Monitoring.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps will be taken to inform police and probation officers responsible for local multi-agency public protection arrangements when a control order is imposed on an individual in that area. [224230]

Ms Blears: A multi-agency approach has been adopted both before and after a control order is made. The police are fully involved in this process. Probation officers would be involved where appropriate, for example, if the subject of the order was on probation.

Prevention of Terrorism Bill

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will publish the legal advice he has received regarding derogation from Article 5 of the European Charter of Human Rights for provisions under the Prevention of Terrorism Bill. [218245]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 28 February 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role he expects the Scottish courts to play in the judicial oversight of the powers to be granted to him under the Prevention of Terrorism Bill. [218547]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 28 February 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Prison/Probation Services (Competition)

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has evaluated on whether competition in *(a)* probation and *(b)* prison services drives up quality. [217297]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Prisoners (Foreign Nationals)

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many foreign nationals living in the United Kingdom have been sentenced to prison for criminal offences and been recommended for deportation in each of the last five years; and how many have been deported on the completion of their prison sentence. [207236]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Prisons

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the release of prisoner C from Woodhill prison. [216658]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prison places have been *(a)* opened and *(b)* closed (i) temporarily and (ii) permanently in each year since 1997, broken down by prison. [221175]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost of holding the detainees in HMP Belmarsh has been to date. [222537]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The cost of keeping a Category "A" prisoner at a high security prison such as HMP Belmarsh is approximately £40,000 per annum. Taking account of time served on criminal charges, etc. we estimate that detention has cost approximately £1,300,000.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the costs of keeping the Belmarsh detainees under supervision following release on conditional bail. [222538]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* The Home Office has prepared a Regulatory Impact Assessment in relation to the Prevention of Terrorism Act. Paragraphs 42 to 51 set out the estimated public sector costs. The regulatory Impact Assessment can be found at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/legis/rias/rias.html#2005

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list for each prison and young offenders institution *(a)* the latest figure for the average number of hours per week of purposeful activity and *(b)* the percentage each of those figures is of the target set. [224182]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been achieved in each prison and young offender institution in inmates gaining nationally recognised qualifications in the last three years. [224183]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Probation Boards

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to make the employees of probation boards in England and Wales civil servants. [208717]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Probation Hostels

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places were occupied in *(a)* probation hostels and *(b)* voluntary sector hostels in England and Wales where the offender was known to the multi-agency public protection panel on the latest date for which figures are available. [199978]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of places in hostels run by *(a)* the probation service and *(b)* the voluntary sector were allocated to sex offenders in England and Wales on the latest date for which figures are available. [199979]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many places are available in probation hostels in England and Wales; and how many were occupied by high risk offenders on the latest date for which figures are available. [201436]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to target probation hostel resources at very high risk and high risk offenders. [201437]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Probation Service

John Austin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to accelerate the introduction of the purchaser/provider model for the Probation Service within the National Offender Management Service structure. [204007]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 15 December 2004]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of whether the purchaser/provider model proposed for the probation service will aid the ability of the probation service effectively to carry out its functions of protecting the public and reducing offending behaviour. [209632]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Prosecution Policy (Taunton)

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Director of Public Prosecutions with reference to the Three Strikes and You're Out policy recently introduced by police and the Crown Prosecution Service in Taunton. [208230]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 13 January 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Queen's Jubilee Medal

Tom Cox: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Queen's Jubilee medals have been awarded *(a)* in total and *(b)* to each of the services. [206202]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Race (Young People)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research his Department has commissioned into young people's awareness of and attitude towards race. [224779]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police authorities have *(a)* complied with their statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, *(b)* published a race equality scheme and action plan and *(c)* carried out race impact assessments. [216545]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many local authorities have *(a)* complied with their statutory duties under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, *(b)* published a race equality scheme and action plan and *(c)* carried out race impact assessments. [216547]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Reconvictions

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison and Probation Services achieved the 2004 target to reduce the rate of reconvictions of all offenders punished by imprisonment or by community supervision by 5 per cent. [224822]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Recorded Crime

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of recorded crimes resulted in a conviction in each year since 1997, broken down by recorded offence. [205330]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Regional Offices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which *(a)* non-departmental public bodies and *(b)* executive agencies within the remit of his Department have regional offices based on the Government Offices for the Regions' regional structure; and when the regional offices were established in each case. [219879]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government have established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department; [219948]

(2) which regional *(a)* bodies, *(b)* institutions, *(c)* taskforces, *(d)* panels, *(e)* offices and *(f)* organisations the Government has established since May 1997 which are the responsibility of his Department. [220188]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Rehabilitation

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the results of the research on rehabilitation regimes to be published; and if he will make a statement. [201677]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Released Offenders

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of literacy and numeracy rates among offenders released from prison. [224825]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the percentage of offenders who *(a)* get a job and *(b)* live in stable accommodation when they are released from prison. [224826]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

River Police

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of *(a)* the relative effectiveness of policing the non-tidal Thames by each of the forces having such responsibility and *(b)* the percentage of the total forces resources devoted to such policing by each of the relevant police authorities. [206883]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Roadside Drug Testing

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has for roadside drug testing; and what assessment he has made of the *(a)* value and *(b)* effectiveness of such tests. [221704]

Caroline Flint: We have already given the police a power to conduct compulsory roadside tests for impairment, which may be due to a drug, and for the presence of drugs.

Impairment tests are conducted in accordance with a Code of Practice issued on 20 December 2004. They involve a trained officer observing a suspect in the performance of specified tasks and making other observations about his physical state. They are based on the voluntary field impairment tests and drug recognition techniques that have been in use for some time and are of proven effectiveness in indicating whether a person might be under the influence of a drug.

Tests for the presence of drugs have to be carried out by means of a device of a type approved by the Secretary of State. We are currently developing the detailed specification for such a device and the procedures by which candidate devices might be assessed in field and laboratory trials. It will then be for manufacturers to produce such devices and submit them for approval. We currently expect that suitable products will be on the market by the end of 2006.

A reliable indication of drug presence will, in the same way as a reliable indication of impairment, valuably inform the police decision whether a person might be committing the offence of driving or attempting to drive while unfit to drive through drugs.

Royal Prerogative

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many times the royal prerogative has been used since 1975; and under what circumstances. [217977]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Royal Wedding

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of additional costs to be incurred in providing security at the wedding of HRH Prince of Wales due to its change of date. [224983]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Ryan McQuigg

Mr. Salmond: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the UK security agencies will process the request submitted by the Scottish Parliament for a security pass for Mr Ryan McQuigg. [222017]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Security Industry

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will instruct the Security Industry Authority to make licence application forms readily available to door supervisor candidates and via their approved training provider; [220792]

(2) if he will temporarily suspend the conditionality clause covering the exemption under sub-paragraph (4) *(b)* of section 4 of the Private Security Industry Act 2001, pending the establishment of the approved contractor scheme; [220793]

(3) whether an approved contractor scheme under the Private Security Industry Act 2001 has been established; [220794]

(4) whether it is his policy that a person whose application to the Security Industry Authority for a licence to work as a security doorperson has not yet been considered may work as a doorperson pending that consideration; [220795]

(5) if he will delay further implementation of the provisions of the Private Security Industry Act 2001 until existing applicants have completed their training and registration and have been licensed as security door staff. [220796]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources have been provided to ensure that the 20 March 2006 deadline for licensing all security personnel can be met. [222344]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 17 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Security Warnings

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many security warnings have been issued by the Home Office since 1997. [203224]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sentencing

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Sentencing Guidelines Council on the consistency of sentencing. [224922]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he has received from *(a)* HM Customs and Excise and *(b)* the Inland Revenue in relation to the proposed establishment of the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [218360]

Caroline Flint: Close negotiations are continuing with Her Majesty's Customs and Excise as to the funds and posts to be transferred to the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) from that Department, and to ensure effective links between SOCA and the establishment of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs on 1 April 2005.

Sex Offenders

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many sex offenders are absent without authorisation from prisons in England and Wales. [203515]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sexual Abuse (Historical Cases)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of complainants in historical sex abuse cases have been offered *(a)* counselling and *(b)* other support at an early stage of the investigation in each year since 2001. [219311]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment his Department has made of police compliance with guidelines for the interviewing of prisoners in historical sex abuse cases; [218789]

(2) whether the Department has conducted an audit of police compliance with guidelines for the interviewing of prisoners in historical sex abuse cases. [210005]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sikhs

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will meet representatives from *(a)* the Sikh Federation (UK), *(b)* the National Council of Gurdwaras, *(c)* Young Sikhs and *(d)* the Sikh Secretariat to discuss developments since 2001 on the Sikh Agenda for the UK Government; and if he will make a statement. [224493]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a Minister from his Department will attend the Sikh convention in 2005 [224536]

Fiona Mactaggart: No invitation has been received to attend the Sikh Convention 2005. All invitations received by Ministers are considered on an individual basis, alongside other diary commitments.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his Department's policy is on the wearing of the Kirpan by Sikh employees. [221664]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Criminal Justice Act 1988 makes it an offence for a person to have a bladed or sharply pointed article—other than a small folding pocket knife—in a public place, without good reason, with the onus on the knife carrier to show they have a good reason for carrying it. However, the Act exempts Sikhs from criminal prosecution on the grounds that the kirpan is a religious article. Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam 1999 and the Human Rights Act 1998 also protect the right of individuals to follow their chosen religion.

Home Office staff are permitted to wear the kirpan at work.

The Home Office will be drawing up a code of practice concerning the wearing of Kirpans by Sikh employees. This will recognise the Sikh's religious freedom to carry an article of faith and will take account of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Prison Service's policy is on practising Sikh officers wearing the Kirpan; and if he will discuss the issue with RESPECT. [224336]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Somali Organisations

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the expenditure by his Department on UK-based Somali organisations in each year since 1997; and what consultation is undertaken by his Department with representatives of the Somali community when deciding on allocations of such expenditure. [224587]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Special Advisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role is fulfilled by the third special adviser in his Department. [210489]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the occasions between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004 when special advisers attended meetings with external representatives at which ministers were not present. [210542]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the speeches his special advisers made in an official capacity between 31 March 2003 and 31 March 2004, broken down by date. [210564]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Surplus Assets Sales

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the value of sales of surplus assets from his Department was in each year since 2000–01. [220964]

Fiona Mactaggart: The value of sales of surplus assets for the Core Home Office for the period 2000–01 to 2003–04 are contained in the table.

Figures for 2004–05 are not yet available.

£

Asset category	*2003–04*	*2002–03*	*2001–02*	*2000–01*
Sale of vehicles	28,113	16,547	62,134	48,437
Sale of plant and machinery	0	0	0	1,336
Sale of land and property	1,077,492	1,250,313	0	125,439
Total annual sales	1,105,605.00	1,266,860.00	62,134.00	175,212.00

Targets

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent progress has been made towards achieving the Public Service Agreement target to reduce crime and the fear of crime. [219098]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to reduce crime by 15 per cent. and further in high crime areas, by 2007–08 will be met. [219099]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent progress has been made towards the public service agreement target for reducing the gap between the highest Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership areas and the best comparable areas. [219100]

Caroline Flint: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.2 million by 2005–06 will be met; [219107]

(2) what recent assessment he has made of whether the public service agreement target to increase the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by 2007–08 will be met. [219108]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Terrorism

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the level of terrorist threat to the United Kingdom since the bomb attacks in Madrid in March 2004. [216550]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the merits of introducing a new offence of committing acts preparatory to terrorism. [216699]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on co-operation of EU states against terrorism. [218792]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in restricting the fund-raising activities of Islamist terror organisations

Mr. Charles Clarke: Al Qaeda continues to pose the greatest international terrorist threat. The UK supports UN sanctions against member and associates of al Qaeda and has supported the addition of 28 individuals and 11 entities to the UN Sanctions list since 1 March 2004. the sanctions require all 191 UN member states to freeze the assets of those listed.

More generally we have developed strong working relationships across the Government and between law enforcement agencies and the financial sector. These have enabled us to create a hostiles environment for terrorists and enabled intelligence building and counter terrorist investigations.

The role of the financial sector in this partnership has been crucial and we strongly welcome the support they have given to date and the active role they have taken in ongoing discussions on how to prevent terrorist supporters gaining access to UK financial products.

The UK is at the forefront of international activity in this area and has worked in close co-operation with partner to strengthen international standards, target countries where enforcement and legislation is week, and providing technical assistance and capacity building where necessary.

Multilateral efforts to counter terrorist financing have feature prominently on all international agendas in recent years. These efforts at both policy and operational have helped prevent terrorists from sourcing, moving and deploying their finances; and there is considerably more understanding of the nature of financial sources, flows, networks and destinations than there was at the time of the attacks in the USA in 2001.

Tetra

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the total cost of the roll out of the Tetra police communications network; and what estimate he has made of the cost to each person liable for payment of the Sussex Police Authority precept, broken down by costs payable through *(a)* the precept and *(b)* general taxation. [220784]

Caroline Flint: The Airwave radiocommunications system network is being centrally funded by the Home Office under a PFI contract which will cost £2.3 billion at 1999 prices over the 22 years of the contract.

The costs of providing handsets and control centres are met by individual police forces. We do not have a breakdown of the costs to Sussex Police.

Precepts are a matter for local police authorities. For 2004–05 the Sussex Police Authority budget was met 29 per cent. from precept and 71 per cent. from grants.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what instructions have been issued to Sussex police regarding procedures for making complaints about the operation of the new Tetra system. [222031]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Torture-obtained Information

Mr. Pope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 7 February 2005, *Official Report*, column 1257W, on torture-obtained information, on how many occasions in the last year his Department has used information obtained by the use of torture in another country. [218761]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Transphobic Crime

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what reasons underlie his Department's policy on the recording of transphobic crimes as a distinct category within hate crime reporting. [200583]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Travellers

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many full-time equivalent staff in his Department deal with issues relating to Travellers. [219878]

Fiona Mactaggart: We estimate that less than full-time equivalent deals with specific Gypsy and Traveller issues in the Home Office. This varies as work demands, and involves a number of people spending a proportion of their time.

Vehicle Licensing Checks

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vehicles have been stopped using Automatic Number Plate Recognition technology on suspicion of being unlicensed in each of the last three months for which figures are available; and how many such vehicles were displaying a vehicle licence disc. [224506]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Violent Crime

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of violent crime recorded in Leicester was categorised as *(a)* violence against the person, *(b)* sexual offences and *(c)* robbery, in each year since 1999–2000. [221211]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 14 March 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Gill: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to reduce the level of violent crime in *(a)* Leicester and *(b)* England and Wales. [222887]

Ms Blears: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the project to make it possible for victims of crime to track the progress of their case online was initiated; what stage the project has reached; whether it is on schedule; and what the latest estimate of the cost of this project is. [218855]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Visa Applications

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the *(a)* names, *(b)* functions and *(c)* relationship to him of the people in whose visa applications (i) he and (ii) his private office have been involved. [203225]

Mr. Browne: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions *(a)* he and *(b)* his private office have been directly involved in visa applications to his Department. [203226]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has ever contacted any foreign embassy to inquire about travel documents for any other foreign nationals. [203247]

Mr. Charles Clarke: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the settlement visa of Mrs. Marcia Morroll of Galhampton, South Devon to be renewed; when her passport will be returned; and if he will make statement on the time scale for processing this application. [224704]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the time scale for processing an application for further leave to remain from an applicant who has overstayed on a visa was in the most recent period for which figures are available. [224780]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what stage the visa applications for *(a)* Bukola Fakeye, reference F1054346 and *(b)* Lucky Osadolor, reference B1127338, have reached; and if he will make a statement. [224850]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 6 April 2005]:* It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Volunteering

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent research the Department has conducted into attitudes towards volunteering by the recently retired. [224764]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Wild Cat (Sydenham)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will issue instructions to the Metropolitan Police to ensure that in hunting for the wild cat near Sydenham, they use every effort to tranquilise and capture the animal and not to kill it. [224150]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 4 April 2005]:* This is an operational matter for the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. He tells me that that presently there is no active search taking place for "a wild cat" in Sydenham. Should officers encounter any animal which could be considered dangerous they will deal with it in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the Association of Chief Police Officers Manual of Guidance on the Police Use of Firearms.

Witnesses

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will consider introducing

proposals to extend section 97 of the Magistrates Courts Act 1980 and Schedule 3 paragraph 1 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to allow prosecutors to summon all potential witnesses to a magistrates court for a deposition. [218867]

Paul Goggins: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the existing requirements are for taping the statements of interviews of witnesses by the police which could later be submitted for review by the prosecution. [218869]

Paul Goggins: Guidance on interviewing vulnerable or intimidated witnesses, including consideration of video recording, is contained in "Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance for Vulnerable or Intimidated Witnesses, including Children". This guidance became operational in May 2002 when it superseded "Memorandum of Good Practice on Video Recorded Interviews with Child Witnesses for Criminal Proceedings".

The Association of chief police officers also issues guidance including: "Guidance on the Recording of Interviews with Vulnerable and Significant (Key) Witnesses".

Young Offenders (Voluntary Organisations)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much funding has been given to voluntary organisations working with young offenders in each year since 1997. [200338]

Fiona Mactaggart: It has not been possible to provide an answer in the time available before Prorogation.

Neighbourhood Nursery (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a neighbourhood nursery was attached to the Sure Start local programme opened in June 2004 in Crosby. [219324]

Margaret Hodge: I have been asked to reply.

The Sure Start local programme in Seaforth and Bootle was approved in 2001 to provide services to 700 children under four and their families in the wards of Church and Linacre. The Neighbourhood Nursery attached to this local programme, is located in the Linacre ward and opened in June 2004 delivering 62 additional child care places to families living in the area.

The local programme delivers a range of services for families and parents within the area, including

Outreach and home visiting; support for families and parents;

Play, learn and child care facilities

Primary and community health care.

The combined expertise within the team members covers all aspect of health, education, parenting skills, practical and emotional support and social care from ante-natal stage to nursery education.

Seaforth and Bootle local programme has established a mobile toy library and the early years workers provide practical support around early learning and play.

The proportion of parents expressing no concerns about the extent of their children's language development increased from 77 per cent. in 2001–02 to 79 per cent. in 2003–04.

The community midwife provides breast feeding support sessions at birth, six weeks and 17 weeks. The rate of take up of these sessions has gone up from 34.4 per cent. in 2002–03 to 37.9 per cent. in 2003–04 at birth; 8 per cent. to 13.9 per cent. at six weeks and 4 per cent. to 8.6 per cent. at 17 weeks.

The number of women supported by post-natal depression group increased from 13 in 2002–03 to 30 women in 2003–04.

The programme funding for the current and future years is as follows:

	Programme name: Seaforth and Bootle (£)
Capital	
Approved	825,211
Revenue	
2004–05	770,140
2005–06	789,393
2006–07	789,393

Sefton council have been allocated capital of £1,954,031 and revenue of £250,000 for 2004–05 and £323,432 for 2005–06, and are planning to open seven Children's centre by March 2006.